



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI  
TO H.E. Mr IGNACE KARUHIJE  
AMBASSADOR OF RWANDA TO THE HOLY SEE**

*Thursday, 20 December 1973*

*Mr. Ambassador,*

You are now the spokesman of the Government and the representative of the people of Rwanda to the Holy See. You appreciate, you said, the honour and the demands of this high and noble task. We welcome you with joy. Our benevolent support is entirely yours, and our collaborators will do their utmost to facilitate your mission.

We thank for you kind words. We also thank the President of the Rwanda Republic who, last month, already sent us a cordial message, for his very kind wishes. We greet the other Authorities of your country and your dear fellow-countrymen. Allow us on this day to tell them how attentively we are following their lives, their march towards progress; their pursuit of real economic and social justice, their resolve to contribute to peace and international distension.

The greatness of a nation does not depend, in fact, on the extent of its territory or the power of its armaments. It depends on its men, their virtues, their ideals, their spirit of equality and tolerance, their capacity of working for the common good without appealing to violence, which you have rightly denounced. Marching along this way, Rwanda will bring a great deal to the other States.

We continue incessantly, on our part, to exhort the rulers of the world to follow the line recalled here; every meeting, every outstanding date, every event gives us the opportunity to do so. We also constantly encourage Christians, wherever they may be, to grasp the consequences of their action or their inertia, in order that their behaviour may be inspired more by the Gospel. And we know that we can rely particularly on our dear Catholic sons in Rwanda, whose religious vitality has proved itself, deserves the esteem and is, for many reasons, a hope for the African continent.

Our good wishes accompany you, Mr. Ambassador. May the exercise of your office give you many satisfactions and the joy of carrying it out with the feeling of duty done. We willingly invoke the abundant blessings of the Almighty on Your Excellency, on all the people of Rwanda and their rulers.

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