



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR OF BELGIUM
TO THE HOLY SEE**

Saturday, 12 August 1972

Mr. Ambassador,

We greatly appreciate the kind words you have just uttered, for which we thank you warmly. We entrust to you the task of transmitting our respectful and cordial greeting to His Majesty the King of the Belgians and to Her Majesty the Queen, whose interpreter you have been to us.

At the moment when you assume the task of representing your noble country here as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, we express our best wishes for the accomplishment of your high mission, in order that it may contribute to increase the ties of mutual trust between Belgium and the Holy See, the existence of which you have stressed.

How could the fundamental policies that you have briefly recalled fail to justify such trust? Nothing is more important, indeed, in the family of nations at present than sincere and persevering action to foster development and peace. In this field, the building up of the European Community, in which your country is participating, can prove to be rich in hope provided, as we have had the opportunity of recalling several times, that this Community manages to put its growing forces in the service of the high aims that Providence and history assign to it. Such a long and exacting enterprise calls for a clear vision of the common good on the part of each national community, together with an openness to the rest of the world. That is why the deep love of peace and the sense of the international community that you so happily emphasized, Mr. Ambassador, cannot remain alive and efficacious if they are not constantly nourished at the real sources of the meaning of man and do not safeguard all the dimensions of the person, called to carry out his high spiritual destiny, within the human community.

The Catholic Church is responsible for the message of salvation addressed to all men. It alone guarantees the human ideal, its full significance and its ultimate justification. We do not forget that our Catholic sons, very numerous in your dear country, have long proved their great generosity in responding to their light of the Gospel, with concern Christian vocation and spreading the care for peace, often far beyond their frontiers. They have an important place in intellectual life and in various sectors of social life. We rejoice at this and we are convinced that they will continue to make, in these different fields, an efficacious contribution to the good of their country as to that of the universal Church and the whole human community.

This tells you in what spirit we welcome you today. We pray to the Lord for the prosperity of the dear people of Belgium and, on the threshold of your high mission to the Holy See, we gladly give you, Mr. Ambassador, our fatherly Apostolic Blessing.

*ORa n.35 p.2, 3.