

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,

On behalf of the ministers, elders, deacons and members of the Church of Scotland, we, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, beg leave in this Diamond Jubilee Year to present to Your Majesty an expression of our warm appreciation and deep affection.

As the Church of Scotland acknowledged ten years ago on the occasion of Your Majesty's Golden Jubilee, Your Majesty has shown 'many evidences of a high sense of public duty'. To have maintained such standards over sixty years is truly remarkable, giving a clear and consistent example of dedication and service to people in this country and beyond. Throughout the past sixty years, Your Majesty has reigned with grace and dignity, undertaking countless royal duties throughout the United Kingdom and overseas and we would wish to pay tribute to the pleasure which your presence has brought to so many people.

It is appropriate to reaffirm the Church of Scotland's pleasure that each year, in your letter to the General Assembly, Your Majesty continues to renew the promise enshrined in the Accession Oath, to maintain and preserve the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland. The Church has greatly enjoyed the occasions when Your Majesty has attended the General Assembly in person and hope that might again be possible. When, due to the many other demands upon Your Majesty's time, you have been unable to attend the General Assembly in person you have been very ably represented through your Lords High Commissioner, not least by Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, His Royal Highness, Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay and His Royal Highness, Prince Andrew.

It is our privilege to have this opportunity to pay warm tribute to the way in which Your Majesty has shown such an example of quiet Christian witness over the years, in your annual broadcasts; in leading the nation at times of celebration and commemoration and in your regular attendance at worship. Your Majesty and your family are warmly welcomed at Crathie Kirk when at Balmoral Castle and at Canongate when at the Palace of Holyroodhouse and the conversations which are enjoyed by visiting preachers testify to Your Majesty's continuing interest in and knowledge of the work of the Church of Scotland.

Your Majesty has seen many changes in the life of the nation and in the ways in which institutions such as the Church and Crown are viewed; however, both, while seeking positively to embrace change, have at the same time, continued to bear witness to underlying values which endure. It is the privilege of the Church of Scotland, as a national Church, to maintain a territorial ministry to all the people of Scotland. So, through the work of local parishes the Church of Scotland provides open access to the worship of Almighty God and out of that worship inspires her members to serve the good of the wider community. We are also glad to play our part in the ecumenical movement in the United Kingdom and in the increasing mutual understanding among the faith communities. In particular we have set before ourselves the priority of the Gospel to serve, as Christ served, the poor and the marginalised of our society.

The Church would also pay tribute to His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh for his loyal and faithful service to the nation and for his consistent support of Your Majesty. We acknowledge also the dedicated service of the other members of Your Majesty's family who carry out numerous engagements and support many good causes in this country, in the Commonwealth and beyond.

The Loyal Address by the Right Reverend David Arnott, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

