



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI
TO THE AMBASSADOR OF AUSTRIA TO THE HOLY SEE***

Thursday, 19 June 1969

Mr Ambassador,

We give you Our cordial greetings and thank you for the kind words which you have just addressed to Us on this happy occasion of your presenting your Credential Letters as Ambassador of Austria to the Holy See.

Austria, Your Excellency's homeland, enjoys great natural beauty and can look back to many centuries of precious Christian tradition. Christianity has stamped your people's history and brought its best powers to full development. Eloquent evidence of this is given by the glorious cathedrals and abbeys of your country, also by the immortal music of your Austrian master composers.

We thank God for this rich natural achievement on the cultural level, for all good things come from him and he is the God of peace.

It has been Our tireless purpose from the very beginning of Our Pontificate to lend support to international peace. Like Our Predecessors, We continue to point out to the peoples of our troubled century that in the end there is no other basis for genuine, lasting peace worthy of human beings than truth justice, love and freedom (cf. *Pacem in Terris*).

It is significant in these circumstances, Mr. Ambassador, that you should have mentioned in your address that Austria is a neutral country. This neutrality does not signify weakness or lack of interest, but rather an active interest in the cause of peace Your government opted for such an attitude basically in order to serve the community of nations in its striving for unity and easing of tension For this Austria deserves gratitude and trust from other countries.

Mr Ambassador, you may be assured that We have feelings of special esteem for you, as We had for your predecessor. We thank His Excellency the Federal President for the good wishes which you have conveyed to Us, and We ask you to convey Ours to him in return. May you yourself enjoy great success in your new responsible office and work to maintain and improve the good relations which exist between the Holy See and our government. To this end We impart Our Apostolic Blessing with paternal benevolence to you and to your assistants.

*ORa n.27 p.4.