



The Holy See

***DISCORSO DI GIOVANNI PAOLO II
A DIECI AMBASCIATORI ACCREDITATI PRESSO LA SANTA SEDE IN
OCCASIONE DELLA PRESENTAZIONE DELLE LETTERE CREDENZIALI****

Sabato, 14 novembre 1992

Your Excellencies,

1. It is with great pleasure that I welcome Your Excellencies today to receive the Letters accrediting you to the Apostolic See as Ambassadors of your nations and your respective Governments.

Doubtlessly, circumstances did not allow me to receive you separately to discuss with each of you the great questions currently troubling your fellow citizens. Nevertheless, our meeting gives me the opportunity to mention, even though briefly, the diversity of States and cultures to which you belong. From Italy to the countries which are geographically most distant from the Eternal City, you come from regions which I turn to often in thought, sometimes recalling the visits I have already made there. Two of you, the Ambassadors of Bulgaria and Slovenia, are representing countries which, due to the recent changes experienced on the European continent, have just established diplomatic relations with the Holy See. May they be assured that in receiving them today, I am expressing my warmest wishes to their whole nations.

2. Your countries of origin have to face their own problems, but, among other problems I am particularly thinking of the tragic question of hunger and malnutrition affecting millions of people, especially on the African continent, depriving them of their most basic dignity and submitting them to conditions of undeserved suffering. It is more urgent than ever that nations from one continent combine resources and know-how with those of other continents to offer lasting solutions to the scourges which our society, with a wealth of new technology, has the means to remedy.

3. Here, as in other areas, Catholics have a role to play; I express my wish that they take their

place in building the earthly city. I hope that they will always feel encouraged to act in the interest of their fellow citizens, in order to put into practice the twofold commandment of love of God and neighbour, the heart of the Gospel message. Christians do not ask for privileges in daily life: what they want is to be able to profess and freely practise their religion. Everywhere they are disposed to work at the service of the common good in fulfilling their civic duties while respecting the laws of the State and the convictions of all their fellow citizens.

4. To guarantee the means to lead a decent life is to work at the service of the peace which the world will always need. The service of peace, which Saint Augustine defined as the «tranquility of order» is one of your main concerns. If the Church proclaims that true peace comes from Christ, she holds that everything that contributes to the search for peace must be pursued zealously, using every legitimate means, in the hope of one day seeing an end to the conflicts which continue to stain our planet with blood. Your noble mission as ambassadors places you at the centre of the many processes aimed at preserving or establishing this peace in the interest of all humanity and each person in particular. Be assured that you will find my coworkers ready to offer you any help you need to fulfil this exalted but arduous task.

Messrs. Ambassadors, I offer you these reflections inspired by your presence, in token of the fruitful cooperation between the Apostolic See and your governments. Please allow me to tell you one again that I hold your activity in great esteem.

Expressing the hope that you will feel duly welcome in this city, so charged with history, yet a modern crossroads of the nations, I ask God to bless you, your families, the authorities of your countries, and the peoples whom I greet in you, their worthy representatives.

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