



The Holy See

*Discurso al Embajador de RUANDA,
Excmo. Sr. Don François NGARUKIYINTWALI**

2 de marzo de 1990

Mr. Ambassador,

It is a pleasure for me to welcome Your Excellency to the Vatican on the occasion of the presentation of the Letters accrediting you as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Rwanda to the Holy See.

I thank you heartily for having brought me the kind greetings of your President, His Excellency Major-General Juvenal Habyarimans; I am very touched. In return, I ask you to kindly express my best wishes to him personally and my cordial good wishes for the successful fulfilment of his important task in the service of the nation of Rwanda.

In your courteous speech, Mr. Ambassador, you mentioned, quite kindly, the role played by the Catholic Church in the development of the society of Rwanda. I thank you for this testimony. It is, indeed, the wish of the pastors and faithful to encourage everything pertaining to the complete and harmonious development of the human person, to participate in the common effort for progress, putting their people and skill, according to their means, at the service of the various realities of the country. May Christians know that they are called to be signs of Christ's love among their brothers and sisters in the health-care field for example, in the area of education and in the various social initiatives in the nation. That which encourages them is the «new commandment» of loving our neighbour as Christ himself has loved us.

In its foreign relations the Republic of Rwanda, as you have stated, has set for itself the goal of working for peace, cooperation, rapprochement among peoples and international solidarity. With satisfaction I welcome this generous proposal which is in harmony with the initiatives which it has pleased the Holy See to promote in order to foster good understanding between individuals and benefit the development of their nations. During my recent pastoral visit on the African continent, I

renewed my appeal to humanity, in the name of humanity, that the duty of solidarity may be put into practice, especially in regard to the poorest of the African peoples. I expressed my wish that those in authority may continue to be attentive to the real needs of their compatriots and of their desire to participate fully in their own progress.

I wish that Rwanda may continue to make its contribution to the coming of a society that is more and more just and peaceful. This work demands that we be firmly determined to eliminate all the barriers separating people, to respect and promote the legitimate aspirations of all the components of the national community, to love concretely all the members of the human family, those nearest to us, as well as those who are distant, aware of the common origin and common destiny which unites all.

Next September, God willing, my journey will take me to the land of the thousand hills. I am pleased at the thought of getting to know your people and of going to celebrate with the Catholics the faith which we share and which is our great treasure. I know that the Catholics of Rwanda are preparing actively, with their pastors, for this meeting with the Bishop of Rome; I thank God for the fervour of the Christian communities of your country. Please allow me, Mr. Ambassador, to send them, through you as an intermediary, an affectionate greetings May the dynamism of their faith lead the Catholics of Rwanda to participate in an ever more skilled and generous manner in the development and progress of their beloved homeland!

Before concluding, I offer you my best wishes for the fulfilment of the mission which you have officially begun today. The experience which you have had in exercising the highest responsibilities in your country's diplomacy for many years will contribute, I am sure, to the good development of relations between Rwanda and the Holy See, strengthening the bonds of friendship which unite them. Be assured that here you will find the understanding welcome which you will need.

Upon Your Excellency, upon the President of the Republic, upon the members of the Government and upon all your compatriots whom I will learn to know during my coming visit, I cordially invoke the abundance of divine blessings.

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