

**Remarks for Thanksgiving Church Service commemorating the 64th
Anniversary of Jamaica's Independence**

Parish of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church

August 2nd 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

Good morning.

On behalf of the Honourable Sean Sobers, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, I am delighted to offer these brief remarks on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Today, Trinidad and Tobago joins hands with Jamaica as two nations of faith, in offering prayers of thanksgiving to Almighty God, to celebrate 64 grand years of Jamaican Independence.

Of course, this year's service is of profound significance, coming in the wake of the aftermath of Hurricane Melissa, which passed through that island last October, less than a year ago. That tumultuous time brought loss, uncertainty, and hardship for many Jamaican families and communities. Yet, through it all, the strength of the Jamaican people and the sustaining grace

of Almighty God have seen the nation through this challenging period. Indeed as today's second reading says, nothing can separate us from the love of God, not even hardship nor distress. It is in this spirit that we join the people of Jamaica in celebrating and embracing the 2026 Independence theme, **"United in Celebrating Resilience."** The theme is a true reflection of the nation's recent experience and its enduring commitment to recovery, renewal, and continued progress, sustained by unity, true faith, and a sense of shared purpose.

Trinidad and Tobago has always valued its special relationship with Jamaica. In reflecting on Jamaica's admirable progress since Independence, we also offer thanksgiving to Almighty God for the enduring friendship between our two nations. Celebrating 63 years of diplomatic relations is a reminder of the longstanding connection between Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica and the important place this relationship holds in the story of CARICOM.

As founding members of the Caribbean Community, together, we continue to work regionally to strengthen integration, promote economic development,

enhance regional security and advocate for the interests of one Caribbean people in an increasingly complex global environment.

The observance of Jamaica's Independence alongside Emancipation is a meaningful reminder of these two milestones that are deeply connected chapters in the story of our peoples, our one Caribbean peoples. Emancipation recognised the God-given dignity and worth of those who endured the atrocities of slavery, while Independence carries that legacy forward allowing our nations the power to shape our future.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, I once again extend heartfelt congratulations to the Government and people of Jamaica on the occasion of your 64th Anniversary of Independence. May Almighty God continue to bless Jamaica with peace, prosperity and unity, and as today's Responsorial Psalm exhorts: "Open wide your hands, O, Lord and grant the people of Jamaica their desires."

I thank you.