



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO THE FIRST AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA
TO THE HOLY SEE***

Thursday, 25 March 1965

Your Excellency,

We are very happy to receive from you the Letters of Credence with which His Excellency, the President of the Republic of India, has designated you as the First Ambassador of India to the Holy See.

Official diplomatic relations have existed between India and the Holy See for some time, but this is the first time that India has been represented by an Ambassador, and in this We see a sign that relations will continue to the mutual benefit of your noble nation and of the Holy See. We are grateful that His Excellency Dr. Radhakrishnan has raised your representation to the rank of Ambassador.

We welcome Your Excellency today to Our home with special affection, because We had the pleasure of your presence as Special Envoy while We visited your beautiful country late last year, even though that visit was regrettably very brief. We experienced on that memorable occasion your gracious hospitality, and it has remained for Us a priceless experience and a precious episode of Our life.

While in Bombay, We were able to witness personally the vitality of the Church in India, and We were consoled to see the rich contribution which Our children have made to India. All this was possible because India, faithful to its religious heritage and in keeping with its native respect for religion, has granted to the Church freedom of activity and initiative. The educational system of the Catholic Church is indeed widespread, and it has for its purpose to prepare God-fearing, exemplary and loyal citizens for India, citizens who will make their generous contribution to the

general development of their motherland. We are confident that Catholics will do their share in helping India take its rightful place among the family of nations, and We are happy that have been such devoted sons and daughters of India.

We pray that India will never lose its religious sentiments and that she would ever remain aware of her relationship to God. We are all children of one human family, sons and daughters of the one God, and in that spirit we shall labour together to make of the world an acceptable place where all children can rightfully enjoy the creation of God.

We feel that in Your Excellency We have an understanding and experienced representative who will dedicate himself to the mutual benefit of India and the Holy See. We wish you well in your new responsibility and We are confident that you will fulfil your task creditably. In asking Your Excellency to convey Our affectionate greetings to your President, to your Government and to all of your people in India, We invoke upon all an abundance of heavenly blessings and graces.

*AAS 57 (1965), p.386-387.

Insegnamenti di Paolo VI, vol. III, p.190-191.

L'Osservatore Romano, 26.3.1965, p.1.