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## 教宗方濟各 2015年聖誕文告

親愛的弟兄姐妹，聖誕快樂！

基督為我們誕生了！在我們獲救的這一日，大家歡躍吧！

讓我們敞開心扉接納這一日的恩寵，就是耶穌自己。耶穌是從人類視野前升起的光亮「日子」；是天主父向人類揭示祂那無限大愛的慈悲日子；是驅散恐懼與焦慮之黑暗的光明日子；是人們可以相會、對話、和好的和平日子；是歡欣喜樂的日子：一個為弱小、卑微者和全民族的「大喜樂」。(參：路二10)

在這一日，救主耶穌由童貞瑪利亞誕生了。馬槽讓我們看到天主給我們的「記號」：「一個嬰兒，裹著襁褓，躺在馬槽裏」(路二12)。正如白冷城的牧人那樣，我們也要去看看這個記號，看看這件每年在教會中更新的大事。耶穌聖誕是在每個家庭、堂區、團體中更新的大事，以接納天主降生在耶穌基督身上的愛。教會也像瑪利亞一樣，向所有人展示天主的「記號」：瑪利亞在胎中孕育並且生產的嬰孩，卻是至高者的聖子，因為祂是「出於聖神」(瑪一20)。為此，祂真是救主，因為祂是天主的羔羊，祂背負了世界的罪(參：若一29)。讓

我們與牧人們一起在天主羔羊前，俯伏朝拜降生成人的天主的美善，任由那懺悔的淚水滿盈我們的雙眼，洗滌我們的心。

只有祂，只有祂能拯救我們。只有天主的慈悲能將人類從衍生於自私，有時極為可怕的各式各樣的邪惡中，釋放出來。天主的恩寵能令人心改過遷善，為人力無法解決的情勢打開出路。

天主誕生在何處，希望亦在那裡誕生。天主誕生在何處，和平亦在那裡誕生。而在和平誕生之處，仇恨與戰爭就不再有餘地。然而，正是在天主聖子降生於世的地方，緊張與暴力卻持續不斷，和平仍是有待祈求與締造的恩典。願以色列人與巴勒斯坦人能重拾直接對話之路，且達成一個令這兩個民族得以克服衝突而和睦共處的協議。衝突使他們長期敵對，並對整個地區造成了嚴重的影響。

我們祈求上主使在聯合國達成的協議，得以儘快令敘利亞境內武器的喧囂靜默，且使精疲力竭的該國人民的艱苦人道處境獲得彌補。關於利比亞的協議也同樣迫切需要得到所有人的支持，以使該國各方克服令國家飽受磨難的互相間的嚴重分歧與暴力。願國際社會全體一致地把注意力投向如何終止在伊拉克、葉門、非洲撒哈拉以南地帶等處的殘暴行徑，這些殘暴行徑至今仍造成無數人命的犧牲和重大的苦痛，甚至連整個民族的歷史和文化遺產也不放過。我也想到所有遭受恐怖暴力打擊的人，尤其是最近在埃及上空，在貝魯特、巴黎、巴馬科、突尼斯發生的慘劇的犧牲者。

願嬰孩耶穌賞賜安慰與力量，給世界上許許多多地區，我們那些因信仰而受迫害的弟兄們。

我們祈求天主賜予親愛的剛果民主共和國、蒲隆地、南蘇丹人民和平與和諧，使他們通過對話，更加通力合作，以建造一個誠心修好與彼此諒解的文明社會。

願耶穌聖誕也帶給烏克蘭真正的和平，減輕被衝突後果殃及者的痛苦，啟發人們履行已達成之協議的意願，來恢復全國的協和。

願這一日的喜樂光照哥倫比亞人民的努力，使他們滿懷希望，繼續致力於追求所渴望的和平。

**天主誕生在何處，希望亦在那裡誕生，而在希望誕生之處，人們便重新有尊嚴。**然而，今天仍有成群的男女不能享有人性尊嚴，他們也和嬰孩耶穌一樣，忍受寒冷、貧窮、被人拒絕的痛苦。願我們的關懷到達那些最缺乏自衛能力的人那裡，尤其是到達兒童兵、忍受暴行的婦女、販賣人口和毒品勾當的受害者那裡。

我們也要安慰所有逃避窮困或戰爭的人，他們的旅程境況經常極其不合乎人道，不時得冒生命的危險。願所有為援救和接納大量移民及難民而慷慨出力的個人和國家，獲得豐



富祝福的賞報。這些個人與國家協助移民和難民為自己與親人建造一個合乎尊嚴的未來，同時也協助他們融入接納他們的社會中。

在這節日上，願上主將希望賞賜給一切沒有工作的人，支助所有在政治和經濟園地擔負責任的人，使他們致力於促進公益，維護每一個人的生命尊嚴。

**天主誕生之處，慈悲亦興旺。**那是天主賞賜我們的最寶貴的禮品，尤其是在這禧年當中，我們受召去發覺天父對我們每一個人溫柔的愛。願天主特別賞賜監獄中服刑的人恩典，使他們得以體驗祂那痊癒傷口、克勝邪惡的慈悲之愛。

為此，**在今天，我們的獲救之日，我們要一同歡躍。**在默觀馬槽時，我們要定睛凝視耶穌張開的雙臂，祂向我們展示天主慈悲的擁抱。在此同時，我們也要聆聽聖嬰的哭聲正輕輕地向我們訴說：「為了我的兄弟和同伴，我要向你說：祝你平安！」（詠一二二8）

（梵蒂岡電台譯）

從世界各地來到這廣場的親愛弟兄姊妹們，以及你們所有那些透過收音機、電視和其他廣播媒體收聽、收看的人，我衷心向你們問安。

今天是慈悲禧年的聖誕節，所以我祝大家能在自己的生活中迎接耶穌基督帶給我們天主的慈悲，好能慈悲地對待我們的弟兄姊妹。這樣我們便使和平成長！

祝大家聖誕快樂！



## 教宗方濟各

2016年1月1日世界和平日文告

# 克服冷漠與贏得和平

### 1. 天主並不冷漠！天主關注人類！天主不會拋棄我們！

在新年伊始，我不但願與大家分享此一深刻的信念，也誠摯的祝願全世界的每一個人、每一家庭、民族及國家——包括所有的國家及政府元首和各宗教領袖們，都能興盛、平安，並實現願望。我們一如以往仍然相信，在2016年我們仍會在各個不同的層面中，堅定自信地追求正義與和平。和平是天主的恩賜，也是人類的一項任務，而天主把這恩賜託付給所有受召去達成此目標的人。

#### 持守希望的理由

2. 令人難過的是，去年一整年中充斥著戰爭和恐怖主義，加上綁架、種族或宗教迫害，以及濫用權力等等。在世界上許多地方，上述現象如此普遍，以致構成了「零星的第三次世界大戰」。在這一年已近尾聲，然而在展望新的一年之際，一些發生過的事情對我有所啟發，使我鼓勵每一個人，對於人類可以

克服邪惡、對抗退縮和冷漠一事，不要失去希望。那些事情證明我們在面對危急情況時，能夠表現出團結一致，並能超越自私自利、冷淡和漠不關心。

我願在此把各國領袖曾聚集在一起的2015年聯合國氣候高峰會(COP21)，這個會議是要找尋新方法來對抗氣候變遷，以保護我們的共同家園——地球。我們也可想起兩件較早期的全球性事件：在阿地斯阿貝巴舉行的印非高峰會(Addis Ababa Summit)，投注資金來促進全球的永續發展，另一就是採用聯合國2030年永續發展議程(the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)，目標是確保，在2030年全世界人民——特別是那些貧窮的人民，能享更有尊嚴的生活水準。

對教會來說，2015年是特別的一年，因為今年是梵二大公會議兩份文獻發表的五十週年，這兩份文獻清楚地表達了教會對世人的團結關懷。教宗若望廿三世在大公會開始時，就想大大敞開教會之窗，改善她與世界的溝通。《教會對非基督宗教態度》宣言及《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》這兩份文件，標誌了交談、團結關懷和陪伴的新關係，是教會力求在人類大家庭中喚醒的態度。在《教會對非基督宗教態度》宣言中，教會表達她與非基督宗教交談的開放態度。《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》是建基於承認「我們這時代的人們，尤其貧困者和遭受折磨者，所有喜樂與期望、愁苦與焦慮，也都是基督信徒的喜樂與期望、愁苦和焦慮」<sup>1</sup>，教會建議要就我們這世界的難題與全世界人類大家庭交談，作為團結關懷、尊重與愛護這世界的表示。<sup>2</sup>

1 梵二大公會議，《論教會在現代世界牧職憲章》1。

2 同上，3。

今年是慈悲禧年，我也願順著這樣的態度，邀請教會一起祈禱和工作，使每一個基督徒有一顆謙卑同情的心，能夠宣揚慈悲、為慈悲作見證。我希望我們都能學習「寬恕和給予」，更能夠接納「那些生活於社會最邊緣的人士——而邊緣人士是現代社會所造成的」，同時「不流於貶抑人性的無動於衷，或一成不變的日常任務，導致我們發現不到新事物！我們要抗拒只懂破壞的憤世嫉俗心態！」<sup>3</sup>

有許多很好的理由讓我們相信，人類有能力在精誠團結，並在互相聯繫、相互依賴的基礎上共同合作，以彰顯我們對較弱小弟兄姊妹的關懷，以及維護公益。這種相互負責的態度，是建基於我們的重要召叫——友愛和共同的生活。個人的尊嚴和人與人之間的關係，構成了天主按祂肖像創造人類的初衷。天主賦予我們受造物不可剝奪的尊嚴，我們與所有的弟兄姊妹都相互有關係，對他們，我們負有責任；也要與他們團結，共同合作。缺少了這樣的關係，我們就略遜於人。那時我們會明白，冷漠真是人類家庭的一大威脅。在我們就要進入新的一年之際，我願請求每一個人探討此一現實，以克服冷漠並贏得和平。

### 不同類型的冷漠

3. 冷漠顯然不是新的現象，歷史上每個時期都有人對貧困的人關閉心門，對四周發生的事閉目不視，轉過身子避免介入他人的困難。但在我們這個時代，冷漠已不再是單純的個人事件，而有了更廣的層面，於是產生了某種「全球性的冷漠。」

人類社會中的第一種冷漠是對天主冷漠，因而導致對近人及對

<sup>3</sup> 慈悲特殊禧年詔書，《慈悲面容》14-15。

環境的冷漠。這是虛假的人道主義和實用的物質主義，加上相對主義和虛無主義所造成的嚴重後果。我們會以為自己就是自己的本源，而且是自己本身、自己的生命和社會的創造者。我們感到自滿自足，不但想要找到天主的替代者，更想完全不需要天主。結果我們認為除對了自己以外，不欠任何人什麼，只求自己的權利<sup>4</sup>。教宗本篤十六世不認同這錯誤的理解，他觀察到，人類本身以及人的發展都不能光憑自己就能解答我們對終極意義的疑問。<sup>5</sup> 教宗保祿六世也同樣表示「真正的人文主義，必須向至高者開放，承認人生的真正意義來自一個召叫。」<sup>6</sup>

