



**Statement of His Excellency  
Archbishop FORTUNATUS NWACHUKWU  
on the Occasion of the Presentation of his Credentials  
to His Excellency Ambassador IRWIN LAROQUE  
Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)  
accrediting him as Plenipotentiary Representative of the Holy See to CARICOM  
24 March 2021**

Your Excellency,

I am honoured to present to you the Letter of His Eminence, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, accrediting me as Apostolic Nuncio – Plenipotentiary Representative of the Holy See to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

I thank you sincerely for this occasion.

I gladly transmit to Your Excellency and Your collaborators the warm greetings of His Holiness Pope Francis and those of Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, as well as their heart-felt wishes for your wellbeing, and the peace and prosperity of CARICOM.

Your Excellency, the Holy See enjoys very good bilateral diplomatic relations with all the Member States of the Caribbean Community and I am greatly elated to become, with this ceremony, the second Plenipotentiary Representative of the Holy See to CARICOM. This ceremony crowns the round of presentations of my Letters of Accreditation as Ambassador to thirteen Member States of CARICOM.

Your Excellency, the Holy See follows with interest the outstanding engagement of CARICOM in promoting political, economic and social unity in the Caribbean Region. It commends the diplomatic competence which the leadership of CARICOM has shown in resolving issues sometimes involving delicate balances of political ambitions and powers, while fostering respect for the cultural and ethnic diversity and the identity of each of its Member States.

This leadership role of CARICOM, especially in protecting and promoting Human Rights and the Equality of all citizens before the Law in this Region, resonates well with the mission of the Holy See. Pope Francis is widely recognized for his deep commitment to making our world a better place and he seizes every opportunity to champion or support efforts aimed at achieving this goal. His warm personality and approach have brought a freshness to the way the Holy See and the entire Catholic Church carry out their mission, especially with regard to the defense of the dignity of the human person, at every stage of human life, notwithstanding the person's particular socio-economic or other circumstances.

Pope Francis has been persistent in his call to reach out to the more vulnerable members of our society and world; he has also insistently invited all to do more to protect our world from avoidable disasters, especially those caused by human beings, with consequences that translate into interpersonal and international conflicts, wars, migration flows and climatic changes. In the face of the covid-19 pandemic, the Pope has been vocal in calling for just international solidarity to ensure that vaccines and other remedies are made available to all, especially the less privileged of our society. In the presence of interpersonal and international conflicts, he keeps calling for dialogue as the best way to reach durable and fruitful solutions.

Your Excellency, in the execution of its mission, the Holy See generally prioritizes education. This is evident, in this Region, in the numerous Catholic schools and other Institutions, which work in partnership with the Governments for the good of all. We firmly believe that it is to the benefit of the region and the individual States that the young generations are formed in the spirit of mutual respect and the promotion of human dignity, as well as all those other values upon which CARICOM is founded.

In conclusion, be assured, Excellency, that I will spend all my energy and every opportunity available to me to promote and strengthen cooperation between the Holy See and CARICOM.

May God bless abundantly CARICOM.

*+ Fortunatus Nwachukwu*

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