



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO MARK EVELYN HEATH
ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND
MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY OF GREAT BRITAIN***

Thursday, 22 May 1980

Mr Minister,

It is with much pleasure that I receive Your Excellency as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Her Britannic Majesty Queen Elizabeth. I am grateful for the courteous greeting that you bring me in Her Majesty's name and I ask you to convey to her the renewed assurances of my high regard and cordial good wishes.

The permanent contacts established through such channels as the diplomatic mission of which you are now the head will doubtless strengthen still further the mutual understanding and friendship between the Holy See and the United Kingdom and will foster close and effective collaboration for good.

In international life, the United Kingdom has an important part to play, both in itself and as a member of the European Community and of the worldwide Commonwealth, in favour of freedom, peace and cooperation between peoples and in support of international organizations. The role to which it is called is in keeping with the values of democracy and respect for human dignity that are part of your people's magnificent historical and cultural tradition. The good auspices under which Zimbabwe has joined the independent nations of the world can be attributed to an initiative of the British Government that happily combined courage with patience. I pray God to grant that such positive results will continue to come from the same source.

I also pray that the difficulties affecting the troubled area of Northern Ireland will be eased by peaceful political means and that it will be shown that peace achieves the works of justice, while

violence does not, so that reconciliation and love will be victorious over hatred and strife.

I am aware of the increased understanding between the Catholic Church of England and the other Christian communities in your country. Such understanding and respect, far from being opposed to fidelity to the truth, is a logical consequence of that fidelity. I am happy to know of these developments and I hope that they will continue undiminished.

With much pleasure I am looking forward to the visit that Her Majesty intends to make to the Vatican in October. In the meantime I invoke upon her and all her subjects the blessings of Almighty God. I likewise pray for the happiness and success of your own mission.

*AAS 72 (1980), p. 402-403.

Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, vol. III, 1 pp. 1149-1150.

L'Attività della Santa Sede 1980 pp. 358-359.

L'Osservatore Romano 23.5.1980 pp.1, 4.

L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English n.23 p.9.

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