對鄰人的冷漠，會用各種方式表現出來。有些人見多識廣；他們聽廣播，看報紙、看電視，但是他們只是機械化地做這些事，並未真正參與其中。他們模糊地知道令人痛苦的悲劇，但他們感覺不到與自己有關，也沒有惻隱之心。他們只把目光、思想行為集中在自己身上。我們必須說，今天儘管資訊多到爆炸，但並未使我們更關心他人的困難——那需要開放的心和團結關懷的態度。<sup>7</sup> 事實上，太多的資訊會讓人的感覺麻木，而且多少會降低了問題的嚴重性。「有些人直接了當地譴責貧窮國家造成的麻煩，由此得到滿足；這些控訴者縱容未獲證實的以偏概全，宣稱某種『教育』可解決問題，會使人平靜、並把人變得溫順無害。此說固然惹人惱火，但火上加油的是根深蒂

<sup>4</sup> 參閱本篤十六世《在真理中實踐愛德》通諭，43。

<sup>5</sup> 參閱同上，16。

<sup>6</sup> 《民族發展通諭》42；《在真理中實踐愛德》通諭，16。

<sup>7</sup> 「不斷全球化的社會使人變得更接近，但是卻沒有使我們成為兄弟。單憑理智，足以使人覺知人與人之間的平等，使人共處，相互尊重，但卻不足以建立兄弟之情。」(本篤十六世《在真理中實踐愛德》通諭，19)

固的貪污，遍布不同國家，從政府到商業以及各種機構，無論領導人的政治噱頭是甚麼，總之，到處有人貪污，試想那些被排擠到社會邊緣的人看到社會如此腐敗，怎會按捺得住！」<sup>8</sup>

另外，對自己身邊事物——尤其是那些不直接觸及我們的事物，毫不關心，也可看出人的冷漠。有些人寧願不問問題或尋求答案；他們過著舒適的生活，對受苦者的哭號聲充耳不聞。我們在幾乎察覺不出的情況下，已無法對他人及他人的困難感到同情；我們沒有興趣去關懷他們，仿佛他們該為自己的困難負責任，而與我們無關似的。<sup>9</sup>「在我們健康、舒適時，很容易忘記他人（但是天主父絕不會如此）：我們不關心他們的困難、他們的痛苦以及他們所承受的不公義……。我們的心日趨冷漠。只要我還算是健康、過得舒適，我就不會想到那些比較不順心的人。」<sup>10</sup>

因為我們住在同一個家園中，我們必須關心這個家園的狀況，這是我發表《願祢受讚頌》通諭的想法。水和空氣的污染、不分輕重地砍伐森林，破壞自然環境，這些往往是人對人的冷漠所造成的結果，因為萬事萬物都互相關連的。還有我們對待動物的方式，也會影響我們對待他人的態度，<sup>11</sup> 還有人在其他地方為所欲為，但在自己家中卻不敢這麼做。<sup>12</sup>

在這種情況中，冷漠會讓人只顧自己而缺少奉獻精神。這也是我們與天主、與我們的近人和與環境不能和平相處的原因。

8 宗座勸諭《福音的喜樂》60。

9 參閱同上54。

10 2015年四旬期文告。

11 參閱《願祢受讚頌》通諭，92。

12 參閱同上，51。

## 和平受到全球化冷漠威脅

4. 對天主的冷漠超越了個人的內在與心神的氛圍，能影響到公共及社會領域。正如教宗本篤十六世所指出，「天主的榮耀與人類在世的平安密切相關。」<sup>13</sup> 確實，若不開放心胸，接納超越性事物，人類很容易成為相對主義的犧牲品，很難公正行事、並致力於和平。<sup>14</sup> 漠視天主和否定天主，會使人不承認有高於他自己的規範，而唯以自己為標準，於是造成了無限制的殘酷和暴力。<sup>15</sup>

同時在個人和公共的層面上，對鄰人的冷漠，是出於對天主的冷漠，表現在對個人及公共事務不關心、少投入，這樣反而會延長了不公義和社會嚴重失衡的情況。進而造成衝突或產生不滿的氣氛，遲早爆發為暴力及不安全的行為。

冷漠和缺乏投身造成嚴重的有虧職守，而我們每一個人本應按自己的能力以及在社會上的角色，努力促進公益，特別是促進和平，因那是人類最寶貴的資產。<sup>16</sup>

在制度面上，對他人冷漠、漠視他人的尊嚴、基本權利和自由，當這些成為追求利益和享樂之下的文化，則會滋生不正義的行為和政策，甚至將其合理化，最終成為對和平的威脅。冷漠甚至令人把可悲的經濟政策視為合理正當，而那會孕育不公義、分裂和暴力，以保障個人或國家的福利。更常見的是，為了鞏固並維持勢力和財富而制定的經濟和政治計劃，甚至不惜

13 對駐梵蒂岡外交使節團的談話，2013年1月7日。

14 同上。

15 參閱本篤十六世，為世界和平與正義的反省、對話與祈禱日的談話。亞西西，2011年10月27日。

16 參閱宗座勸諭《福音的喜樂》217-237。

踐踏他人的基本權利和需要。當人們目睹他們的基本權利，如食物、飲水、健康照顧或就業的權利遭到否定，他們就會用武力來獲取了。<sup>17</sup>

此外，默許砍伐樹林、污染、大自然的災難，這會破壞生態系統，而根絕整個社區，造成嚴重的不安全，最後則產生新形式的貧窮，新的不公義，到後來，安全與和平都大受威脅，這些都是對自然環境冷漠的後果。試想，有多少戰爭是因為缺乏物資或是對自然資源貪求無厭而產生？有多少戰爭還會繼續進行下去？<sup>18</sup>

### 從冷漠轉到慈悲：內心的悔改

5. 2015年和平日文告的主題是「不再是奴隸，而是弟兄姊妹」，在那篇文告中，我追想起聖經中第一個人類弟兄的圖像，就是加音和亞伯爾（參看創四1-16）。我是希望大家注意到，從一開始，這弟兄之情就怎樣遭到背叛。加音和亞伯爾是

<sup>17</sup> 「今天在很多地方，我們聽到加強保安的要求。除非社會以及人彼此的排擠與不平等得以逆轉過來，否則是不可能消除暴力的。窮人及最窮的民眾被控告行使暴力，然而正因缺少平等機會，不同形式的侵略和衝突會找到滋生的沃土，早晚會爆發出來。當一個社會，無論地區性、國家性、或全球性的，甘願把社會一部分人遺棄在邊緣，便沒有任何政治方案或資源可用在執法或監控系統上，而能夠無限期地保障社會安寧。這不單是因為不平等刺激了受體制排擠的人，而使他們用暴力來反抗，更因為社會經濟系統的根基就是不公的。就如善傾向擴展，容忍邪惡亦然，容忍邪惡就是不正義，傾向擴展有害的影響力，並悄悄地腐蝕任何政治和社會體系，無論這些體系看起來多麼穩固。」（宗座勸諭《福音的喜樂》59）。

<sup>18</sup> 參閱《願祢受讚頌》通諭，31、48。

兄弟，兩人出於同一母胎，他們有同樣的尊嚴，也同樣是按天主肖像所造；但他們兄弟鬩牆。「加音不但受不了亞伯爾，還出於嫉妒而殺害亞伯爾。」<sup>19</sup> 殺害兄弟是一種背叛，加音拒絕承認亞伯爾是弟弟，就成為家庭的手足情誼、團結關懷及相互尊重被破壞的第一個例子。

天主於是介入，提醒人們對同胞手足的責任，正如祂在亞當和厄娃——我們的原祖父母與造物主天主的關係破裂時，也曾提醒他們一樣。「上主對加音說：『你弟弟亞伯爾在哪裡？』他答說：『我不知道，難道我是看守我弟弟的人？』上主說：『你作了什麼事？聽！你弟弟的血由地上向我喊冤』。」（創四9-10）

加音說他不知道他弟弟發生了什麼事，又說他不是看守弟弟的人。他對自己的生命、對自己的命運不負責。他覺得自己與這些無關。他對胞弟漠不關心，輕視與他同血緣的人。多麼可悲！這個關於兄弟、家庭、人類的故事，多麼令人難過！這是兄弟之間冷漠的第一個表現。然而天主並不冷漠。在他眼中，亞伯爾的血有無限的價值，他要求加音交代清楚。在人類剛開始時，天主顯示出祂參與人類的命運。後來，以色列子民在埃及成了奴隸，天主再次介入，對梅瑟說：「我看見我的百姓在埃及所受的痛苦，聽見他們因工頭的壓迫而發出的哀號；我已注意到他們的痛苦，所以我要下去拯救百姓脫離埃及人的手，領他們離開那地方，到一個美麗寬闊的地方，流奶流蜜的地方」（出三7-8）。我們應注意文字中使用的動詞，都是用來形容天主的干預：他看到、聽見、注意到、下去和拯救。天主並未保持冷漠。祂關心注意，也採取行動。

<sup>19</sup> 2015年世界和平日文告2。

天主同樣在祂的愛子耶穌身上，下到我們中間。祂取了肉軀，並在各方面都跟我們一樣，除了沒有罪以外。耶穌與我們認同：「祂在眾多弟兄中作長子」（羅八29）。耶穌不僅僅滿足於教導群眾，祂還關心他們的福祉，特別是在看到他們挨餓（參閱谷六34-44）或沒有工作時（參閱瑪廿3）。祂不只關心人，也關心海中的魚、天空的飛鳥、植物和樹木，大小生物祂都關心。祂注意也愛護一切受造物。但祂不僅止於看見，祂還觸及人們的生活，跟他們說話，幫助他們，對那些貧困有需要的人顯示仁慈。不只如此，祂還強烈地動心、落淚哭泣（參閱若十一33-44）。祂盡力中止痛苦、哀傷、悲慘和死亡。

耶穌教導我們要像天上的父一樣慈悲（參閱路六36）。在善心的撒瑪黎雅人的故事裡（參閱路十29-37），祂譴責那些見人有需要，卻不伸出援手的人，那些「從旁邊走過去的人」（參閱路十31-32）。耶穌藉這個例子教導那些聽祂講話的人，特別是祂的門徒，應停下腳步，用各種可能的方法，為減輕這世界的痛苦，減輕我們弟兄姊妹的痛苦盡一分力，不論我們有多忙碌，也要先從花自己的時間開始。冷漠往往會找藉口：必須遵守禮儀的規定、還有許多事該做、藏身在敵意和偏見背後，而這些正是使我們分裂的原因。

天主的心是慈悲的。天主子民所組成的大家庭中的每一分子，也應該懷有一顆慈悲的心；只要人享有人的尊嚴，也就是在受造物身上反映出天主的容貌，那顆心就悸動得更快。耶穌告訴我們，對他人——異鄉人、病患、囚犯、無家可歸的人，甚至我們的敵人——的愛，正是天主用以判斷我們行為的標準。我們永遠的命運就與此有關。難怪保祿宗徒告訴在羅馬的基督徒，「應與喜樂的一同喜樂，與哭泣的一同哭泣」（參閱羅

