



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE AUTHORITIES FROM THE REPUBLIC OF TOGO*

Saturday, 22 March 1969

It is with great pleasure that We welcome you in Our dwelling today, Mr. Minister, and that We greet at your side His Excellency Mr. Paul Eklou and the eminent personalities who have come with you to Italy for a cultural and friendly mission. In spite of your heavy timetable, you have made a point of paying Us a visit. We appreciate this delicate attention and Our welcome extends, beyond you, to your dear country, Togoland.

You know Our attachment for the land of Africa. We have already been there and We are preparing for another journey which, rapid though it will be, will clearly show the world Our deep interest in the joys, the difficulties, the trials of the peoples of this great continent. We will not tread the soil of your country; but through prayer We will entrust to God the intentions of those who live there and We rejoice in being able to do so by the intercession of the martyr Saints of Uganda who were faithful to their faith without renouncing the moral values of African tradition.

As the second Vatican Council so rightly recalled: "Living in various circumstances during the course of time, the Church, too, has used her preaching the discoveries of different cultures to spread and explain the message of Christ to all nations, to probe it and more deeply understand it, and to give it better expression in liturgical celebrations and in the life of the diversified community of the faithful" (*Gaudium et spes*, n 58, 2).

We are happy, then, that you have come to Europe to bring it, together with your friendship, the spiritual riches that are specifically yours. It is through brotherly exchanges that the peoples will learn to know and respect one another. We cannot but encourage such initiatives and We assure you very willingly that the Church will work more and more to help all cultures to blossom, provided they have a sense of the common good and are attentive to the needs of each man. Through the mystery of His redemption, Christ came to save every man and through His Gospel, to bring the

world a ferment of unity and peace.

We should like to prolong this conversation. That is impossible for Us, unfortunately. But We are anxious, in concluding this too short meeting, to assure you of Our faithful thought. And We wholeheartedly invoke the abundance of divine Blessings on you, on your families, on those who are dear to you, as well as on your noble nation and its rulers.

*ORa n.14 p.3.
