



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA TO THE HOLY SEE***

Monday, 12 July 1971

Mr. Ambassador,

We are touched by the courteous words which you have addressed to us on presenting your Letters of Credence from His Excellency the President of the Republic of Korea.

Not only do they show your deep awareness of the importance of the mission you are undertaking, but they also recall the glorious history of the Church in Korea, where the seed of the word of God has fallen on fertile soil.

Is it not significant that the first expansion of the Catholic Church in your country was due, after God's grace, to the initiative of its own people, who brought in Christian literature and welcomed the good news of the Gospel while yet there was no missionary from foreign lands to teach them? This underlines the fact that there is no clime, culture or race to which the Church can be alien. In Korea, as elsewhere, she "must strike her roots deep into the spiritual and cultural ground of the place and assimilate all that is of genuine value . . . Thus, while preserving the cultural excellence and individuality of each nation, the Catholic Church will be able to communicate what is of universal value in each of them to all the others, for their mutual enrichment" ([Message to the Peoples of Asia, 29 November 1970](#)).

It is Our dearest desire that the Church in Korea will continue to flourish and to build on the spiritual and cultural values which are the boast and the treasure of your nation, and that it may long bring its own priceless contribution to the development and wellbeing of the people.

We would ask you to express Our gratitude to His Excellency the President for the kind greetings

which you have conveyed on his behalf and to assure him of Our prayerful good wishes for him and for all the beloved people of the Republic of Korea, upon whom We invoke the Lord's richest blessings.

For yourself We pray that God may assist you in your noble mission of working for the continued deepening of understanding and friendship between the Holy See and your country. In the fulfilment of your duties, you can always count on Our ready willingness, and that of the offices of the Holy See, to give you all the assistance and cooperation in Our power.

*AAS 63 (1971), p.686-687;

Insegnamenti di Paolo VI, vol. IX, p.619-620;

L'Attività della Santa Sede 1971, p.285-286;

OR 12-13.6.1871 p.1;

ORa n.29 p.2 .