



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO NIGERIA, BENIN
GABON AND EQUATORIAL GUINEA

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE NON-NIGERIANS**

Lagos, (Nigeria), 16 February 1982

Dear Friends,

I rejoice at this encounter with you, all you non-Nigerians who are living and working in this great country. Many of you come from parts of Europe, including my own dear country. But a good number of you are from other African nations.

1. You are living and working in Nigeria because Nigeria welcomes you and because you accept and respect Nigeria. You are in this country in different capacities. Some of you are engaged in the oil industry, in big civil and mechanical engineering works and in major industrial concerns. Some of you are members or officials of international organizations. Yet others are engaged in academic pursuits, teaching, medical work, administration, trade or commerce. Others of you are working on your own account.

2. Your presence and activities in Nigeria are signs of universal brotherhood. You and the Nigerians give to each other the right hand of brotherhood, friendship, cooperation and solidarity.

You give and you receive. The Nigerians give and they receive.

Be loyal to Nigeria which welcomes you. Love Nigeria. Help Nigeria. Do nothing that will damage Nigeria. Obey her laws. Respect her leaders. Help Nigeria to rise to greater heights. Make friends with Nigerians.

You are also unofficial ambassadors of your various countries. Bear this in mind. Let your conduct bring to your countries nothing but honour, peace, joy and the cementing of international relations.

3. You do not want to lose your national identities. You are right in this. Your home cultures meet the Nigerian culture as friends who ever seek to understand each other better. Both sides are enriched.

Do not forget religion and its practice while you are outside your home country. Where language becomes a problem, please discuss with the bishops and priests and other religious leaders how your group can be properly served.

All you non-Nigerian nationals working in Nigeria, the Pope has a deep interest in your well-being and in the well-being of your families, especially if there is physical separation involved. Always honour Nigeria and your home countries. May God's abundant blessings descend on you all.