十二15），他也鼓勵格林多人多多捐獻，做為與教會受苦的弟兄同心同體的表現（參閱格前十六2-3）。聖若望則寫道：「誰若有今世的財物，看見自己的弟兄有急難，卻對他關閉自己憐憫的心腸，天主的愛怎能存在他內？」（若壹三17；參閱雅二15-16）

這就是為什麼「教會，為了她所傳揚之訊息的可信性，教會絕對需要活出慈悲，見證慈悲。教會的語言、態度，必須傳達慈悲，好能觸動所有人民的心，再次啟迪他們尋找回歸天父的途徑。教會的首要真理就是基督的愛。教會成為這愛的僕人，將這愛通傳給所有人：這愛是樂於寬恕的，並甘願把自己交付。因此，那裡有教會的臨在，天父的慈悲就有了佐證。簡而言之，在我們的堂區、團體、協會和運動，那裡有基督徒，人就應該找得到慈悲的綠洲。」<sup>20</sup>

我們蒙召叫，使憐憫、愛心、慈悲和團結關懷成為真正的生活方式，作為我們彼此關係的準則。<sup>21</sup>為此，我們的心必須改變：天主的恩寵必須把我們的鐵石心腸轉變為血肉的心（參閱則卅六26），能以真正的團結關懷之心接納他人。因為團結關懷遠甚於「對遠近許多不幸者的空洞同情或膚淺的哀傷。」<sup>22</sup>團結關懷是「一項將自己獻身於共同利益的堅決而持續的決心；也就是獻身致力於每一個人的和整體的利益，因為我們對所有人都要負責任」<sup>23</sup>，因為憐憫是由手足情誼湧流出來的。

從這一點就能注意到我們這時代的苦惱，以及日漸增加的相

20 慈悲特殊禧年詔書《慈悲面容》12。

21 參閱同上，13。

22 若望保祿二世《論社會事務關懷》通諭，38。

23 同上。



互依賴——尤其是在一個全球化的世界，在個別人士及團體之間，以及與世界上其他人士之間的相互關係，而以最合適的倫理及社會態度來回應，這就是「團結關懷」。<sup>24</sup>

### 建立一個團結關懷與慈悲的文化，以克勝冷漠

6. 團結關懷既是由於個人悔改而產生的倫理德行和社會態度，團結關懷也要求負責教育和陶成的人投身於其中。

首先我想到的是家庭，家庭蒙召叫去實行首要和重要的教育使命。家庭是實踐和傳承愛和手足情誼、共聚和分享、關懷照顧他人的第一個場所。家庭也是傳遞信仰的最有利的場所，就從母親教導子女的簡單祈禱、敬禮等開始。<sup>25</sup>

在學校或其他場合教育兒童和青年的老師們，工作最為困難，他們應該意識到他們的責任也擴及生活中的倫理、精神和社會層面。自由、相互尊重和團結關懷的價值，可以從孩子幼年時就傳遞給他們。談到教育者，教宗本篤十六世說道：「每一個教育場所都可以成為一個向著超性開放、也向他人開放的場所；一個交談、凝聚團結力、注意聆聽的場所，在那裡，年輕人感到個人的能力和內在的豐富都受到賞識，能學會看重他們的弟兄姊妹。願年輕人能受到教導，在日常的行善，表達愛心，積極參與中建立一個更富人性及更友愛的社會中，體驗到喜樂。」<sup>26</sup>

媒體工作者也負有教育和陶成的責任，尤其是在今日，資訊和媒體的傳播管道如此廣布。他們的首要責任是為真理服務，而

24 參閱同上。

25 參閱公開接見時的要理講授，2015年1月7日。

26 2012年世界和平日文告2。

不是為特定的利益服務。因為媒體「不僅提供資訊，也培育閱聽的人的心智，因此他們對年輕人的教育可以有重大的貢獻。絕對不要忘記，教育和傳播之間的關係極其密切：教育透過傳播而產生，而傳播又能或好或歹地影響一個人之人格的形成。」<sup>27</sup>

媒體工作者也應留意，獲得資訊及公諸於世的方法，必須是合法且是道德上所容許的。

### 和平：團結關懷、慈悲與憐憫的文化之成果

7. 在意識到全球性的冷漠帶來的危險的同時，我們也應承認，在上述的情景中，也有許多正面的行動，證明我們能夠付出憐憫、慈悲與團結關懷。

在此我想舉幾個值得讚美的獻身服務例子，來證明我們都能夠不對近人閉目不視，以克服冷漠。這些例子都是在我們走向更人性化的社會之路上的一些良好做法。

還有許多非政府和慈善機構，不論是教會內或教會以外的，他們的成員不畏困難和危險，在瘟疫、災難、武裝衝突中，照顧傷者和病人、埋葬死者。我也願提提那些幫助移民的個別人士和機構——那些移民飄洋過海或走過沙漠，只為尋求過更好的生活。他們的努力包括精神和物資上的愛德工作，而在我們生命的終結時，我們就是依據這些來受審判的。

我也想到那些新聞記者和攝影記者，他們在艱困的情況下報導，提供能喚醒我們良心的影像及輿論；還有獻身於維護人權的人士，尤其是維護少數民族及宗教上的少數群體、原住民、

27 同上。

婦女和兒童，以及我們弟兄姊妹中最軟弱易受傷害者的人權。在他們當中許多聖職人員和傳教士，身為牧者，留在羊群身邊支持他們，特別是在武裝衝突時，不在意危險和艱難。

有多少家庭在工作和社會的困境中，仍然犧牲自己，給孩子「反主流文化」的教育，教導孩子團結關懷、憐憫同情和手足情誼的價值！有多少家庭敞開心胸和打開家門，接納遇到困難的人，例如難民和移民！我願特別感謝那些樂意回應我的請求，接納一個難民家庭的個人、家庭、堂區、宗教團體、隱修院和朝聖地。<sup>28</sup>

最後我願一提那些著手於團結關懷工作的年輕人，以及那些在自己的城市和國家中及其他地方，慷慨地幫助窮困者的人士。我感謝並鼓勵每一個人來參與這種努力，他們的努力常常未受到注意。他們對正義的飢渴會得到滿足，他們的慈悲會引領他們找到慈悲，而且身為和平締造者，他們將被稱為天主的子女。（參閱瑪五6-9）

### 慈悲禧年標記中的和平

8. 在慈悲禧年的精神中，我們都蒙召叫，去了解冷漠如何在生活中顯示出來，並以具體的工作來改善四周的世界，首先就要從自己的家庭、鄰舍和職場開始。

民間社團也同樣被召叫，要對最易受傷害的人特別表達關懷，例如囚犯、移民、失業以及體弱的人。

說到囚犯，在許多方面都急需實際的做法，來改善他們的生活

<sup>28</sup> 參閱三鐘經講道，2015年9月6日。

條件，特別要關心那些在獄中等待審訊的人。<sup>29</sup> 我們得記住，法律制裁的目的是讓人重生，國家的法律應考慮到是否可用其他已定的制裁，代替監禁。在這樣的情況下，我願再次請求各國政府，若是仍有死刑，請考慮廢除死刑，對犯人給以特赦。

至於移民，我請求重新檢討移民法，使這法律能在尊重彼此權利和責任的情況下，反映出對移民的欣然接納，並讓移民更輕易地融入。我們也應特別考慮到居留法所訂的條件，因為若在不得已情況下非法居留，就會導致犯罪。

在這禧年，我也要請求各國領袖，對於因沒有工作、土地和居所的弟兄姊妹，要落實對他們有利的具體措施。我想到的是，創造有尊嚴的工作機會來對抗失業的社會災害，因為後者會影響許多家庭和年輕人，對整個社會產生嚴重的後果。失業的嚴重代價就是人們失去尊嚴感和希望，補助給失業人士和其家庭的社會福利金，是必須的，但只能解決部分問題。我們也應特別關注婦女，因為遺憾的是，在工作中她們依然受到歧視，而且有些婦女的工作並不安定，工作環境也很危險，得到的薪資更與其社會使命的重要性不相稱。

最後我要說，我希望有關人士能採取有效率的方法，來改善病人的生活條件，也就是確保他們都能得到醫療和藥物，同時可以享有家居護理。

各國領袖也蒙召叫，要有超越自己國境的遠見，檢討與其他民族的關係，使他們真正參與和納入國際社會的生活中，以確保

<sup>29</sup> 參閱對國際刑法協會代表團談話，2014年10月23日。

國際大家庭的兄弟情誼。

我懷著這樣的心情，願向各國領袖作三個呼籲：拒絕把他國人民捲入衝突或戰爭，那樣不但破壞物質、文化和社會遺產，長遠來看，也破壞他們的倫理和精神的完整性；其次請求能免除較貧窮國家的國際債務，或是以可以長久的方式來處理；第三則是採取合作的政策，不向某種意識型態的專制低頭，反會尊重當地人民的價值觀，同時，無論如何也不要傷害未出生胎兒最基本且不可剝奪的生存權。

我把這些思考，以及我對新年最真誠的祝願，交託給至聖童貞聖瑪利亞人類之母的轉禱，她關心我們人類大家庭的需要，她會向她的愛子耶穌——和平君王，為我們的祈禱求得垂允，且降福我們每天為建立充滿友愛、團結的世界所作的努力。

發自梵蒂岡

2015年12月8日

聖母始胎無染原罪瞻禮

慈悲特殊禧年開幕

台灣明愛會 恭譯

新竹教區司鐸趙一舟（根深）蒙席（聖名安德肋），於主曆2015年12月17日（星期四）下午六時二十九分蒙主恩召，妥領臨終聖事，享年九十歲。



生平：

- 一九二六年十一月三十日出生於河北省深縣。
- 一九四七年畢業於天津津沽大學附中。
- 一九四七年赴北平新成立的多瑪斯修院，在輔仁大學研壇哲學。
- 一九四九至一九五五年于菲律賓馬尼拉若石神哲學院學習完成哲學及神學。
- 一九五五年四月十七日在馬尼拉領受鐸職。
- 一九五五年赴法國巴黎天主教大學先後攻讀教理講授學及禮儀學二研究所。
- 一九六〇至一九六一年赴德國學習德語。
- 一九六一年回馬尼拉，服務於東亞牧靈研究所，從事研究與寫作，曾編譯《大眾神學》（原著為德文），編寫的Glory to the Lord兩冊聖經頌禱（之後譯為中文《讚頌主榮》、《成謝聖體禱詞》）。
- 一九六七年應主教團郭若石總主教之邀來臺，主編《天主教教理新編》，為期九個月，一年後再度來臺時完成定稿，稱為《天主教的信仰》。
- 一九六九年再次應郭總主教之邀來臺，任職於主教團禮儀委員會迄今。

教宗方濟各

2016年1月17日

第102屆世界移民及難民日文告

「移民及難民挑戰我們。  
慈悲福音的回應。」

親愛的弟兄姊妹們：

在慈悲特殊禧年詔書中，我曾指出：「有時，我們被召叫去更用心注視慈悲，好使我們更能成為天主在我們生命中行動的有效標記」（《慈悲面容》3）。天主的愛，意欲接觸每一個人。那些接受天父擁抱的人，他們本身成了如此多擁抱者張開的雙臂，使每個人感受到像小孩般被愛，而且是人類家庭的一分子，有「在家」的感覺。天主父親般的照料廣及每一個人，猶如牧人照顧他的羊群，但特別關心受傷的、衰弱的或是有病的羊的需求。耶穌告訴我們，天父低頭彎腰來援助那些身體或精神被貧困蹂躪的人；他們情況越是嚴重，天主神聖的慈悲就更強而有力地向他們彰顯。

在我們的時代，移民潮在世界各地擴增。難民和逃離自己家鄉的人，挑戰每個人和團體，以及他們的傳統生活方式；

有時，他們顛覆了他們所接觸的文化及社會生活環境。暴力和貧窮的受害者，離開自己的家鄉，在朝向美好未來的夢想旅程中，越來越遭到人口販運者的剝削。倘若他們從旅程中的困頓與艱難中僥倖生存，他們仍必面對潛伏的猜疑和恐懼。最後他們面對的，時常是不明確及無法執行的收容移民政策——不尊重所有難民權利和義務，無法提供他們短期或長期居留的計劃。今日，慈悲的福音使我們良心不安，阻止我們以為他人受苦是理所當然的，並指出回應的途徑，以信、望、愛三德為基礎，找到行神哀矜和形哀矜的實際方式。

基於上述事實，我選定2016年世界移民及難民日文告的主題：「移民及難民挑戰我們。慈悲福音的回應。」移民潮已是現代社會結構性的現況，而我們首要的問題應該是關心目前急迫現象，對移民和它引起變化的緣因，包括它對社會和人民引起的後果，及提供方針。世界各地出現不可接受的人道主義危機，以致數以百萬計的男男女女悲劇事實，天天向國際社會提出質問。每當我們似旁觀者一般地看見受難者因窒息、飢餓、暴力及海難船難而身亡時，漠不關心和沈默不語都使我們成為共犯。悲劇事件無論是大是小，都是悲劇，即使當一個人的生命喪失，也是悲劇。

移民們是我們尋求更好生活的弟兄姊妹，希望脫離貧窮、飢餓、剝削和地球資源不公平的分配，這些資源本來是要大家平等分享的。我們大家不是都尋求更好的、更體面和更豐盛的生活，並與我們所愛的人分享嗎？

巨大的移民潮出現在此刻的人類歷史，移民的身分不是一個次要的問題。不論移居的人喜歡與否，他們被迫更換他們本身某些最獨特的特質，即使那些接納他們的人，也被迫改變。

我們如何經歷這些改變，才不視這些改變為真正發展的障礙，而看作是人類、社會及屬靈的真正發展的新契機，而這發展尊重並促進我們更人性化的價值，幫助我們與天主、他人和受造物，度一個平衡的生活？

移民和難民的到來，嚴重地挑戰著接納他們的不同團體。除非適當地激勵，管理和規範這些社區團體，否則可能面臨嚴重困難的新狀況。我們應該如何確保整合能夠帶給社區團體互惠互惠，及開放積極的願景，並預防歧視，種族主義，極端民族主義或排外的危險？

聖經的啟示要求我們歡迎外方人，它告訴我們這樣做，我們就打開大門迎接天主，我們在他人面龐上看到基督的容貌。許多機構、善會、運動和團隊——教區的、全國的和國際的組織，體驗到會晤、共享和精誠團結的同慶所帶來的奇妙及喜悅。他們聽到了耶穌基督的好聲音：「看，我立在門口敲門」（默三20）。然而，不僅是在國家政策層次上繼續在討論如何規定接納移民的條件和限制，在一些堂區團體裡亦然，似乎它們傳統的平靜受到了威脅。

面對這些問題，教會怎可能不從耶穌基督的言行尋求啟示呢？福音的回答就是慈悲。首先，慈悲是恩典，是天主父藉著聖子所彰顯的。天主賜予的慈悲，使我們面對著基督傾流了寶血而完成的救贖奧跡所帶來的希望，湧流出喜樂的感恩。

慈悲滋養並強化與他人的精誠團結，作為對天主的慈愛必然的回應：「藉著聖神已傾注在我們心中了」（羅五5）。我們每一個人都對近人，對他或她，都有要負的責任：無論近人身居何處，我們是我們兄弟姐妹們的守護者。與別人維持良

好關係，以及能夠克服偏見和恐懼，是推動相遇文化的主要因素，我們不僅要作好準備去給予，同時也要從他人領受。其實，好客是從施與受而成長。

從這一點看，重點是不要只從合法或不合法的身分去看移民，而是要維護他們人性的尊嚴，他們也能對社會發展和一般的福祉作出貢獻。尤其是當他們能對接納者負責任地承擔起自己的義務，欣然尊重客居國家的物質文化和精神遺產，服從其法律，幫助其需要。移民問題不能只局限於他們的政治和法律的一面，它同時會影響經濟，也會影響多種文化具體共存的同一地區。這一切都有助於捍衛和促進人性，使文化相融及民族團結，因為這是慈悲的福音所啟發和激勵、更新和改造全人類的方法。

教會的立場，就是與所有維護人們有尊嚴的生存權而努力的人們站在一起，首先實行不必移居他國的權利，以及協助宗主國為有所貢獻。這一過程，應該包括自開始就必須協助移民和難民離開的國家。這證明團結關懷、合作、國際間的相互依存和地球物資的公平分配，是更堅定努力的要素；特別是在移民和難民潮的起源地：消除導致人們、個人或集體，拋棄他們自己的家鄉和文化的環境。無論如何，必須在最初階段起，避免難民由於貧窮、暴力和迫害而集體逃亡。

也需要正確地形成輿論，至少預防危害移民的不正當的恐懼和推測。

沒有人可以冷漠地面對犯罪組織所造成之新型奴役、人口販運——男人、婦女和兒童，並被迫在建築、農業、漁業或在其他市場從事勞動工作。無數未成年人被迫成為兒童兵士在戰

鬥！無數人們成為器官販賣、被迫行乞和性剝削的受害者。今天的難民們是從上述異常的罪行中逃離出來的，他們懇求教會和社會團體，確保從那些伸出雙手接納他們的人身上，可以看到天主的面容：「仁慈的父和施與各種安慰的天主。」（哥林多後書一3）

親愛的弟兄姐妹們，移民和難民們！在慈悲福音的核心，與別人相遇和接納，交織著與天主的相遇和被祂的接納。接納別人意指接納天主本身！天主的慈悲顯示在你們旅途中遇到的人身上，你們不要讓你們從天主慈悲所獲得的生命的希望和喜樂被剝奪了！我將你們託付於聖母瑪利亞——移民和難民之母，並託付於聖若瑟，他們倆曾共同經歷過逃亡埃及的辛酸。我請聖母及聖若瑟為那些為教區牧靈和關懷服務移民的善心人士們轉求，感謝他們付出了大量的精力、時間和資源。我誠摯地頒布我的宗座降福。

教宗方濟各

發自梵蒂岡

2015年9月12日，聖母聖名紀念日

## 主教團移民暨難民牧靈觀光委員會 慈悲特殊禧年移民日牧函

教宗方濟各宣布，自2015年12月8日聖母無玷始胎瞻禮開始，至2016年11月20日基督君王節為慈悲特殊禧年；同時，移民與難民的禧日會在2016年1月17日第102屆世界移民與難民日慶祝，教宗頒布本屆世界移民與難民日的主題為：「**移民及難民挑戰我們。慈悲福音的回應。**」

為了與普世教會同時共同慶祝，台灣地區主教團已訂於2016年1月17日舉行台灣地區慶祝移民主日，即每年一月的第三個主日。

因應這個新的改變，我請我的執行祕書——那禮斐神父傳播這訊息，並告知台灣有移民聚集的堂區及聚會場所的本堂司鐸、專任司鐸和志工們這項新實施的說明。

在開始移民主日新的慶祝日期之際，我希望主教團移民暨難民牧靈觀光委員履行此決議，能於2016年1月17日在台灣七個教區一起慶祝移民與難民的禧日，落實普世教會慶祝移民暨難民主日的計劃。

### 計劃如下：

- 各教區和各堂區全體教友能夠積極參與移民日的慶祝活動（即：教區和堂區能夠實際與移民朋友互動），我衷心希望各堂區的主任司鐸、負責移民的專任司鐸及所有志工們都能主動參與及互動。
- 使這個慶祝活動，成為一個獨特的機會，教會本著慈悲的精神與移民朋友同慶，在此同時，讓我們藉此表達出對移民朋友的親近、關注及精誠團結。

- 透過這個特別的時機，使教友了解移民潮的整個現況，以提高教友對當今移民潮現象的認知，即其正面的影響，以及同時存在之潛伏的危機和風險。
- 這一移民禧日，也是宣布教宗年度文告的好時機。
- 這個慶祝並不是侷限在當天而已，我們也可以在慈悲特殊禧年安排和計劃與移民現象相關的其他活動。

教宗方濟各在世界移民及難民日文告的主題「**移民及難民挑戰我們。慈悲福音的回應。**」主題的第一部分：「移民及難民挑戰我們」，首先說明了，有那麼多的男男女女被迫離鄉背井；根據聯合國難民部門指出，由於中東地區的動盪不安，帶來了創紀錄性的大量移民。

教宗文告主題的第二部分：「慈悲福音的回應」。全世界對當今的移民現象作出回應，特別是教會，教宗邀請我們在慈悲禧年期間，展示慈悲的行動，同時他也提醒我們「基督本人，親臨在這些『小子』的每一位身上，（……）當我們預備離開此世時，我們要接受審判，愛是審判的基礎。」（《慈悲面容》15）

當我們看到世界上關於移民與難民所呈現出來的困境的畫面時，我們台灣也不例外。在台灣二千三百萬的人口中，新住民、移工和外籍學生高達五十萬人，占台灣總人口的2.71%。由於語言和文化的障礙，使得他們在融入當地社會時困難重重。某些移工們在工作場合上遭遇到不同的虐待，或有些人則淪為人口販賣的犧牲者。教宗方濟各強調；「暴力和貧窮的受害者，離開自己的家鄉，在朝向美好未來的夢想旅程中，越來越遭到人口販運者的剝削。」他也提到：「聖經的啟示要求我們歡迎外方人，它告訴我們這樣做，我們就打開大門迎接天主，我們在他人面龐上看到基督的容貌。許多機構、善會、運動和團隊——教區的、全國的和國際的組織，體驗到會晤、共享和精誠團結的同慶所帶來的奇妙及喜悅。」

台灣地區主教團移民暨難民牧靈觀光委員會，透過移民的專任司鐸、牧靈工作者和保護移民權利及默默陪伴他們的志工們，對此作出回應，以「體驗到會晤、共享和精誠團結的同慶所帶來的奇妙及喜悅。」

台灣移民聯盟(MENT)以服務與照顧移民為宗旨，致力於移工、移民、難民與船員的福祉與權益，維護上主所賦予他們的尊嚴。有時，某些專任司鐸和志工們也冒著危險去面對這些破壞移民和新住民的尊嚴與價值的不良制度。他們的努力鮮為人知，為了愛護這些移動中的人民，他們默默付出。他們在日常生活為移民們處理困境的額外勞苦，有些時候也會不被當地教會了解。教宗重申「教會的立場，就是與所有維護人們有尊嚴的生存權而努力的人們站在一起。」

欣逢慈悲特殊禧年，每個人「我們被召叫去更用心注視慈悲，好使我們更能成為天主在我們生命中行動的有效標記」（《慈悲面容》3）。教宗強調「天主的愛，意欲接觸每一個人。」這份愛被完全明白天父愛的奧秘的人們生活出來，這些人們接受上主的慈悲，並且將這一切轉向給那些在困境中的人，並承認每一個人都是人類大家庭的一分子。

在慈悲特殊禧年之際，我要請求大家能夠致力履行形哀矜及神哀矜，並以個人簡單的方式，實行傳遞慈悲的使命，在自己生活的地方展示天父慈悲的愛。慈悲乃是寬恕傷害我們的人，同情受到各種不義和虐待而受苦的人，善待我們當中的陌生人，向慈悲的天父打開心門。

我也要求所有的移民協調員和司鐸們，兢兢業業地實行上主賦予他們的司鐸聖召，成為傳遞慈悲的聖職人員。在講道中對移民們說明慈悲特殊禧年對他們生活的重要性，細心地接待前往告解懺悔的移民們，他們因受到的創傷而導致他們犯下了過錯。藉著聖神，

傳遞慈悲的人被賦予智慧、聰敏、明達、超見、孝愛、剛毅和敬畏；這些恩典將使我們敞開心門去幫助他人體驗天父慈悲的奇妙。

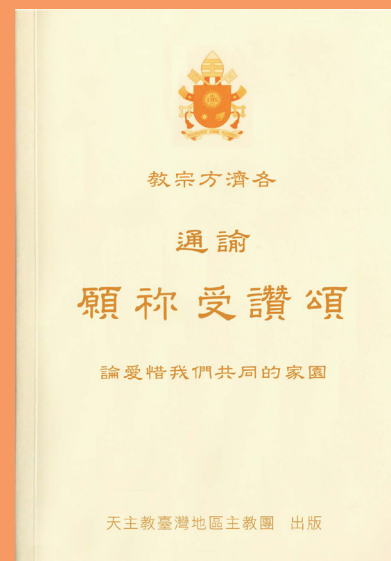
主教團移民暨難民牧靈觀光委員會邀請所有當地的本堂司鐸，聽從教宗的號召，打開大門歡迎移民朋友們加入堂區的團體，使他們也能融入堂區生活，只有當本堂司鐸懷著一顆開放的心，明白移民在路途上所面臨的困境，他們才能融入團體。他們是教會的一員，雖然我們彼此有著語言和文化的差異，但我們有著慈悲、愛心和體諒明達的共同文化。雖然我們各有不同的語言，但我們心中卻說同樣的話，講同一信仰的語言。甚至不是天主教徒的移民，他們在我們的教堂也同樣受歡迎，因為教會關心所有需要幫助的人。天主教會超越了宗教、種族和膚色，每個人都是在天主父面前同一個大家庭的成員。誠如教宗所說的：「接納別人，意指接納天主本身！天主的慈悲顯示在你們旅途中遇到的人身上，你們不要讓你們從天主慈悲所獲得的生命的希望和喜樂被剝奪了！」

親愛的弟兄姊妹、移民、難民、新住民和在台灣的外國學生們！在慈悲福音的核心，與別人相遇和接納，交織著與天主的相遇和被祂的接納。我們都是在人世間的移民，我們真正的居所是與慈悲天主聖父在一起的天鄉。我將你們託付於聖母瑪利亞——移民和難民之母，並託付於聖若瑟，他們經歷過逃亡埃及的辛酸。我也請中華諸聖人為大家代禱，並衷心給予你們我主教的降福。

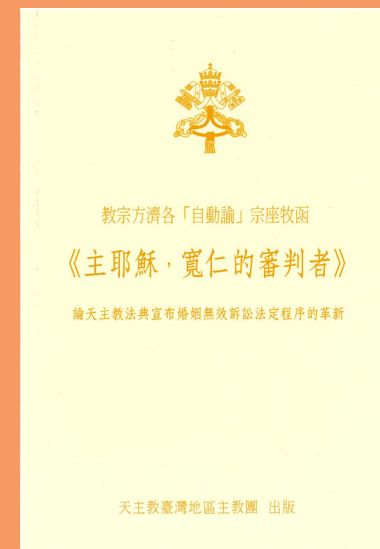
於2015年12月8日聖母無玷始胎瞻禮

慈悲禧年開幕日

主教團移民暨難民牧靈觀光委員會主席 林吉男 主教



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## Message of His Holiness Pope Francis

### Urbi et Orbi

### CHRISTMAS 2015

Dear brothers and sisters, Happy Christmas!

Christ is born for us, let us rejoice in the day of our salvation!

Let us open our hearts to receive the grace of this day, which is Christ himself. Jesus is the radiant “day” which has dawned on the horizon of humanity. A day of mercy, in which God our Father has revealed his great tenderness to the entire world. A day of light, which dispels the darkness of fear and anxiety. A day of peace, which makes for encounter, dialogue and reconciliation. A day of joy: a “great joy” for the poor, the lowly and for all the people (cf. Lk 2:10).

On this day, Jesus, the Saviour is born of the Virgin Mary. The Crib makes us see the “sign” which God has given us: “a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger” (Lk 2:12). Like the shepherds of Bethlehem, may we too set out to see this sign, this event which is renewed yearly in the Church. Christmas is an event which is renewed in every family, parish and community which receives the love of God made incarnate in Jesus Christ. Like Mary, the Church shows to everyone the “sign” of God: the Child whom she bore in her womb and to whom she gave birth, yet who is the Son of the Most High, since he “is of the Holy

Spirit” (Mt 1:20). He is truly the Saviour, for he is the Lamb of God who takes upon himself the sin of the world (cf. Jn 1:29). With the shepherds, let us bow down before the Lamb, let us worship God’s goodness made flesh, and let us allow tears of repentance to fill our eyes and cleanse our hearts.

He alone, he alone can save us. Only God’s mercy can free humanity from the many forms of evil, at times monstrous evil, which selfishness spawns in our midst. The grace of God can convert hearts and offer mankind a way out of humanly insoluble situations.

Where God is born, hope is born. Where God is born, peace is born. And where peace is born, there is no longer room for hatred and for war. Yet precisely where the incarnate Son of God came into the world, tensions and violence persist, and peace remains a gift to be implored and built. May Israelis and Palestinians resume direct dialogue and reach an agreement which will enable the two peoples to live together in harmony, ending a conflict which has long set them at odds, with grave repercussions for the entire region.

We pray to the Lord that the agreement reached in the United Nations may succeed in halting as quickly as possible the clash of arms in Syria and in remedying the extremely grave humanitarian situation of its suffering people. It is likewise urgent that the agreement on Libya be supported by all, so as to overcome the grave divisions and violence afflicting the country. May the attention of the international community be unanimously directed to ending the atrocities which in those countries, as well as in Iraq, Libya, Yemen and sub-Saharan Africa, even now reap numerous victims, cause immense suffering and do not even spare the historical and cultural patrimony of entire peoples. My thoughts also turn to those affected by brutal acts of terrorism, particularly the recent

massacres which took place in Egyptian airspace, in Beirut, Paris, Bamako and Tunis.

To our brothers and sisters who in many parts of the world are being persecuted for their faith, may the Child Jesus grant consolation and strength.

We also pray for peace and concord among the peoples of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and South Sudan, that dialogue may lead to a strengthened common commitment to the building of civil societies animated by a sincere spirit of reconciliation and of mutual understanding.

May Christmas also bring true peace to Ukraine, offer comfort to those suffering from the effects of the conflict, and inspire willingness to carry out the agreements made to restore concord in the entire country.

May the joy of this day illumine the efforts of the Colombian people so that, inspired by hope, they may continue their commitment to working for the desired peace.

Where God is born, hope is born; and where hope is born, persons regain their dignity. Yet even today great numbers of men and woman are deprived of their human dignity and, like the child Jesus, suffer cold, poverty, and rejection. May our closeness today be felt by those who are most vulnerable, especially child soldiers, women who suffer violence, and the victims of human trafficking and the drug trade.

Nor may our encouragement be lacking to all those fleeing extreme poverty or war, travelling all too often in inhumane conditions

and not infrequently at the risk of their lives. May God repay all those, both individuals and states, who generously work to provide assistance and welcome to the numerous migrants and refugees, helping them to build a dignified future for themselves and for their dear ones, and to be integrated in the societies which receive them.

On this festal day may the Lord grant renewed hope to all those who lack employment; may he sustain the commitment of those with public responsibilities in political and economic life, that they may work to pursue the common good and to protect the dignity of every human life.

Where God is born, mercy flourishes. Mercy is the most precious gift which God gives us, especially during this Jubilee year in which we are called to discover that tender love of our heavenly Father for each of us. May the Lord enable prisoners in particular to experience his merciful love, which heals wounds and triumphs over evil.

Today, then, let us together rejoice in the day of our salvation. As we contemplate the Crib, let us gaze on the open arms of Jesus, which show us the merciful embrace of God, as we hear the cries of the Child who whispers to us: “for my brethren and companions’ sake, I will say: Peace be within you” (Ps 121[122]:8).

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS  
**POPE FRANCIS**  
 FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE  
**XLIX WORLD DAY OF PEACE**

1 JANUARY 2016

## Overcome Indifference and Win Peace

**1. God is not indifferent! God cares about mankind! God does not abandon us!** At the beginning of the New Year, I would like to share not only this profound conviction but also my cordial good wishes for prosperity, peace and the fulfilment of the hopes of every man and every woman, every family, people and nation throughout the world, including all Heads of State and Government and all religious leaders. We continue to trust that 2016 will see us all firmly and confidently engaged, on different levels, in the pursuit of justice and peace. Peace is both God's gift and a human achievement. As a gift of God, it is entrusted to all men and women, who are called to attain it.

### Maintaining our reasons for hope

2. Sadly, war and terrorism, accompanied by kidnapping, ethnic or religious persecution and the misuse of power, marked the past year from start to finish. In many parts of the world, these have become so common as to constitute a real "third world war fought piecemeal". Yet some events of the year now ending inspire me, in looking ahead to the new year, to encourage everyone not to lose hope in our human ability to conquer evil and to combat resignation and indifference. They demonstrate our capacity to show solidarity and to rise above self-interest, apathy and indifference in the face of critical situations.

Here I would mention the efforts to bring world leaders together at COP21 in the search for new ways to confront climate change and to protect the earth, our common home. We can also think of two earlier global events: the Addis Ababa Summit for funding sustainable development worldwide and the adoption of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, aimed at ensuring a more dignified standard of living for all the world's peoples, especially the poor, by that year.

