



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI TO THE AMBASSADOR OF HAITI TO THE HOLY SEE*

Friday 10 June 1977

Mr. Ambassador,

We thank you for the kind words you have just uttered. We are happy to receive you and to welcome you to the Vatican. May the contacts you will have here always be cordial and fully fruitful!

Your Excellency has recalled Haiti long tradition of Christian faith, its attachment to the Church and the happily active presence of the latter. It is certain that, faithful to the teaching and the example of her divine founder, the Church seeks to promote the human uplift of the peoples to which she brings faith in Christ. She has endeavoured for a long time to carry out this work in Haiti. Was the Holy See not among the first that, at the time, to recognize and encourage your country when it proclaimed its independence? And the Church is still trying to contribute by giving this human progress its widest dimensions. It is, in fact, the complete development of the whole man and of all men that must be ensured. Indeed we recalled some essential aspects of this in our Encyclical «*Populorum progressio*», hoping for the coming of more human conditions, such as, we said, «the passage from misery towards the possession of necessities, victory over social scourges, the growth of knowledge, increased esteem for the dignity of others, cooperation for the common good, the acknowledgement by man of supreme values, and of God their source and their finality» (n 21).

To promote a fruitful collaboration in these fields, we hope that the good relations between the civil leaders whom you represent and the authorities of the Church will be intensified, in order to maintain the indispensable atmosphere of trust and freedom, with respect for the sphere of autonomy of each side, corresponding to its competence, according to the spirit and the explicit wishes of the recent Second Vatican Council. It is under these conditions that both will be able to

exercise best their responsibility, which is, in the first place, a demanding and disinterested service, for the benefit of the whole population. And we are sure that, guided by their esteemed Bishops who are so concerned about the quality of life of their fellow-countrymen, our sons of Haiti are ready to contribute with all their might, in faithfulness to their Christian and human vocation, to the prosperity of their country. It is the honour of the Republic of Haiti to rely first and foremost on its own strength, on the value of its men and its natural potential to face up to its destiny, while encouraging at all levels this responsibility and this spirit of service. But we also hope with you that international cooperation will help your country to solve its development problems. On our side, during our pontificate we have not ceased, nor shall we cease, to recall the moral duty of solidarity between more privileged and less privileged nations, and to appeal to this brotherhood of peoples which alone makes it possible to build a new, really human world.

Mr. Ambassador, we assure you of our goodwill and express to you our good wishes for the successful accomplishment of your mission. We beg you to convey our greetings and good wishes to His Excellency Mr Jean-Claude Duvalier and to the dear people of Haiti, on whom we invoke the blessings of the Lord Almighty.

*ORe n.27 p.11.