



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI
TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL
TO THE HOLY SEE***

Monday, 4 July 1977

Mr. Ambassador.

We are happy to receive Your Excellency here as the new Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Brazil. You represent to the Holy See a great nation, capable of an amazing advance. You belong to a people with very engaging human qualities, familiar with the Catholic faith, and you yourself have just recalled human ideals which call forth our sympathy.

We thank you for the noble words with which you begin your mission, and for the sentiments which you conveyed to us on the part of His Excellency the President Ernesto Geisel. We entrust to you the care of expressing to him the fervent wishes we form for the Brazilian nation whose destiny he guides

Who would not subscribe willingly to the concern to construct in your country, as you say, a just, free and prosperous society, in an atmosphere of peace and respect? That is an exalting task, which requires the participation and trust of all categories of the people, to the good of whom it is ordained, not only in the future, but also in the present. It is an immense task, for it must take into account in the first place all those whose living conditions are most precarious. For them, daily bread, employment, dignity, responsibility are indispensable elements of the development for which we expressed the wish just ten years ago, in our encyclical *Populorum Progressio*. It is, in a sense, a formidable task, for it must prevent the pursuit of efficiency or the concern to ensure the necessary public order from deteriorating into situations of arbitrary action or of violation of the indefensible rights of the human person. For such a work, we pray to the Lord to assist and guide the consciences of all those who assume heavy tasks in the service of their compatriots.

The Church, on her side, encourages all her children to contribute in solidarity to this material, social, moral and spiritual progress. She is convinced that the evangelical values, to which she actively bears witness, are the most fundamental conditions of harmonious and complete development. Like Christ, she cannot prevent herself from having special concern for the poor and the weak: she knows, too, the value of forgiveness, reconciliation and peace. She believes that a civilization of love is possible, and she sees that which is at stake and which represents, for Latin America and for the world, the fulfilment of this original civilization that the Christian traditions of your country permit and which will do honour to Brazil. In this work of human promotion and evangelization, the Church cannot fail to attribute special importance to the safeguarding of the institution of the family, in conformity with Christian principles. The Holy See is at the side of the Brazilian Bishops in their desire and their duty to serve the Church and their country generously and effectively.

It is with these warm sentiments that we implore the Blessing of God on your dear compatriots, while wishing you, Mr. Ambassador, a happy and fruitful mission to the Holy See.

*ORa n.28 p.4.