



The Holy See

*ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR OF PERU TO THE HOLY SEE**

Thursday, 13 November 1969

Mr. Ambassador,

We have listened with great attention to your remarks on this occasion of your presenting your credential letters as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Peru to the Holy See. These circumstances are a further step indicating the happy relations existing between the two parties. This occasion arouses feelings in Us of cordial welcome to Your Excellency and renewed kindness for the Peruvian Nation, to which Our thoughts are turned and to which We send a message of affection and benediction.

Your Excellency's allusions to Our Encyclical *Populorum Progressio* cannot fail to interest Our pastoral concern. Our concern is for initiatives taken towards obtaining greater social justice, lasting equilibrium in international relations and peaceful coexistence, with respect for the inviolable rights of every person and every people. Such concerns were happily combined in that Encyclical.

Your Excellency's allusions could not leave us indifferent, because these ideals imply an origin and execution in conscience and love. They are not merely an external adjunct, but belong to the very essence of the Christian message. Catholicism confined to the individual sphere, and not projected dynamically towards practical communion with mankind, would be in contradiction to the teaching of the Divine Redeemer, who came to restore to men and women their dignity of being children of God, and indeed to make them his more fraternally, to give temporal equity and philanthropy the urgency, the vigour and the merit belonging to those higher acts which are known as evangelical justice, charity and peace.

The Church therefore looks at individuals and peoples with the watchfulness of a Mother, and

fosters genuine development in them. She desires that they themselves shall be as far possible the creators of their own progress, but that such progress may not be reduced to mere material growth, since "economics and technology have no sense unless they are for man, whom they should serve" (Enc. *Populorum Progressio* n 34). Progress needs to be whole and integrated, personal and communitarian. That is to say that it has to embrace the whole of man and all men and women It has to encourage and aid them, and help them to be responsible for their own potentialities and rightful aspirations. It should not consider and evaluate them simply as citizens of the world, but also as pilgrims towards an everlasting destiny. For closed and exclusive humanism would end by becoming inhuman (cf. ib. n 42).

We recall these concepts in the presence of the Representative of a country that is actively and loyally Catholic. Its national spirit is impregnated with moral and religious virtues. Its landscape is studded with the names of Christians, and its history has blossomed with saints, such as Toribio of Mogrovejo, Francis Solano, Rose of Lima and Martin de Porres, and with celebrated cultural institutions. Who does not know of the Major University of St Mark, dating from the dawn of Christianity in your country, the first university in Latin America? How can We omit to mention the Colleges of St. Martin and of St. Philip, and no runny other social and relief works? These are all a sign of the Church's labour in the work of developing Peru and constitute a guarantee and a pledge that the way so long followed in this direction shall continue to be followed

So shall it be, as We strongly hope, because in that country we can count upon Our dearly beloved Brothers and Sons, who are Peru and are the Church. And the Church, without any terrestrial ambition, 'desires one single thing: to continue Christ's own work under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for Christ came to the world to give evidence of the truth, to save and not to judge, to serve and not to be served" (II Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 3).

We extend Our best wishes and assure you of Our benevolence for the successful accomplishment of the mission which Your Excellency begins today, so crowning a long and experienced diplomatic career. Together with Our own greeting we express Our pleasure at the greeting which We have received from the President, the Government and the People of Peru, We invoke the continual assistance of plentiful divine blessings upon all.

* ORa n.48 p.2.