



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS TO THE HOLY SEE****

Saturday, 28 November 1992

Mr Ambassador,

I am pleased to extend to you a warm welcome to the Vatican, and to accept the Credential Letters by which you are appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Mauritius to the Holy See. Grateful for the cordial greetings you bring from Their Excellencies the President and the Prime Minister, I ask you kindly to convey to them my own good wishes and to assure them of my sentiments of esteem and affection for the people of Mauritius, whose gracious hospitality I remember so fondly.

In my Pastoral Visit to Mauritius three years ago Providence gave me the opportunity to experience for myself how your fellow-citizens aspire to live according to the values which you identified as characteristic of your nation. In this regard I particularly recall the question posed to me by the young people I met at Rose Hill: "Tell us how to build true unity on our multiracial island of Mauritius" (John Paul II, *Meeting with Young People at Rose Hill Stadium - Mauritius* [October 15, 1989], 2). In claiming the ideal of racial harmony as their own, they have assimilated a profound wisdom and they echo a desire for unity which is found in the hearts of men and women of good will everywhere. As the peoples of the world grow ever more interdependent, the goal of building concord between peoples of differing backgrounds takes on an urgency not just within individual nations, but for the human race as a whole. This is especially true at the present time, when the removal of constraints imposed by ideological confrontation has seen the reappearance of old, unresolved antipathies and the birth of some which are new. The way to social harmony is for each individual to respect and to treasure the natural and legitimate diversity of others, recognizing that all share the same inalienable dignity. That harmony becomes effective solidarity when we acknowledge that no one is totally a stranger and beyond our concern. We are all brothers and

sisters, related in virtue of our common humanity.

As my Predecessor Pope Paul VI once wrote: "Whoever works to educate the rising generations in the conviction that every man is our brother is building from the foundation the edifice of peace" (Paul VI, *Message for the World Day for Peace 1971*). In fact, the cause of peace is so important for the men and women of this age, and the obstacles to its triumph are so great, that the family of nations cannot afford to see any State or region fail to make its indispensable contribution to this crucial endeavour. It is my ardent hope that the Republic of Mauritius, as a meeting point for the cultural traditions flowing from both the East and the West, will offer a valuable lesson in how to bring together the rich diversity of peoples in the one great task of serving the common good.

In its relations with States, the Holy See – in accordance with its own specific character – is ready and eager to support any initiative which fosters works of justice and solidarity, and which thereby reinforces the climate necessary for peace. Within the international community, it seeks to be a faithful witness to the truth about man and about the social order which should sustain him in the achievement of his true end.

I am grateful for your kind remarks about the significant contributions made by the Catholics of Mauritius to their homeland, especially in the fields of social service and education. The State's legal guarantee to protect the religious liberty of all citizens makes it all the easier for the members of the Catholic Church in your country to work for the common good, in cooperation with the followers of other religious traditions. In this regard, reaffirmation of respect for the integrity of the Church's schools is especially welcome, since the safeguarding of their specifically Catholic character ensures that the students will be trained to play a part in the nation's life, taking inspiration from their faith in order to fulfil their responsibilities as citizens.

Mr Ambassador, as you take up your post as your Republic's Representative, I assure you of the full cooperation of the Roman Curia for the success of your mission. It is my hope that your service will strengthen the cordial relations between your Government and the Holy See, and I ask Almighty God to bless all the people of Mauritius with peace and prosperity.

**Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, vol. XV, 2 p.764-766.*

L'Attività della Santa Sede 1992 p. 818-819.

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