



The Holy See

JOURNEY TO UGANDA

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO THE SICK IN THE HOSPITAL OF RUBAGA**

Friday, 1 August 1969

To you, Gentlemen, who are responsible for the completion of this new hospital, We extend Our heartfelt gratitude for inviting Us to its solemn inauguration. We come here today, not only to praise this material structure, for We know well what labour and sacrifices its construction has demanded, but above all to meet the sick, the suffering and the afflicted.

Here is the love taught by the Gospel! We thank and bless all who show such evangelical charity in this hospital; We encourage them to remember that, in their difficult service to the sick, they are assisting Our Lord Himself, Who said: "Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do it to Me".

Beloved patients, We greet you most affectionately, for you are the special recipients of divine love. Jesus expressed the most profound meaning of love in His parable of the Good Samaritan, who helped a sick and wounded man.

Hence, when the Church opens hospitals where none is available, and thus serves the sick, she is true to her mission of charity. To this duty, the missionaries have always given first place, not as an unseemly propaganda, but only to show the Church's unselfish and universal love for all the poor and afflicted, of every race, colour and religion. In this, she has no desire to compete with the civil authorities; she wishes only to inspire their action, or supply its lack when necessary, for she is always the servant of men in their human development, both physical and spiritual. Such is the mission of this excellent new hospital.

To its directors, therefore, to the medical, nursing and technical personnel and staff, and particularly to all the patients and their families, We lovingly impart Our very special Apostolic Blessing.

In the place of healing, and on this occasion, We wish to make the announcement of a project, inspired by Our special love and concern for the suffering, and particularly for the suffering children.

To Our great sorrow, it was not possible for Us, during Our stay in Africa, to visit that region which is undergoing a fearful conflict, the land of Nigeria. But, to show Our affection for that country, which We had the joy of visiting when Archbishop of Milan, We intend, as soon as the situation permits, to found there two institutions, in the ecclesiastical jurisdictions where We then journeyed, and which have since been so terribly ravaged by the consequences of war. These two institutions will receive and help the innocent young children, who have been wounded or crippled or otherwise injured because of the conflict, and seek to repair the damage, both physical and moral, done to those little ones, and also as much as possible assist them by suitable training to take their place in society as useful citizens, thus working for the future and for peaceful development. Hence We shall place both these institutions under the loving maternal patronage of Our Lady of Peace, whom We now implore to obtain from her Divine Son Jesus, the Prince of Peace, the speedy end of hostilities and the return of concord and brotherly love to that dear land. But We wish also to show in a practical way Our love for the sick and suffering of Uganda. Therefore we offer towards the completion and continuation of this Hospital, Our personal gift in the amount of ten thousand dollars, accompanied by Our prayers for all those who work and are helped here. God bless you.