



The Holy See

JOURNEY TO UGANDA

ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE FAITHFUL OF THE VILLAGE OF MENG0

Friday, 1 August 1969

Beloved sons and daughters,

This meeting with you, the men, women, and children-of this village, is one of the richest and happiest occasions of Our visit to Africa. We greet and bless you, and through you We salute and embrace all the village People of Uganda and of all Africa. Most Africans live in villages, as you do; to you, and to each of them, We assure Our esteem, Our affection, and Our hopes for your future.

In a village like this, everyone knows his neighbours, and all feel that they are brothers. Each one works together for the common good, tills the common land, celebrates common traditions. The work is hard, and the reward is small; but the lot of those who go to the cities is much more difficult and more dangerous.

Pope John said that workers on the land must never have an inferiority complex or consider themselves less important (cf. *Mater et Magistra*, n. 126). He also said, however, that you must continue to ask for essential services, such as roads, transportation, communications, drinking water, housing, medical care, education, vocational training, religious assistance and also recreation (*ibid.* n. 128). Great efforts are already being made in this way, and We are happy that the Catholic Church has contributed, as far as she is able, to village development and improvement. We Ourselves have instructed Our Commission on Justice and Peace to enter this struggle, and to work for the betterment of your village communities and your daily living.

Here, from your village, We proclaim to all Africa and the entire world that rural Africa must be aided in developing its immense agricultural possibilities; that the establishment of local industries must replace the exploitation of raw materials; and that the African villager must be helped to become, through concord and union with local and national society, the master of his own destiny and development, given the instruction necessary to undertake his personal responsibilities.

We desire for each one of you that dignity and justice which are proper to the sons of God. Therefore, We summon the whole world to that universal brotherhood under God, for which Our Lord Jesus Christ, and your own Uganda Martyrs, gave their lives. To encourage you also to give your lives, that is, your daily living and work, for your brothers, We lovingly impart to you all Our Apostolic Blessing.

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana