

**NOTES FOR A TOAST BY SPEAKER KINSELLA:
OFFICIAL VISIT TO HOLY SEE**

Your Eminence Cardinal Ouellet;

Your Excellency Archbishop Dominique Mamberti;

Honoured guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I would like to begin by recognizing the presence of two esteemed guests at this evening's magnificent event. Your Eminence Cardinal Ouellet, you have served the Catholic Church in Canada in numerous noteworthy capacities. Your work as a professor and a theologian have been widely recognized and praised at home and around the world. Your presence tonight is a great honour.

On a personal note, it is also a pleasure for me to get together with a fellow alumnus from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Your Excellency Archbishop Mamberti, you have had an extensive diplomatic career as an envoy of the Holy See. You have served the Catholic Church and humanity in providing physical and spiritual subsistence to countries in the midst of social and economic adversity, such as Sudan and Somalia. I am deeply humbled to make your acquaintance.

It is truly a great personal pleasure for me to return once more to Rome. As I have mentioned, even though it may have been

many years ago (please do not ask me how many years ago), I had the honour and privilege to study here at St. Thomas Aquinas University and at Pontifical Lateran University. Fall in Rome always conjures wonderful memories of my time in academia. I remember my learning experience at both institutions with great fondness.

This past spring, I was here in the Vatican in my role as Speaker of the Senate of Canada, to mark the establishment in 2008 of official relations between Canada and the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta. Tonight, we are here to celebrate another truly noteworthy diplomatic achievement.

40 years ago to the day, on October 15th, 1969, the longstanding relationship between Canada and the Holy See was formalized, and official diplomatic relations between country and state began.

The Catholic Church has in fact had a representative, under the title of “Apostolic Delegate,” in Canada since 1899. This representative, as the head of the Catholic Church, was invited to a number of Parliamentary functions, for example, the opening of Parliament.

Over the years, the ties between Canada and the Holy See have grown healthy and strong. Our mutual interests are many, and Canada counts itself as fortunate to be able to engage in open dialogue with representatives from the Holy See, and to have access to their counsel on a broad range of questions of common concern. On issues

such as development in the third world, political and economic relations with Eastern Europe, and Canada's participation in numerous international organizations, such as the United Nations, Canada has been able to depend on an informed reading and thoughtful consultation with representatives of the Holy See.

Tonight we are here to look back with great fondness at the progress of the ties between Canada and the Holy See. But just as importantly, we are also here to look forward with equal delight to the prospect of further closeness between Canada and the Holy See. With this in mind, I would like to propose a toast: To forty more years.