

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

13 November 2021

To the Friends Gathered in Tanna,
Vanuatu, for the Dedication
of the House of Worship

Dearly loved Friends,

With hearts filled with unbounded love, we greet you one and all on this day of great jubilation as you gather to witness the opening of the doors of the first local *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* in the Pacific. This is a resounding victory, further fulfilling the vision of 'Abdu'l-Bahá expressed in the Tablets of the Divine Plan for the establishment of the community of the Greatest Name in Vanuatu. Dedicated in the centennial year of the Master's Ascension, this glorious institution invites people of all persuasions to gather in fellowship and harmony and engage in the praise and glorification of God.

The work of laying the spiritual foundation of this House of Worship began long before its construction. We recall with profound admiration the self-sacrificing endeavours of the friends who first introduced the Faith to Vanuatu, and those first radiant believers native to the land who took the healing message of Bahá'u'lláh to their countrymen, tribes, and families. This is truly a moment to give thanks that the Blessed Beauty has raised up a community distinguished by a spirit of selfless service, devotion, and love of God. Drawing on the power of prayer, you have placed complete trust in God, and directing your energy to the service of others, you have overcome challenges through cooperation and mutual support. Indeed, we have witnessed that in times of adversity you have demonstrated extraordinary resilience.

The emergence of this Temple is an outward expression of a community life that has transformed through the union of worship and service, and it will undoubtedly exert a profound spiritual effect on the lives of those who reside on the island of Tanna, throughout your country, and beyond. The dearly loved friends of Vanuatu will now surely intensify their efforts to contribute to the spiritual and material prosperity of their communities and to foster within their society higher levels of unity, founded on the incontestable truth of the oneness of humankind.

This sacred edifice shines out as a beacon of light. May it become a centre from which spiritual forces radiate, may it diffuse the illumination of the Lord, and like unto the resplendent rays of dawn, may it brighten the horizon before you. We call to mind at this historic moment the words of the Beloved Master: "When the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* is completed, when the lights are emanating therefrom, and the righteous assemble therein, when prayers are offered to the Kingdom of divine mysteries and the voice of glorification is raised to the Supreme Lord, then shall the believers rejoice, and their hearts be dilated, overflowing with the love of the ever-living and self-subsisting God."

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