



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE
OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI
TO WEST ASIA, OCEANIA AND AUSTRALIA

***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI
TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS****

*Manila, Philippines
Friday, 27 November 1970*

Gentlemen,

As we come to this part of the world to meet the Catholic bishops of Asia, we have pleasure in taking this occasion to present our wishes for the prosperity of the peoples whom you represent. Many of them maintain most cordial relations with the Holy See.

It is in fulfillment of our spiritual mission that we have undertaken this long journey, which is to bring us to various centers of the immense continent of Asia, as well as to Australia, where we are to meet the Catholic hierarchy of that continent. Although our journey has therefore no political character, we still have the greatest joy in greeting the people of the various countries through which we are passing, and in giving them assurance of the Catholic Church's affection and wish to serve them, as well as the deep esteem she has for the nobility of their cultural and religious traditions.

In the very line of our pastoral responsibility, we hope that our journey will also be seen as a sign of peace and social progress, which we have set up as important aims of our pontificate. It is our constant prayer that the hearts of all men, irrespective of their social position, but especially those in positions of responsibility, may be open to sentiments of peace, solidarity, social justice and service to the common good. Development is the great challenge of this decade. It is our generation that is called upon and must give the response. We shall be judged by the generosity

of our commitment.

You, gentlemen, have the great mission of being men of dialogue. Be peacemakers among the nations, for peace is the first of blessings. It is the condition for other blessings and at the same time their perfection. Be also before your Governments advocates, in the name of our universal brotherhood, of international aid for less favored peoples. «World unity, ever more effective», we said in our encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (65). «Should allow all peoples to become artisans of their own destiny.... The younger or weaker nations ask to assume their active part in the construction of a better world, one which shows deeper respect for the rights and the vocation of the individual. This is a legitimate appeal; everyone should hear it and respond to it». In so doing, you will have deserved the gratitude of mankind, and God will bless you. With all our heart we invoke his divine assistance on yourselves, your families, your countries and your efforts.

*ORa n.49 p. 4.