



The Holy See

JOURNEY TO UGANDA

FAREWELL CEREMONY

***CONCLUSIVE ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO THE FAITHFUL OF UGANDA***

Cathedral of Rubaga - Saturday, 2 August 1969

Beloved sons and daughters,

We come to the end of Our visit to Uganda! The style of the Pope's journeys is one of brevity and speed; so that now We are about to depart, having enjoyed two days of great spiritual consolation. We shall never forget your welcome, so very cordial and filial. We shall ever cherish in Our memory and in Our heart the holy impressions of this most happy meeting: your good selves, your loveable people, your courteous Authorities, both civil and military, the dignitaries both of the State of Uganda and of the City of Kampala. And especially you, Venerable Brother, the Most Reverend Emanuel Nsubuga, Archbishop of Kampala, you who have been so kind and so hospitable to Us, and to the persons comprising Our mission; We must assure you of Our deep gratitude. All of you who have collaborated in the success of these days: We paternally thank you, each and every one! And We promise you that We shall transform the happy memory and dutiful thankfulness of Our African voyage into special prayers for each one of you.

We cannot leave this blessed land, however, without addressing a special word to the Clergy, to the Men and Women Religious, to the Brothers and the Sisters, dedicated to the service of Christ and of His Church. Permit Us at least to tell you how great is Our esteem and Our affection for you, precisely because of what you are, because of what you do. We wish to repeat, with the words of Saint Paul: God is Our witness, how We yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus! (cf. *Phil.* 1, 8). By Him you have been loved and you have been called, through a spiritual history and experience which has marked your life and your vocation, which is a sign of

predilection on His part. He looked upon you and loved you (cf. *Mk.* 10, 2 1) and He chose you (cf. *Jn.* 15, 16); for your part, you responded, and said Yes to His love; you chose the better part (cf. *Lk.* 10, 42); you have given and consecrated yourselves to Him, without reserve and without repentance. You have understood to their very depths the demands of the Kingdom of Heaven; you have given everything, you have given your all for All, that is, for Him Who is Life (cf. *Mt.* 19, 29). How, then, could We not love you, Brothers and Sisters, Sons and Daughters of complete dedication to Our Lord Jesus, and of total fidelity to His love and to His cause?

Permit Us to add this also, that in you, in your sacrifice and in your love, We have the strongest and most fruitful hopes for the future of the Church in this young Christian Africa, and even for the future of the Church in the world. You know that the Church is now passing through a time of fervour, which is at the same time a period of unrest, because of the new, agitated state of the world of today. But We think that, if you are good, strong, faithful and fervent, . the Church will emerge from this trial even more holy, and better adapted to her mission of salvation among men. It is Our Lord, of course, Who saves souls and saves the world; but not without our ministry and our collaboration. We, who are vowed to His service, can say, with Saint Paul, "We are God's fellow workers" (*1 Cor.* 3, 9).

Take heart! Have courage, beloved sons and daughters! Let Us repeat to you also the exhortation of the Apostle Peter, whose most humble successor We are: "Be firm in your faith!" (*1 Pet.* 5, 9). Permit Us also to remind you of the power, We might say the decisive power, of your example upon the young Christianity around you; if you are good and holy, then your communities of faithful will surely be good and holy. Example is the first witness which they have the right to expect from us who are consecrated to the Lord. This is the sermon which all of you, men and women, old and young, can preach: your example! The example of true faith and piety: for if you are in sincere union with Christ, those to whom you dedicate your ministry will be also, The example of charity and concord, especially between local personnel and the personnel coming from outside, from abroad, to plant the Church of God here. Be humble (cf. *Phil.* 2, 3; *Rom.* 12, 10); help one another; do not give too much importance to differences of nationality, of education, of race, of tribe; always remember that we are brothers (cf. *Mt.* 5, 47; 23, 8; *1 Tim.* 5, 1; *Rom.* 10, 12; *1 Cor.* 12, 13; *Gal.* 3, 28). And strive truly to live that ecclesial communion which makes us all one in Christ (*Jn.* 17, 21-23), all one Mystical Body (*1 Cor.* 10, 16-17, etc.), for we are the Church, all one thing with Christ and between ourselves. In order that this mystery of twofold unity the sacramental unity with the risen Body of Christ, and the mystical and social unity among ourselves through the Holy Spirit, in the self-same faith and charity-may even now, during this life of pilgrimage towards the life to come, be brought to perfection, let us make sure to honour, in the Bishop, the sign and the minister of unity. Let us understand the meaning and the value of the Hierarchy in the Church; for we must be united to the Body of Christ as He conceived and organized it, if we wish to live in the Spirit of Christ, that very Spirit which animated that Mystical Body (cf. St Ignatius of Antioch; St Augustine; Encyc. *Mystici Corporis*; *Lumen Gentium*, Nos. 18, 19, etc.; *Eph.* 4, 11-14). The Bishop! Your own Bishop! Be always close to him, understand his wishes and his needs, give

shape and action to the new organization of the ecclesial community, let your obedience be loving and easy, and see in the Bishop your shepherd, your teacher; in fact, see in him Jesus Christ Himself (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, No. 21)!

Beloved sons and daughters, would you like a final remembrance? Then have filial devotion to Mary most holy, the Blessed Virgin, true Mother of Christ and spiritually our Mother. You will have great need of her - to understand Christ, to serve Him, to imitate Him; you will need consolation and confidence - entrust yourselves to Our Lady (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, No. 68).

It is to her, as We depart, that We confide the Church of Africa, and especially this Church of yours here. Invoking upon all of you her sweet, powerful, motherly protection, We salute you and once more We bless you.

Goodbye! And, by God's mercy, may we meet again one day in Heaven!