



# The Holy See

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***ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE FIRST AMBASSADOR OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
TO THE HOLY SEE\****

*Thursday, 1 July 1982*

*Mr Ambassador,*

It is with much pleasure that I receive Your Excellency as your country's first Ambassador Plenipotentiary to the Holy See. At the centre of the Catholic Church there is now a presence of Papua New Guinea in your person, and I am confident that this will strengthen further the happy relations to which you referred and which have been steadily developing in the years since your nation achieved its independence.

My personal relationship with Papua New Guinea began before I was chosen for the See of Rome and thus given a special responsibility with regard to the Church in every part of the world. As Archbishop of Krakow I had the pleasure of visiting your country, meeting its people and getting to know at first hand some of its characteristics, its needs and its points of strength. I learnt to esteem the people of Papua New Guinea and I continue to have a deep interest in their welfare. Through the diplomatic relations that exist between Papua New Guinea and the Holy See and with the help provided by Your Excellency and by my own representative in Port Moresby, I hope to maintain fruitful contact not only with the Church in your land but also with your nation as a whole.

Papua New Guinea has but recently initiated its history as an independent state within the comity of nations. It has done so with the help of excellent principles, largely inspired by the Christian faith which your people have overwhelmingly accepted in the course of a single century. You have built up a precious heritage to pass on to future generations: a heritage of respect for the freedom, dignity and rights of each individual human being and of concern for those who are suffering or are in any kind of need. These values will provide guidance, strength and inspiration for your nation in time to come. I pray that Papua New Guinea may ever preserve them undiminished, and may

always enjoy their benefits.

As you have remarked, the Catholic Church is willingly cooperating in bringing about your country's development: an integral development both of individuals and of the whole people, with attention to health and other bodily needs, to intellectual and technical advancement, and to spiritual growth. The Church personnel that come from other lands to assist in this process have as their sole motive to respond out of fraternal love to an existing need, and they have as their aim to hasten the day when that need disappears and they themselves can be replaced by local people with an equal or even greater preparation and spirit of service. I am confident that the civil authorities will continue to appreciate their great contribution to society and will ensure that they enjoy all the conditions necessary for the satisfactory fulfilment of their task.

I assure you of my heartfelt good wishes for all the people of the still young nation of Papua New Guinea. May God grant all of you harmony and a spirit of cooperation, all round progress and the ability to combine the best in both the old and the new. May he guide and assist your leaders now and in years to come. And may he bestow his blessings abundantly on each one of you.

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\*AAS 74 (1982), p. 1119-1120.

*Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, vol. V, 3 pp. 3-4.

*L'Attività della Santa Sede* 1982 pp. 537-538.

*L'Osservatore Romano* 2.7.1982 pp.1, 2.

*L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English* n.29 p.7.

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