



# The Holy See

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SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD  
L WORLD DAY OF PEACE

POPE FRANCIS

*ANGELUS*

*Saint Peter's Square  
Sunday, 1st January 2017*

**[[Multimedia](#)]**

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*Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!*

In recent days we have rested our adoring gaze on the Son of God, born in Bethlehem; today, the *Solemnity of Mary Most Holy Mother of God*, we turn our gaze to the Mother, while reflecting upon each of them in their close relation. This bond is not exhausted for the fact of having begot and been begotten; Jesus is “born of woman” (Gal 4:4) for a mission of salvation, and his mother is not excluded from this mission, but rather, is intimately associated with it. Mary is aware of this.

Therefore she is not closed to considering only her maternal relationship with Jesus, but remains open and attentive toward all the events that take place around him: she keeps and ponders, scrutinizes and closely examines them, as today’s Gospel reading tells us (cf. Lk 2:19). She has already said her ‘yes’ and conveyed her willingness to be involved in the fulfillment of the salvific plan of God, who “has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts, he has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree, he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away” (Lk 1:51-53). Now, silent and attentive, she tries to understand what God asks of her day by day.

The visit of the shepherds offers her the opportunity to understand something of God’s will as manifested by these humble and poor people. Luke the Evangelist recounts for us the shepherds’ visit to the grotto with a close succession of verbs expressing movement. He thus says: *they go*

with haste, *they find* the Babe with Mary and Joseph, *they see, they report* what they had been told about him, and lastly they *glorify* God (cf. Lk 2:16-20). Mary closely follows this passage, what the shepherds say, what has happened to them, because she already perceives in it the movement of salvation, which will flow from the work of Jesus, and she adapts, ready for every request of the Lord. God asks Mary not only to be mother of his only begotten Son, but also to cooperate with the Son and for the Son in the plan of salvation, in order that in her, a humble handmaid, great works of divine mercy may be fulfilled.

Now, as we, like the shepherds, contemplate the icon of the Babe in his mother's arms, we feel growing in our hearts a sense of immense gratitude to She who has given the Saviour to the world. For this reason, on the first day of a new year, we say to her:

Thank you, O Holy Mother of the Son of God, Holy Mother of God! / Thank you for your humility which drew the gaze of God; / thank you for the faith with which you received his Word; / thank you for the courage with which you said 'here I am', / forgetting yourself, enthralled by Holy Love, / made wholly one with his hope. / Thank you, O Holy Mother of God! / Pray for us, pilgrims in time; / help us to walk on the path of peace. / Amen.

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#### **After the Angelus:**

Dear brothers and sisters, Happy New Year! The year shall be good in the measure that each of us, with God's help, seeks to do good day by day. In this way peace is built, saying 'no' — with deeds — to hatred and to violence, and 'yes' to brotherhood and reconciliation. Fifty years ago, Blessed [Paul VI](#) began celebrating on this day the World Day of Peace, so as to strengthen the common commitment to build a peaceful and fraternal world. In this year's [Message](#), I proposed adopting *non-violence as a style of politics for peace*.

Unfortunately, violence has struck even in this night of good wishes and of hope. Sadly, I express my closeness to the Turkish people; I pray for the numerous victims and for the injured, and for the entire Nation in mourning, and I ask the Lord to support all men and women of good will who roll up their sleeves to face the scourge of terrorism and this stain of blood which covers the world with a shadow of fear and dismay.

I wish to thank the President of the Italian Republic for the expression of good wishes that he addressed to me last evening, during his Message to the Nation. I reciprocate wholeheartedly, invoking the Lord's blessing upon the Italian people so that, with their responsible contribution in solidarity with all, they may look to the future with confidence and hope.

I greet all of you present here, families, associations and youth groups, wishing you a happy and peaceful new year. I express my gratitude for the many initiatives of prayer and of commitment to

peace taking place in every part of the world. I remember in particular last evening's national march held in Bologna, sponsored by CEI, *Caritas*, Catholic Action and *Pax Christi*, with the support of the Diocese and Municipality of Bologna.

I greet the participants in the "Peace in all lands" demonstration, sponsored by the Community of Sant'Egidio. Thank you for your presence and your witness!

To all I wish a year of peace in the Lord's grace and with the maternal protection of Mary, Mother of God.

Happy feast day and, please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch! *Arrivederci!*