



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI TO THE NIGERIAN PILGRIMS

Thursday, 1 July 1976

Dear sons and daughters,

We are happy to welcome you today. In you we greet representatives of the entire Archdiocese of Lagos—an ecclesial community united with your Archbishop and with us in the oneness of Christ's universal Church. In you we embrace all Nigeria, which we remember so well and love so much.

We speak frequently about your country and follow the events in your land with deep paternal interest and affection.

Our hope today is that your pilgrimage to Rome will confirm in your hearts a profound sense of your Christian vocation. We pray that you will be always aware of the mission that is yours as followers of Christ. This mission is to give witness to his love, and in his name to extend fellowship and service. With Saint Peter we exhort you “go on growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ” (2 *Petr.* 3, 18).

And we are confident that your contribution will be authentic and that, today and for ever, you will be faithful sons and daughters of the Catholic Church and loyal citizens of Nigeria.

To all of you and to your families we cordially impart our Apostolic Blessing.