



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI TO THE AMBASSADOR OF ARGENTINE*

Monday, 27 September 1976

Mr Ambassador,

In these moments in which you present to us the Letters that accredit you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Argentine Republic to the Holy See, our first word is to bid Your Excellency a warm welcome and to wish you success in carrying out the high mission you are beginning today and to assure you of our benevolent collaboration in its accomplishment.

The presence of Your Excellency here makes us think, with renewed vividness, of a country that is distant geographically but near to us in affection: Argentina, an outstanding part of our constant concern and the permanent object of our affectionate memory.

If "anxious care for all the churches" (cf. *2 Cor* 11. 28) is a duty of our ministry, it cannot but turn to an important portion of the People of God, which requires growing attention and uninterrupted care in the delicate vicissitudes through which it is passing. It is the response that we, the Holy See and the Church must give to the expectant call of the Argentine people, which – as Your Excellency has indicated – feels the Church as being part of the substance of its life, its national patrimony, and its most characteristic values.

In fact, the faith lived individually and collectively by the Argentine people, as well as the centuries-old activity of the Church in Argentina, have left deep traces, the beneficial social influence of which is deeply felt, not only in the moulding of concrete historical forms, but also as a pulsation of the present and an elevating impulse as regards the future.

Today as yesterday, the Church, faithful to her mission and in the sphere of her competence, will continue to give her disinterested assistance to the Argentine people, in solidarity with its

aspirations to overcome its difficulties, and collaborating in all initiatives that promote a greater dignity of persons or encourage its march towards higher aims, temporal or spiritual. In this evangelizing and humanizing task, the Church in Argentina does not desire any privilege; she is content with being able to serve the faithful and the civil community in an atmosphere of serenity, respect and safety for everyone.

In this connection, as common Father, we cannot but participate intensely in the anguish of those who have been dismayed by the recent episodes which have cost the loss of precious human lives, including those of various ecclesiastics. These facts took place in circumstances which are still awaiting an adequate explanation. At the same time we deeply deplore this increase in blind violence. In recent times it has seriously upset the life of the Argentine people, which rightly aspires to peace and concord.

Mr. Ambassador: on this solemn occasion we wish to express our best wishes – which become a fervent prayer – for Argentina. May this noble country, with such a noble tradition and so rich in energies, find the way to concord and internal peace. May it advance in this way – as we hope with all our heart – along the paths of progress in justice, in constant respect of the fundamental rights of persons, in real faithfulness to its Christian values. And may that lead it to occupy the important place that belongs to it in the world family of nations and of the American continent.

Finally, we request Your Excellency to convey these wishes and sentiments of ours to the authorities and all the beloved people of Argentina, on which we incessantly implore abundant heavenly blessings.

*ORa n.42 p.4.