For the Church, 2015 was a special year, since it marked the fiftieth anniversary of two documents of the Second Vatican Council which eloquently expressed her sense of solidarity with the world. Pope John XXIII, at the beginning of the Council, wanted to open wide the windows of the Church and to improve her communication with the world. The two documents, *Nostra Aetate* and *Gaudium et Spes*, are emblematic of the new relationship of dialogue, solidarity and accompaniment which the Church sought to awaken within the human family. In the Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, the Church expressed her openness to dialogue with non-Christian religions. In the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, based on a recognition that "the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well",<sup>[1]</sup> the Church proposed to enter into dialogue with the entire human family about the problems of our world, as a sign of solidarity, respect and affection.<sup>[2]</sup>

Along these same lines, with the present Jubilee of Mercy I want to invite the Church to pray and work so that every Christian will have a humble and compassionate heart, one capable of proclaiming and witnessing to mercy. It is my hope that all of us will learn to "forgive and give", to become more open "to those living on the outermost fringes of society - fringes which modern society itself creates", and to refuse to fall into "a humiliating indifference or a monotonous routine which prevents us from discovering what is new! Let us ward off destructive cynicism!"<sup>[3]</sup>

There are many good reasons to believe in mankind's capacity to act together in solidarity and, on the basis of our interconnection and interdependence, to demonstrate concern for the more vulnerable of our brothers and sisters and for the protection of the common good. This attitude of mutual responsibility is rooted in our fundamental vocation to fraternity and a life in common. Personal dignity and interpersonal relationships are what constitute us as human beings whom God willed to create in his own image and likeness. As creatures endowed with inalienable dignity, we are related to all our brothers and sisters, for whom we are responsible and with whom we act in solidarity. Lacking this relationship, we would be less human. We see, then, how indifference represents a menace to the human family. As we approach a new year, I would ask everyone to take stock of this reality, in order to overcome indifference and to win peace.

### **Kinds of indifference**

3. Clearly, indifference is not something new; every period of history has known people who close their hearts to the needs of others, who close their eyes to what is happening around them, who turn aside to avoid encountering other people's problems. But in our day, indifference has ceased to be a purely personal matter and has taken on broader dimensions, producing a certain "globalization of indifference".

The first kind of indifference in human society is indifference to God, which then leads to indifference to one's neighbour and to the environment. This is one of the grave consequences of a false humanism and practical materialism allied to relativism and nihilism. We have come to think that we are the source and creator of ourselves, our lives and society. We feel self-sufficient, prepared not only to find a substitute for God but to do completely without him. As a consequence, we feel that we owe nothing to anyone but ourselves, and we claim only rights.[4] Against this erroneous

understanding of the person, Pope Benedict XVI observed that neither man himself nor human development can, on their own, answer the question of our ultimate meaning.[5] Paul VI likewise stated that "there is no true humanism but that which is open to the Absolute, and is conscious of a vocation which gives human life its authentic significance".[6]

Indifference to our neighbour shows itself in different ways. Some people are well-informed; they listen to the radio, read the newspapers or watch television, but they do so mechanically and without engagement. They are vaguely aware of the tragedies afflicting humanity, but they have no sense of involvement or compassion. Theirs is the attitude of those who know, but keep their gaze, their thoughts and their actions focused on themselves. Sadly, it must be said that today's information explosion does not of itself lead to an increased concern for other people's problems, which demands openness and a sense of solidarity.[7] Indeed, the information glut can numb people's sensibilities and to some degree downplay the gravity of the problems. There are those who "simply content themselves with blaming the poor and the poor countries themselves for their troubles; indulging in unwarranted generalizations, they claim that the solution is an 'education' that would tranquilize them, making them tame and harmless. All this becomes even more exasperating for the marginalized in the light of the widespread and deeply rooted corruption found in many countries – in their governments, businesses and institutions – whatever the political ideology of their leaders." [8]

In other cases, indifference shows itself in lack of concern for what is happening around us, especially if it does not touch us directly. Some people prefer not to ask questions or seek answers; they lead lives of comfort, deaf to the cry of those who suffer. Almost imperceptibly, we grow incapable of feeling compassion for others and for their problems; we have no interest in caring for them, as if their troubles were their own responsibility, and none of our business.[9] "When we are healthy and

comfortable, we forget about others (something God the Father never does): we are unconcerned with their problems, their sufferings and the injustices they endure... Our heart grows cold. As long as I am relatively healthy and comfortable, I don't think about those less well off.”[10]

Because we dwell in a common home, we cannot help but ask ourselves about the state of its health, as I sought to do in *Laudato Si'*. Water and air pollution, the indiscriminate exploitation of forests and the destruction of the natural environment are often the result of man's indifference to man, since everything is interrelated. Then too, there is the way we treat animals, which has an effect on the way we treat other people[11], and the cases where people freely do elsewhere what they would never dare do at home.[12]

In these and in other situations, indifference leads to self-absorption and a lack of commitment. It thus contributes to the absence of peace with God, with our neighbour and with the environment.

#### **Peace threatened by globalized indifference**

4. Indifference towards God transcends the purely private sphere of the individual and affects the public and social sphere. As Benedict XVI pointed out, “the glorification of God and human peace on earth are closely linked”. [13] Indeed, “without openness to the transcendent, human beings easily become prey to relativism and find it difficult to act justly and to work for peace.[14] Disregard and the denial of God, which lead man to acknowledge no norm above himself and himself alone, have produced untold cruelty and violence.[15]

On both the individual and communitarian levels, indifference to one's neighbour, born of indifference to God, finds expression in disinterest and a lack of engagement, which only help to prolong situations of injustice and grave social imbalance. These in turn can lead to conflicts or, in any event, generate a climate of dissatisfaction which risks exploding sooner

or later into acts of violence and insecurity.

Indifference and lack of commitment constitute a grave dereliction of the duty whereby each of us must work in accordance with our abilities and our role in society for the promotion of the common good, and in particular for peace, which is one of mankind's most precious goods.[16]

On the institutional level, indifference to others and to their dignity, their fundamental rights and their freedom, when it is part of a culture shaped by the pursuit of profit and hedonism, can foster and even justify actions and policies which ultimately represent threats to peace. Indifference can even lead to justifying deplorable economic policies which breed injustice, division and violence for the sake of ensuring the wellbeing of individuals or nations. Not infrequently, economic and political projects aim at securing or maintaining power and wealth, even at the cost of trampling on the basic rights and needs of others. When people witness the denial of their elementary rights, such as the right to food, water, health care or employment, they are tempted to obtain them by force.[17]

Moreover, indifference to the natural environment, by countenancing deforestation, pollution and natural catastrophes which uproot entire communities from their ecosystem and create profound insecurity, ends up creating new forms of poverty and new situations of injustice, often with dire consequences for security and peace. How many wars have been fought, and how many will continue to be fought, over a shortage of goods or out of an insatiable thirst for natural resources?[18]

#### **From indifference to mercy: the conversion of hearts**

5. One year ago, in my Message for the 2015 World Day of Peace, with the motto “No Longer Slaves, but Brothers and Sisters”, I evoked the first biblical icon of human brotherhood, that of Cain and Abel (cf. Gen 4:1-16). I meant to draw attract attention to how from the very beginning this original brotherhood was betrayed. Cain and Abel were brothers. Both

came forth from the same womb, they were equal in dignity and created in the image and likeness of God; but their relationship as brothers was destroyed. “It was not only that Cain could not stand Abel; he killed him out of envy.”[19] Fratricide was the form of betrayal, and Cain’s refusal to acknowledge Abel as his brother became the first rupture in the family relations of fraternity, solidarity and mutual respect.

God then intervened to remind man of his responsibility towards his fellows, as he had also done when Adam and Eve, our first parents, ruptured their relationship with him, their Creator. “Then the Lord said to Cain: “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?” But the Lord replied: “What you have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground” (Gen 4:9-10).

Cain said he did not know what had happened to his brother, that he was not his brother’s keeper. He did not feel responsible for his life, for his fate. He did not feel involved. He was indifferent to his brother, despite their common origin. How sad! What a sorry tale of brothers, of families, of human beings! This was the first display of indifference between brothers. God, however, is not indifferent. Abel’s blood had immense value in his eyes, and he asked Cain to give an account of it. At the origin of the human race, God shows himself to be involved in man’s destiny. Later, when the children of Israel were slaves in Egypt, God once more intervened to tell Moses: “I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey” (Ex 3:7-8). We should note the verbs which describe God’s intervention: he sees, hears, knows, comes down and delivers. God does not remain indifferent. He is attentive and he acts.

In the same way, in Jesus his Son, God has come down among us. He took flesh and showed his solidarity with humanity in all things but sin. Jesus identified with us: he became “the first-born among many brethren” (Rom 8:29). He was not content merely to teach the crowds, but he was concerned for their welfare, especially when he saw them hungry (cf. Mk 6:34-44) or without work (cf. Mt 20:3). He was concerned not only for men and women, but also for the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, plants and trees, all things great and small. He saw and embraced all of creation. But he did more than just see; he touched people’s lives, he spoke to them, helped them and showed kindness to those in need. Not only this, but he felt strong emotions and he wept (cf. Jn 11:33-44). And he worked to put an end to suffering, sorrow, misery and death.

Jesus taught us to be merciful like our heavenly Father (cf. Lk 6:36). In the parable of the Good Samaritan (cf. Lk 10:29-37), he condemned those who fail to help others in need, those who “pass by on the other side” (cf. Lk 10:31-32). By this example, he taught his listeners, and his disciples in particular, to stop and to help alleviate the sufferings of this world and the pain of our brothers and sisters, using whatever means are at hand, beginning with our own time, however busy we may be. Indifference often seeks excuses: observing ritual prescriptions, looking to all the things needing to be done, hiding behind hostilities and prejudices which keep us apart.

Mercy is the heart of God. It must also be the heart of the members of the one great family of his children: a heart which beats all the more strongly wherever human dignity – as a reflection of the face of God in his creatures – is in play. Jesus tells us that love for others – foreigners, the sick, prisoners, the homeless, even our enemies – is the yardstick by which God will judge our actions. Our eternal destiny depends on this. It is not surprising that the Apostle Paul tells the Christians of Rome to rejoice with those who rejoice and to weep with those who weep (cf. Rom 12:15),

or that he encourages the Corinthians to take up collections as a sign of solidarity with the suffering members of the Church (cf. 1 Cor 16:2-3). And Saint John writes: “If any one has the world’s goods and sees his brother or sister in need, yet refuses help, how does God’s love abide in him? (1 Jn 3:17; cf. Jas 2:15-16).

This then is why “it is absolutely essential for the Church and for the credibility of her message that she herself live and testify to mercy. Her language and her gestures must transmit mercy, so as to touch the hearts of all people and inspire them once more to find the road that leads to the Father. The Church’s first truth is the love of Christ. The Church makes herself a servant of this love and mediates it to all people: a love that forgives and expresses itself in the gift of oneself. Consequently, wherever the Church is present, the mercy of the Father must be evident. In our parishes, communities, associations and movements, in a word, wherever there are Christians, everyone should find an oasis of mercy.”[20]

We too, then, are called to make compassion, love, mercy and solidarity a true way of life, a rule of conduct in our relationships with one another.[21] This requires the conversion of our hearts: the grace of God has to turn our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh (cf. Ezek 36:26), open to others in authentic solidarity. For solidarity is much more than a “feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far”. [22] Solidarity is “a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all”, [23] because compassion flows from fraternity.

Understood in this way, solidarity represents the moral and social attitude which best corresponds to an awareness of the scourges of our own day, and to the growing interdependence, especially in a globalized world, between the lives of given individuals and communities and those of other

men and women in the rest of the world.[24]

### **Building a culture of solidarity and mercy to overcome indifference**

6. Solidarity, as a moral virtue and social attitude born of personal conversion, calls for commitment on the part of those responsible for education and formation.

