



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI TO THE FIRST AMBASSADOR OF CYPRUS ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE*

Monday, 24 September 1973

Mr. Ambassador.

We thank Your Excellency for the elevated sentiments you have just expressed on presenting to us your Letters of Credence. We are all the more sensitive to them in that it is the first time that the island of Cyprus has thus been represented by an Ambassador to this Apostolic See. Be sure of our cordial welcome.

Beyond your person, we respectfully greet His Beatitude Archbishop Makarios, President of the Republic, who has assumed, since the independence of your dear country, the heavy charge of the supreme magistracy in the service of all Cypriots. And we welcome, with great sympathy and outstretched wishes, these diplomatic relations that your Government has wished to establish with the Holy See. In this context we hope to strengthen our specific contribution to respect for the rights of man, to justice, peace and spiritual progress, knowing how much your fellow countrymen value these ideals, so necessary for their country and for all peoples.

Your Excellency's message enables us to recall the glorious and sometimes tormented past of your country, the symbiosis of the many civilisations that have left their stamp on it, the courage it has had to manifest in order to keep its originality and to find the peaceful ways of life in common, the riches of all orders of which it is rightly proud, these human values also call forth our esteem and our joy. You will understand that there is one of these that particularly touches us: the Christian vitality that has incessantly been displayed in your country since the blessed day when the great Apostle St Paul brought to it the light of the Gospel. It was his first halting-place on leaving Antioch. Near the place where he ended his missionary journey, we recommend to his intercession these venerable Christian communities that were so near his heart. We form fervent wishes for the Catholic Community, which is particularly dear to us: for all our brothers in the faith

in Cyprus, with whom we hope the full communion willed by Our Lord may be realized; and for all those who share our belief in Almighty God.

We wish you, Mr. Ambassador, a fruitful mission at the Holy Sec, for the good of your countrymen as a whole, and the pursuit of peace in this Mediterranean crucible in which Cyprus has a prime place. We willingly implore on your person, on those who are dear to you, on all the inhabitants of your country and its rulers, the abundant blessings of God.

*ORa n.41 p.2.