



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI TO THE AMBASSADOR OF MADAGASCAR*

Thursday, 11 June 1970

Mr. Ambassador,

We greatly appreciate the delicate sentiments that Your Excellency has just expressed and We thank you warmly for the filial wishes you presented to Us. We are happy to welcome you to this Apostolic Palace, at the beginning of your high mission.

You represent at the Holy See His Excellency Mr. Philiben Tsiranana, the President of the Republic of Madagascar. We have followed with deep emotion and affectionate attention his recent illness and We entrust to you the care of taking to him, with the testimony of Our cordial remembrance. Our best wishes for his recovery and the assurance of our prayer for his intentions.

Your Excellency knows all the sympathy We feel for the noble people of Madagascar. With all their sons, We sympathized with their ordeals when the terrible cyclone Jane recently swept over your country, sowing destruction and leaving numerous families homeless and without resources. We hope these difficulties will soon be overcome.

You know, too, Our high esteem for your compatriots, and how much We appreciate the rich heritage of their ancestral wisdom, their deeply religious soul, their sense of family life, their peaceful and conciliating spirit, and the way they have succeeded in taking their rightful place in the family of nations and within the Church.

Rooted in this fertile soil of human values, the Christian faith brought by generous missionaries was able to spread widely among you, marking the Madagascan soul, in its turn, with the unmatched enrichment due to God's gifts. With Our venerated brothers, the Bishops of your country, We invite Our Catholic sons this double and beneficial fidelity. In the service of the

common good, in union with all their fellow-countrymen, let them use their talents and their responsibilities generously, to carry out this great work of material, social, cultural and spiritual development, at which your nation is working so actively. The Gospel urges us in fact to make the spirit of service, justice, peace and love shine forth everywhere. Without it our world cannot become the human and brotherly community that men are seeking so ardently.

It is with these sentiments that We warmly invoke the graces of God on the whole Madagascan people as a pledge of a fruitful material and spiritual future for the great island. And, wishing you a successful mission to the Holy See, We give you yourself, Mr. Ambassador, your family and all those dear to you, Our fatherly Apostolic Blessing.

*ORa n.26 p.2.