



# The Holy See

---

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR OF INDIA  
ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE\***

*Friday, 10 January 1986*

*Mr Ambassador,*

I am happy to welcome you to the Vatican and to accept the Letters of Credence by which you are appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of India to the Holy See.

This ceremony is taking place in circumstances of particular significance. With God's help, within a few weeks I will visit your beloved country. I assure you and the people of India that I look forward to this event with anticipation and hope. I avail myself of this occasion to express my gratitude to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities who have collaborated in making this visit possible. In a special way I would ask you to convey my sincere sentiments of appreciation and regard to His Excellency President Giani Zail Singh and to the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi.

When my predecessor Pope Paul VI arrived in India in 1964, he expressed his sentiments of goodwill towards the people of India in these words: "At last we can come to know this immense and populous Land, and manifest in person our friendship and admiration to the great and noble people of India, so untiring in its efforts for world peace, so industrious in seeking prosperity in harmony and concord with the other nations of the world".

With these very same sentiments of friendship and respect I am preparing for my own visit.

The second circumstance forming the context of this meeting is that of the recently celebrated Nineteenth World Day of Peace which, this year, falls within the International Year of Peace proclaimed by the United Nations Organization.

No theme of international life is so essential in our time as that of peace and the urgent need to overcome the tensions that threaten it. "It is a value that responds to the hopes and aspirations of all peoples and all nations, of young and old, and of all men and women of good will".

For a just and universal peace to be established it is necessary for rivalries and conflicts between individuals and nations to be replaced by trust and by a new relationship of solidarity, a solidarity which embraces the entire human family. The bonds of brotherhood between peoples must be strengthened and dialogue must take the place of confrontation, in a sincere search for the common good of the whole of humanity.

Mr Ambassador, you have referred to the objectives of international peace, disarmament and the proper use of the world's resources for which your country speaks in the international forum. The Holy See likewise hopes that these objectives will enter ever more fully into the consciousness of the peoples and of their leaders, so that a concerted effort can be made to consolidate justice, peace and freedom in the world.

These universal themes and the patient work of promoting them in every sphere of life are central to your role as Representative of India of the Holy See. I wish you very personal happiness in the fulfilment of your diplomatic duties, and I assure you of my personal interest and of the collaboration of the various offices of the Holy See.

Your presence is a reminder of the particular bonds which exist between the Holy See and India, where, as you mentioned, Christianity has been at home since the earliest Christian era. I pray that my forthcoming visit may further deepen these bonds and make clear my heartfelt respect for the spiritual traditions which so characterize your Nation's history.

I express the ardent hope and prayer that the Republic of India may proceed always in peace and harmony towards the noble ideals enshrined in its Constitution, for the spiritual and material good of all its citizens.

May Almighty God abundantly bless the people of India!

---

\*AAS 78 (1986), p. 639-640.

*Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, vol. IX, 1 pp. 48-50.

*L'Attività della Santa Sede* 1986 pp. 19-20.

*L'Osservatore Romano* 11.1.1986 p.5.

© Copyright 1986 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

---

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana