



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE AMBASSADOR OF CHILE TO THE HOLY SEE

Monday, 22 March 1971

Mr. Ambassador,

We have listened with sincere gratitude to the deferent words you have just addressed to us on presenting the Letters that accredit you as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Chile to the Holy See. Appreciating also the courteous message you transmitted to us from H. E. the President of the Republic, we wish to evoke for a Nation we love so much the hopes and joy that your presence, Mr. Ambassador, arouses in us.

The ideas about peace, justice, progress and a brotherly society, to which Your Excellency referred, can not but strike a vibrating chord in our spirit, since it is our labour and that of the Church to keep up a constant dialogue on the problems and the legitimate aspirations of the human family, of which the great Chilean Nation is such a rightly appreciated member.

In this way we think we are being faithful to our specific mission of proclaiming a transcendent Truth, which is a seed destined to grow and develop in souls like a tree with spreading branches, open to all horizons of man's and society's activity; and which is light to illuminate humanity in its search for the right way to harmonious progress, in its earthly and eternal dimensions.

For this reason the mission of the Church is a mission of sincere service to every man, to every society, to the whole of mankind, making each one feel responsible for the fate of his fellowmen. Where the voice of the Gospel arrives, there arrive the promotion of man, the proclamation of justice and the work of charity.

Your Excellency paid particular attention to respect for the law and the postulates of peace, defining them pillars of the life of the Chilean Nation; to the democratic tradition of the Country and

to the spiritual rakes that every nation needs, to promote true progress.

We listened with satisfaction to these concepts, which are so essential for the Church to carry on her activity freely. She is defined by the spirit of service to which we have referred, and has no other aim than the authentic moral and spiritual benefit of her members, and therefore is indirectly reflected in the whole national community. And we think, specifically, of the generous action that the Church is carrying out in Chile in the service of the poorest and neediest, by means of her works of social promotion and of charity; of the effort she is making in favour of student youth with her schools and universities, of the initiatives for the welfare of the sick and the old, as well as social work for the betterment of workers in the country and in town. The freedom of action of the Church has been presented by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council as the fundamental principle in relations between the Church and the public authorities and the whole civil order.

We trust that, in this spirit the Church in your country will always meet, on the part of the State, with the conditions due to her far her disinterested and fruitful action; and that Chile will continue to cherish her Catholic tradition, the cultural, moral and religious heritage of her people, and her cordial relations with the Holy See, which Your Excellency said you would like to draw even closer. We trust too that Chile will wish to maintain the good relations with the Church that presently obtain, assuring her freedom for her worship and her ministry, freedom understood not in the sense of a mere tolerance that may be limited as a negative factor in the life of the people, but as a noble right and a school of culture, progress and human elevation.

Mr. Ambassador, expressing fervent wishes for the happy fulfillment of your lofty mission, we are glad to assure you of our benevolence, and as we repeat our special affection for the beloved Chilean People, we send them and all their Authorities our greeting, through Your Excellency, while we implore divine assistance and the continual blessings of the Almighty for the whole nation.

*ORa n.13 p.2.