I think first of families, which are called to a primary and vital mission of education. Families are the first place where the values of love and fraternity, togetherness and sharing, concern and care for others are lived out and handed on. They are also the privileged milieu for transmitting the faith, beginning with those first simple gestures of devotion which mothers teach their children.[25]

Teachers, who have the challenging task of training children and youth in schools or other settings, should be conscious that their responsibility extends also to the moral, spiritual and social aspects of life. The values of freedom, mutual respect and solidarity can be handed on from a tender age. Speaking to educators, Pope Benedict XVI noted that: “Every educational setting can be a place of openness to the transcendent and to others; a place of dialogue, cohesiveness and attentive listening, where young people feel appreciated for their personal abilities and inner riches, and can learn to esteem their brothers and sisters. May young people be taught to savour the joy which comes from the daily exercise of charity and compassion towards others and from taking an active part in the building of a more humane and fraternal society”. [26]

Communicators also have a responsibility for education and formation, especially nowadays, when the means of information and communication are so widespread. Their duty is first and foremost to serve the truth, and not particular interests. For the media “not only inform but also form the minds of their audiences, and so they can make a significant contribution to the education of young people. It is important never to forget that the

connection between education and communication is extremely close: education takes place through communication, which influences, for better or worse, the formation of the person.”[27]

Communicators should also be mindful that the way in which information is obtained and made public should always be legally and morally admissible.

### **Peace: the fruit of a culture of solidarity, mercy and compassion**

7. While conscious of the threat posed by a globalization of indifference, we should also recognize that, in the scenario I have just described, there are also many positive initiatives which testify to the compassion, mercy and solidarity of which we are capable.

Here I would offer some examples of praiseworthy commitment, which demonstrate how all of us can overcome indifference in choosing not to close our eyes to our neighbour. These represent good practices on the way to a more humane society.

There are many non-governmental and charitable organizations, both within and outside the Church, whose members, amidst epidemics, disasters and armed conflicts, brave difficulties and dangers in caring for the injured and sick, and in burying the dead. I would also mention those individuals and associations which assist migrants who cross deserts and seas in search of a better life. These efforts are spiritual and corporal works of mercy on which we will be judged at the end of our lives.

I think also of the journalists and photographers who shape public opinion on difficult situations which trouble our consciences, and all those devoted to the defence of human rights, especially the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, indigenous peoples, women and children, and the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. Among them are also many priests and missionaries who, as good pastors, remain at the side of their flock and

support them, heedless of danger and hardship, especially during armed conflicts.

How many families, amid occupational and social difficulties, make great sacrifices to provide their children with a “counter-cultural” education in the values of solidarity, compassion and fraternity! How many families open their hearts and homes to those in need, such as refugees and migrants! I wish to thank in a particular way all those individuals, families, parishes, religious communities, monasteries and shrines who readily responded to my appeal to welcome a refugee family.[28]

Finally, I would mention those young people who join in undertaking works of solidarity, and all those who generously help their neighbours in need in their cities and countries and elsewhere in the world. I thank and encourage everyone engaged in such efforts, which often pass unobserved. Their hunger and thirst for justice will be satisfied, their mercy will lead them to find mercy and, as peacemakers, they will be called children of God (cf. Mt 5:6-9).

### **Peace in the sign of the Jubilee of Mercy**

8. In the spirit of the Jubilee of Mercy, all of us are called to realize how indifference can manifest itself in our lives and to work concretely to improve the world around us, beginning with our families, neighbours and places of employment.

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.

With regard to prisoners, it would appear that in many cases practical measures are urgently needed to improve their living conditions, with particular concern for those detained while awaiting trial.[29] It must be kept in mind that penal sanctions have the aim of rehabilitation, while national



laws should consider the possibility of other establishing penalties than incarceration. In this context, I would like once more to appeal to governmental authorities to abolish the death penalty where it is still in force, and to consider the possibility of an amnesty.

With regard to migrants, I would ask that legislation on migration be reviewed, so, while respecting reciprocal rights and responsibilities, it can reflect a readiness to welcome migrants and to facilitate their integration. Special concern should be paid to the conditions for legal residency, since having to live clandestinely can lead to criminal behaviour.

In this Jubilee Year, I would also appeal to national leaders for concrete gestures in favour of our brothers and sisters who suffer from the lack of labour, land and lodging. I am thinking of the creation of dignified jobs to combat the social plague of unemployment, which affects many families and young people, with grave effects for society as a whole. Unemployment takes a heavy toll on people's sense of dignity and hope, and can only be partially compensated for by welfare benefits, however necessary these may be, provided to the unemployed and their families. Special attention needs to be given to women – who unfortunately still encounter discrimination in the workplace – and to some categories of workers whose conditions are precarious or dangerous, and whose pay is not commensurate to the importance of their social mission.

Finally, I express my hope that effective steps will be taken to improve the living conditions of the sick by ensuring that all have access to medical treatment and pharmaceuticals essential for life, as well as the possibility of home care.

Looking beyond their own borders, national leaders are also called to renew their relations with other peoples and to enable their real participation and inclusion in the life of the international community, in order to ensure fraternity within the family of nations as well.

With this in mind, I would like to make a threefold appeal to the leaders of nations: to refrain from drawing other peoples into conflicts or wars which destroy not only their material, cultural and social legacy, but also – and in the long term – their moral and spiritual integrity; to forgive or manage in a sustainable way the international debt of the poorer nations; and to adopt policies of cooperation which, instead of bowing before the dictatorship of certain ideologies, will respect the values of local populations and, in any case, not prove detrimental to the fundamental and inalienable right to life of the unborn.

I entrust these reflections, together with my best wishes for the New Year, to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother, who cares for the needs of our human family, that she may obtain from her Son Jesus, the Prince of Peace, the granting of our prayers and the blessing of our daily efforts for a fraternal and united world.

*From the Vatican, 8 December 2015*

*Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

*Opening of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy*

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[1] SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 1.

[2] Cf. *ibid.*, 3.

[3] Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy *Misericordiae Vultus*, 14-15.

[4] Cf. BENEDICT XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*, 43.

[5] Cf. *ibid.*, 16.

[6] Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, 42.

[7] “As society becomes ever more globalized, it makes us neighbours but does not make us brothers. Reason, by itself, is capable of grasping the equality between men and of giving stability to their civic coexistence, but it cannot establish fraternity” (BENEDICT XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*, 19).

[8] Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 60.

[9] Cf. *ibid.*, 54.

[10] Message for Lent 2015.

[11] Cf. Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 92.

[12] Cf. *ibid.*, 51.

[13] Address to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, 7 January 2013.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Cf. BENEDICT XVI, Intervention during the Day of Reflection, Dialogue and Prayer for Peace and Justice in the World, Assisi, 27 October 2011.

[16] Cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 217-237.

[17] “Until exclusion and inequality in society and between peoples are reversed, it will be impossible to eliminate violence. The poor and the poor peoples are accused of violence, yet without equal opportunities the different forms of aggression and conflict will find a fertile terrain for growth and eventually explode. When a society – whether local, national or global – is willing to leave a part of itself on the fringes, no political programmes or resources spent on law enforcement or surveillance systems can indefinitely guarantee tranquility. This is not the case simply

because inequality provokes a violent reaction from those excluded from the system, but because the socioeconomic system is unjust at its root. Just as goodness tends to spread, the toleration of evil, which is injustice, tends to expand its baneful influence and quietly to undermine any political and social system, no matter how solid it may appear” (Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 59),

[18] Cf. Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 31 and 48.

[19] Message for the 2015 World Day of Peace, 2.

[20] Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy *Misericordiae Vultus*, 12.

[21] Cf. *ibid.*, 13.

[22] JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] Cf. *ibid.*

[25] Cf. Catechesis for the General Audience of 7 January 2015.

[26] Message for the 2012 World Day of Peace, 2.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] Cf. Angelus Address of 6 September 2015.

[29] Cf. Address to Delegates of the International Association of Penal Law, 23 October 2014.

## FOR THE WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

January 17, 2016

### “Migrants and Refugees Challenge Us. The Response of the Gospel of Mercy”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the Bull of indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy I noted that “at times we are called to gaze even more attentively on mercy so that we may become a more effective sign of the Father’s action in our lives” (Misericordiae Vultus, 3). God’s love is meant to reach out to each and every person. Those who welcome the Father’s embrace, for their part, become so many other open arms and embraces, enabling every person to feel loved like a child and “at home” as part of the one human family. God’s fatherly care extends to everyone, like the care of a shepherd for his flock, but it is particularly concerned for the needs of the sheep who are wounded, weary or ill. Jesus told us that the Father stoops to help those overcome by physical or moral poverty; the more serious their condition, the more powerfully is his divine mercy revealed.

In our time, migration is growing worldwide. Refugees and people fleeing from their homes challenge individuals and communities, and their traditional ways of life; at times they upset the cultural and social horizons which they encounter. Increasingly, the victims of violence and poverty, leaving their homelands, are exploited by human traffickers during their journey towards the dream of a better future. If they survive the abuses and hardships of the journey, they then have to face latent

suspicions and fear. In the end, they frequently encounter a lack of clear and practical policies regulating the acceptance of migrants and providing for short or long term programmes of integration respectful of the rights and duties of all. Today, more than in the past, the Gospel of mercy troubles our consciences, prevents us from taking the suffering of others for granted, and points out way of responding which, grounded in the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, find practical expression in works of spiritual and corporal mercy.

In the light of these facts, I have chosen as the theme of the 2016 World Day of Migrants and Refugees: Migrants and Refugees Challenge Us. The Response of the Gospel of Mercy. Migration movements are now a structural reality, and our primary issue must be to deal with the present emergency phase by providing programmes which address the causes of migration and the changes it entails, including its effect on the makeup of societies and peoples. The tragic stories of millions of men and women daily confront the international community as a result of the outbreak of unacceptable humanitarian crises in different parts of the world. Indifference and silence lead to complicity whenever we stand by as people are dying of suffocation, starvation, violence and shipwreck. Whether large or small in scale, these are always tragedies, even when a single human life is lost.

Migrants are our brothers and sisters in search of a better life, far away from poverty, hunger, exploitation and the unjust distribution of the planet’s resources which are meant to be equitably shared by all. Don’t we all want a better, more decent and prosperous life to share with our loved ones?

At this moment in human history, marked by great movements of migration, identity is not a secondary issue. Those who migrate are forced to change some of their most distinctive characteristics and, whether they

like or not, even those who welcome them are also forced to change. How can we experience these changes not as obstacles to genuine development, rather as opportunities for genuine human, social and spiritual growth, a growth which respects and promotes those values which make us ever more humane and help us to live a balanced relationship with God, others and creation?

The presence of migrants and refugees seriously challenges the various societies which accept them. Those societies are faced with new situations which could create serious hardship unless they are suitably motivated, managed and regulated. How can we ensure that integration will become mutual enrichment, open up positive perspectives to communities, and prevent the danger of discrimination, racism, extreme nationalism or xenophobia?

