



The Holy See

***DISCOURS DU SAINT-PÈRE JEAN-PAUL II
À S. E. MONSIEUR SAMUËL LAHADY,
NOUVEL AMBASSADEUR DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE
DE MADAGASCAR PRÈS LE SAINT-SIÈGE****

Samedi, 14 novembre 1992

Mr. Ambassador,

It is with joy that I welcome Your Excellency to the Vatican as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Madagascar to the Holy See. I thank you most kindly for having conveyed to me the greetings of His Excellency Mr. Didier Ratsiraka, President of the Republic of Madagascar, and I ask you to return to be so kind as to express, together with my good wishes for his person, my warmest wishes for the fulfilment of his task, for the benefit of all the Madagascan people. I likewise greet all the members of the Government and I invoke God's assistance upon all those officials in the service of the nation.

In your address you chose to mention the Apostolic See's efforts on behalf of peace and justice in Africa and the world: I am grateful for the appreciation which you expressed in such kind words.

Your presence here, Mr. Ambassador, bears witness to a real esteem for motives of a religious nature, and I express to you my satisfaction. Indeed, if just and peaceful relations are to be established between peoples, it requires, among other things, using to advantage the dynamism of spiritual values.

Please allow me, Mr. Ambassador, to use the occasion of this meeting to address, through you, a cordial greeting to the members of the Catholic Church in Madagascar, who gave me such a warm welcome during my Pastoral Visit in 1989. From the youngest to the oldest they expressed the depth of their faith and their desire to live in fraternity while working for the well-being of all their fellow citizens. I can assure you that, under the leadership of their Bishops, the faithful of Madagascar want to make their contribution to that challenging task of building a prosperous nation where all citizens can lead a life in conformity with their dignity as human beings. Encouraged by their Christian faith and their love for their

country, each according to his own means will continue to be involved in the fields of education, health-care and social work, among other areas cooperating with their fellow citizens of other religious traditions. In their resolve to be actively involved in building their own country, they will help to maintain the social values of the Great Island, so well expressed in the famous «fihavanana» that seeks to extend the harmony existing within a family to all the members of society. Without a doubt new forms of solidarity need to be invented today in the academic and urban world, the world of work and of economy. I hope that these new forms of solidarity may be profoundly rooted in the spirit of the ancient values so beautifully illustrated, among others, by Victoire Rasoamanarivo, whom I had the joy of beatifying in Antananarivo.

Before concluding, I express my fervent wish that the people of your country may never experience insecurity in their daily struggle to survive, but may rather satisfy their hunger, enjoy good health live from their work, profit from the wealth of their ancestral heritage and help it benefit the family of nations.

As you begin your mission, I offer you my best wishes and assure you that you will always find here a cordial welcome and attentive understanding from my coworkers.

Upon Your Excellency, upon the people of Madagascar and their leaders, I cordially invoke an abundance of divine blessings.

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