



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE MISSIONARIES LEAVING FOR AFRICA

Saturday, 19 October 1963

Beloved sons and daughters,

We are happy to receive you on the very day of your departure for the Missions of Africa. We have Ourselves visited that great Continent, and seen with Our own eyes the accomplishments and achievements of the missionaries there. As you leave your homes and families to join them, and to labour in that distant field of the Lord, We pray that He may prosper your work and, through you, bring many souls to Himself.

No matter what sorrows, suffering or disappointment you may meet in your missionary endeavours, remember always that the Vicar of Christ thinks constantly of you and prays for you. We assure you of Our paternal affection and of Our special benevolence towards those who leave all things and follow Our Lord, the Lord of the harvest. We ask Him to give strength to your hands, eloquence to your voices, zeal to your minds and true holiness to your souls, so that you may be other Chrism, attracting men to God by your example.

For Christ, then, you are acting as ambassadors, God, as it were, appealing through you (cfr. 2 Cor. 20). Be always ready to show your credentials, that is, conduct yourselves in all circumstances as God's ministers, in much patience... in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in unaffected love; in the word of truth, in the power of God (*ibid.* 4-6).

Take with you, to the souls to whom you will minister, Our paternal apostolic Blessing. We bestow it upon you with all our heart, to accompany you on your way and to be a pledge of abundant divine graces in your apostolate.
