



## The Holy See

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***DISCORSO DI GIOVANNI PAOLO II  
A S.E. IL SIGNOR GHEORGHE PANCRATIU IULIU GHEORGHIU,  
NUOVO AMBASCIATORE DI ROMANIA PRESSO LA SANTA SEDE\****

*Martedì, 8 giugno 1993*

1. Your Excellency's coming to the home of the Successor of Peter to present the Letters accrediting you as the first Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the new Republic of Romania after 45 years is a significant event: it is one of the happy consequences of the recent upheaval which has changed the situation in Europe and has permitted the resumption of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the noble Romanian nation.

2. I am particularly touched by the sentiments and convictions contained in your address, as well as your words of esteem for the activity of the Apostolic See and the Successor of Peter in international life. I thank you very much for the kind message which you have conveyed to me from His Excellency Mr. Ion Iliescu, President of the Republic of Romania. I would be grateful if in return you would express to him my greetings and my best wishes for those who have the noble task of serving their country.

3. Your Excellency mentioned the Christian past and long spiritual tradition to which Romanians have remained deeply attached as a treasure which has shaped the soul of the people, even during the darkest hours of their recent history under the yoke of communism. Even the name of your country recalls the strong and ancient bonds which unite you to ancient Rome, indeed, under the Empire cordial relations caused the spread of the Latin culture along the Black Sea, with original characteristics. Beginning from this common culture, later generations developed the cultures peculiar to central Europe, and the people learned that they had to develop their national identity while making their contribution to the unity of the whole continent.

4. Since December 1989, your country's leaders have been seeking to consolidate the democratic

structures of the State. The international community realizes that this new beginning cannot be achieved without the support of other countries and their economic assistance. Far from turning in on itself, your government, seeking to strengthen the nation, wants Romania to participate actively in Europe. It is now at the level of the continent, with a view to the whole of the planet, that political, economic and social relations must be envisaged. The wealthier nations must be in solidarity with those which are gradually casting aside the structures of oppressive governments. It is indeed in mutual relations that each country can find its proper place in the concert of nations.

5. Supported in their legitimate aspirations by the fundamental values of peace, respect for the dignity of the human person and for the dignity of peoples, individuals and human groups work together to build their homeland. Dialogue between groups in Romania having different cultures and different customs should allow each citizen to participate in the national life, to play his responsible role in the common home, in the new era which has now begun. This path of dialogue, upon which the Holy See places special importance, is the only one that respects the individual, peoples and ethnic minorities.

6. You have seen fit to make reference, Mr. Ambassador, to the new dispositions adopted in your country in regard to religious freedom and reparation for the injustices committed since 1949; the Holy See appreciates the gestures which have been made by your government. It hopes that the unresolved problems will find a satisfactory solution, fruit of persevering and constructive dialogue between the parties concerned.

The majority of the Christians in Romania belong to the Romanian Orthodox Church. Although they are of different nationalities, notably Hungarian, Catholics - both those of the Romanian Byzantine rite and the Latin Rite - want to participate actively, as they did in the past, in the life of society, in developing health care, in teaching the young, the future of the nation, with the kind recognition of the authorities. The vocation of the Catholic Church, which is to proclaim the Gospel, is expressed especially through charitable activity. Catholics want to promote fraternal relations with their fellow citizens regardless of their origin or religious creed, with a view to cordial understanding among all, which is so necessary for democratic life. I take this opportunity to address, through you, my warmest greetings to all the faithful of the Catholic Church present in your country.

7. As you begin your mission as Ambassador of the Republic of Romania to the Holy See, I offer you my best wishes. Since you have been in Rome, you have been able to discover the riches of the Eternal City, which are strikingly similar in particular to the frescoes recently discovered in the suburbs of Constanta. For their part, our diplomatic relations, which have now been fully restored, are the sign of the profound, trusting bonds that go beyond the vicissitudes of history.

Be assured, Mr. Ambassador, that you will always find among my collaborators the attentive kindness and cordial understanding which you may need for the successful outcome of your

activity.

Upon Your Excellency, you fellow citizens and its leaders, I cordially invoke an abundance of divine blessing.

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