



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
ON THE OCCASION OF THE LETTERS OF CREDENCE
BY THE AMBASSADORS OF GUINEA, LATVIA, INDIA AND BAHRAIN ACCREDITED TO THE
HOLY SEE**

*Clementine Hall
Thursday, 17 December 2015*

[Multimedia]

Your Excellencies,

I am pleased to receive you on the occasion of the presentation of the Letters by which you are accredited as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassadors of your countries to the Holy See: Guinea, Latvia, India and Bahrain. I thank you for the greetings you conveyed to me on behalf of your respective Heads of State and, in return, I wish to express, by your courtesy, my best wishes to them personally and as they carry out of the noble task entrusted to them. I pray that God grant that all your fellow citizens may live in peace and prosperity.

Two days ago the [Message for the forthcoming World Day of Peace](#) was published. The theme I chose for it was : “Overcome Indifference and Win Peace”. I am glad for the opportunity today to share with you attention to such an important challenge: to collaborate in promoting a global culture of solidarity, capable of opposing the globalization of indifference that is, sadly, one of the negative tendencies of our time. Many are the ways in which this attitude of indifference is manifested, and diverse are also the causes that concur to feed it; but they can be essentially reduced to an unbalanced humanism, in which man has taken God’s place and, thus, been left in turn a victim of various forms of idolatry. The extremely grave ecological crisis we are experiencing can also be traced back to this anthropological imbalance (cf. Encyclical [Laudato Si’](#), nn. 115-121).

Indifference to God, indifference to one’s neighbour and indifference to the environment are connected and fuel each other. Therefore, they can only be opposed with a response that addresses them all together, namely, with a renewed humanism, which returns the human being to his correct relationship with the Creator, with others and with creation. It is, as I said, about

promoting a culture of solidarity and sharing, and this requires the commitment of all those who have responsibility in the political, social, cultural and educational arena. In this challenge, a decisive role is also played by the mass media, which in our days significantly influence personal and social attitudes. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on the professional and ethical qualification of those who operate in this sector. At the same time, it remains indispensable to continue to invest in schools, not understood in an isolated way but in constant relation to families and to the social context, collaborating to reinforce an educational alliance that has been greatly weakened in various countries.

All this is necessary in order to overcome indifference and build peace. The year that is about to end has unfortunately been marked by an increase in violent conflicts, whether war-like or terrorist in nature. On the other hand, in more mature consciences, this situation is increasingly provoking a non-violent but spiritual and moral reaction. This is what we want and must nourish with the means at our disposal and according to our responsibilities. In keeping with her proper mission, with the Jubilee of Mercy that has just begun, the Catholic Church proposes to spread throughout the world the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation, calling the faithful and men and women of good will to open themselves up to the gift of God's grace and to practice what in our tradition are the "spiritual and corporal" works of mercy. "Civil society is likewise called to make specific and courageous gestures of concern for their most vulnerable members, such as prisoners, migrants, the unemployed and the infirm" (*Message for the World Day of Peace 2016*, n. 8). Moreover, in this Jubilee Year, I wish to formulate an "appeal to national leaders for concrete gestures in favour of our brothers and sisters who suffer from the lack of labour, land and lodging" (*ibid.*). At the international level, I earnestly hope that all nations will commit themselves to renew relations with others, cooperating actively to ensure the growth of fraternity in the great family of peoples as well (cf. *ibid.*).

Dear Ambassadors, before concluding these reflections, I would like to express, through you, my fraternal greeting to the Pastors and faithful of the Catholic communities present in your countries. I cordially encourage them to always collaborate out of loyalty to the common good of society as a whole. The more and the better they are able to do so, the more they will be accorded in fact full religious freedom. For its part, the Holy See is honoured to be able to establish with each of you and with the countries you represent an open and respectful dialogue and a constructive collaboration. From this perspective, as your new mission is officially inaugurated, I express to you my best wishes, assuring you of the constant support of the various offices of the Roman Curia in carrying out your function. Upon each of you, upon your families and your collaborators, I invoke an abundance of Divine Blessings.

Thank you!
