



The Holy See

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

WELCOME CEREMONY

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI

*Airport of Colombo, Ceylon
Friday, 4 Decemeber 1970*

On our return journey, We have the joy of being able to call at Colombo to greet «the pearl of the Indian Ocean» and. in this way to respond to the gracious invitation which has been extend to Us.

We offer Our greetings to the Governor-General, His Excellency Mr William Gopallawa, the representative of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, to the Prime Minister, the Honourable Mrs Bandaranaike, to the Members of the Government, and at the same time to the national and local authorities who have honoured us by coming to welcome us. We are aware of your determination to implement in your country a courageous social policy, designed to ensure better living conditions and prosperity for all. By the grace of God and Our words of encouragement, may this Our visit contribute to strengthen among us, especially among Our Catholic brethren, an awareness of that duty towards society which is binding on all.

We greet with fraternal affection Cardinal Thomas Cooray, the bishops of the Island and their Catholic people. We thank God for having given Us the satisfaction of this meeting to unite Ourselves with you in prayer, to encourage you in the service of God and of your neighbour. As you know, you cannot have one without the other, and no Christian conscience could neglect one without thereby damaging the other, for professing the faith involves witnessing to a brotherhood that is really part of one's life.

We greet all the noble people of Ceylon who have come in such numbers to show their warm hospitality. From Our heart, We thank them and assure them of the deep affection of the Pope.

May God bless this land of Ceylon and may he protect its entire people.

Jayave sri lanka.