Biblical revelation urges us to welcome the stranger; it tells us that in so doing, we open our doors to God, and that in the faces of others we see the face of Christ himself. Many institutions, associations, movements and groups, diocesan, national and international organizations are experiencing the wonder and joy of the feast of encounter, sharing and solidarity. They have heard the voice of Jesus Christ: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock" (Rev 3:20). Yet there continue to be debates about the conditions and limits to be set for the reception of migrants, not only on the level of national policies, but also in some parish communities whose traditional tranquillity seems to be threatened.

Faced with these issues, how can the Church fail to be inspired by the example and words of Jesus Christ? The answer of the Gospel is mercy.

In the first place, mercy is a gift of God the Father who is revealed in the Son. God's mercy gives rise to joyful gratitude for the hope which opens up before us in the mystery of our redemption by Christ's blood.

Mercy nourishes and strengthens solidarity towards others as a necessary response to God's gracious love, "which has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Rom 5:5). Each of us is responsible for his or her neighbour: we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. Concern for fostering good relationships with others and the ability to overcome prejudice and fear are essential ingredients for promoting the culture of encounter, in which we are not only prepared to give, but also to receive from others. Hospitality, in fact, grows from both giving and receiving.

From this perspective, it is important to view migrants not only on the basis of their status as regular or irregular, but above all as people whose dignity is to be protected and who are capable of contributing to progress and the general welfare. This is especially the case when they responsibly assume their obligations towards those who receive them, gratefully respecting the material and spiritual heritage of the host country, obeying its laws and helping with its needs. Migrations cannot be reduced merely to their political and legislative aspects, their economic implications and the concrete coexistence of various cultures in one territory. All these complement the defence and promotion of the human person, the culture of encounter, and the unity of peoples, where the Gospel of mercy inspires and encourages ways of renewing and transforming the whole of humanity.

The Church stands at the side of all who work to defend each person's right to live with dignity, first and foremost by exercising the right not to emigrate and to contribute to the development of one's country of origin. This process should include, from the outset, the need to assist the countries which migrants and refugees leave. This will demonstrate that solidarity, cooperation, international interdependence and the equitable distribution of the earth's goods are essential for more decisive efforts, especially in areas where migration movements begin, to eliminate those imbalances which lead people, individually or collectively, to abandon

their own natural and cultural environment. In any case, it is necessary to avert, if possible at the earliest stages, the flight of refugees and departures as a result of poverty, violence and persecution.

Public opinion also needs to be correctly formed, not least to prevent unwarranted fears and speculations detrimental to migrants.

No one can claim to be indifferent in the face of new forms of slavery imposed by criminal organizations which buy and sell men, women and children as forced labourers in construction, agriculture, fishing or in other markets. How many minors are still forced to fight in militias as child soldiers! How many people are victims of organ trafficking, forced begging and sexual exploitation! Today's refugees are fleeing from these aberrant crimes, and they appeal to the Church and the human community to ensure that, in the outstretched hand of those who receive them, they can see the face of the Lord, "the Father of mercies and God of all consolation" (2 Cor 1:3).

Dear brothers and sisters, migrants and refugees! At the heart of the Gospel of mercy the encounter and acceptance by others are intertwined with the encounter and acceptance of God himself. Welcoming others means welcoming God in person! Do not let yourselves be robbed of the hope and joy of life born of your experience of God's mercy, as manifested in the people you meet on your journey! I entrust you to the Virgin Mary, Mother of migrants and refugees, and to Saint Joseph, who experienced the bitterness of emigration to Egypt. To their intercession I also commend those who invest so much energy, time and resources to the pastoral and social care of migrants. To all I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing.

*From the Vatican, September 12, 2015,*

*Memorial of the Holy Name of Mary*

## PASTORAL LETTER JUBILEE OF MERCY FOR MIGRANTS

Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of  
Migrants and Itinerant People  
Chinese Regional Bishops' Conference

December 8, 2015, the feast of the Immaculate Conception is the beginning of the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy which was declared by Pope Francis until November 20, 2016 on the feast of Christ the King. It was also being proposed that the Jubilee day for Migrants and Refugees be celebrated on the 102nd World Day of Migrants and Refugees on January 17th, 2016, in which the Holy Father has dedicated with his message to the theme: "Migrants and Refugees challenge us. The response of the Gospel of Mercy".

In line with this declaration, the Chinese Regional Bishops' Conference (CRBC) has designated January 17, 2016 as the new date for our annual National Migrants' Sunday celebration in Taiwan to streamline in the celebration of the World Migrants' Day every year on the third Sunday of January.

With this new development, I instructed my Executive Secretary, Fr. Eliseo Napiere, MSP, to inform and disseminate this information to all the Churches, chaplaincies, oratories where migrants are frequently gather and coordinate with the local Bishops, parish priests, chaplains, volunteers with this new development and implement the instructions therein.

As we start anew with our migrants' Sunday celebration, I wish to implement in my commission the proposal of the Pontifical Council for

the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People that the Jubilee day of Migrants and Refugees be celebrated at the local level in the 7 Dioceses of the island of Taiwan on January 17, 2016 in conjunction with the celebration of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees on January 17, 2016.

It is being proposed:

- that the Jubilee Day be celebrated in the diocesan and parish levels with the active participation of Migrants and with the involvement of the entire Catholic community (the diocese and the parish are the place where interaction with the migrants practically takes place) and I wish that the local Parish Priests, Chaplains, and volunteers be actively involved in this interaction;
- that the celebration be a distinct opportunity for tangible signs of solidarity with migrants in the spirit of the works of mercy: gestures that would both have a symbolic significance and express our closeness and sensitivity to migrants;
- that this Event be a specific occasion to raise awareness of the faithful to the migration phenomenon, by presenting the full picture of the migration reality - that is, with all of its positive aspects, while at the same time presenting its dangers and risks;
- that the Jubilee Day be an opportunity to distribute the annual Message of the Holy Father;
- that the celebration not be confined to a single day, but that it may be a chance to plan and organise other initiatives relative to the migration phenomenon during the Year of Mercy.

The Holy Father, Pope Francis, in his message with a theme: "Migrants and refugees challenge us. The response of the Gospel of mercy." The statement explained that its first part 'Migrants and refugees challenge

us,' draws attention to the plight of so many men and women, forced to abandon their lands. The unrest in the Middle East has brought record numbers of migrants, according to the UN's refugee agency.

The second part of the theme, 'The response of the Gospel of mercy', the Holy Father went on to say, links to the phenomenon of migration, the response of the world, but particularly that of the Church. Recalling how during the Jubilee Year, Pope Francis calls on us to do acts of mercy, it added how Francis reminds us how **"Christ himself is present among the 'little ones', and that at the end of life we will be judged by our response of love."**

As we look at the bigger picture in the world about the plight of the migrants and refugees we also have a share in the context of Taiwan. We have more than 500,000 new immigrants, migrant workers, foreign students living in Taiwan which comprise 2.71% of the total population of 23 million. These migrants have experienced difficulties in integrating themselves to the local communities because of cultural and language barriers. The migrant workers experienced different kinds of abuses in their work places, others became the victims of human and labor trafficking. The Holy Father stresses that **"the victims of violence and poverty, leaving their homelands, are exploited by human traffickers during their journey towards the dream of a better future"**. The Holy Father continues that **"Biblical revelation urges us to welcome the stranger; it tells us that in so doing, we open our doors to God, and that in the faces of others we see the face of Christ himself. Many institutions, associations, movements and groups, diocesan, national and international organizations are experiencing the wonder and joy of the feast of encounter, sharing and solidarity"**. In Taiwan, the Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ECMI) is responding to this challenge through the commitment of our migrants' Chaplains, pastoral workers, and volunteers who are the silent heroes in

protecting the rights of the migrants as well as accompanying them in their **“experience of the wonder and joy of the feast of encounter and solidarity” (PF message).**

The Migrants’ Empowerment Network in Taiwan (MENT) is doing its mission to lobby for policy change in favour of the migrant workers and protect their rights and uphold their God given dignity. We have chaplains and volunteers too who also risk their lives in confronting the abusive system that destroys the value of human dignity of the migrants and new immigrants. Their efforts and commitments are seldom known to everyone for they are doing what they do in the silence of their hearts and in their commitment to love the people on the move. Sometimes they are misunderstood even in the eyes of the local church for their extra ordinary work in dealing the plight of the migrants especially in their high and low moments of their lives. The Holy Father reiterates that the **“Church stands at the side of all who work to defend each person’s right to live with dignity...”**

As we are now in the year of the Jubilee of Mercy, each one is **“called to gaze even more attentively on mercy so that we may become a more effective sign of the Father’s action in our lives”** (Misericordiae Vultus, 3). The Holy Father stresses once again that **“God’s love is meant to reach out to each and every person.”** That love is being lived-out by the people who understand fully the mystery of the Father’s love, the men and women who are open to the mercy of God and in turn showing mercy to those in need and acknowledged that everyone is a member of the one human family.

In this year of mercy, I enjoin everyone to do the corporal and spiritual works of mercy and share the vocation of being missionaries of mercy in your own humble way by showing and acting the merciful love of the Father in your locality. To be merciful is to be forgiving to those who hurt

us, to be merciful is to be compassionate to those who suffer from different kinds of injustice and maltreatment, to be merciful is to be welcoming to the strangers in our midst, to be merciful is to be opened to the mercy of God the Father.

I also enjoin the migrants’ coordinators and chaplains to exercise with utmost care their God given vocation as ordained ministers to be missionaries of mercy. To promote in their homilies the importance of jubilee year of mercy in the lives of the migrants. To be prudent in dealing the penitent-migrants during confession. The migrants have so many hurts brought about by the sins committed and hurts that also lead them to commit sin. Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the missionaries of mercy are endowed with wisdom, understanding, counsel (right judgment), knowledge, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord. These gifts will bring us to be opened to others for them to experience the wonder and awe of the Father’s mercy.

To the parish priests in the local Churches, the Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ECMI) wishes to invite you to heed the call of the Holy Father to open your church to the migrants and welcome them in your parish community. Allow them to integrate in the local Church by inviting them to join the local activities. They can only integrate if the local parish priest has an open heart to understand their plight as people on the move. They are one of us in the Church even though we differ in cultural tradition and language but we are one in the culture of mercy, love, and understanding. We differ in spoken language but we speak one language of the heart and the language of faith. Even those who are non-catholic migrants and immigrants are still welcome in our churches for our Church embraces everyone especially those who need our care. The Catholic Church looks beyond creed, race, and colors for everyone is a member of the one human family under the Fatherhood of One God. To borrow the words of Pope Francis: **“Welcoming others**

means welcoming God in person! Do not let yourselves be robbed of the hope and joy of life born of your experience of God's mercy, as manifested in the people you meet on your journey!"

Dear brothers and sisters, migrants, new immigrants, and in Taiwan! At the heart of the Gospel of mercy the encounter and acceptance by others are intertwined with the encounter and acceptance of God himself (PF Message). In this world, we are all migrants for our rightful place is in heaven with our merciful Father. I entrust you all to the Virgin Mary, Mother of migrants and refugees and to St. Joseph, who experiences the bitterness of emigration to Egypt. I also commend you to the intercession of the Chinese Martyrs-Saints, who died in the mercy and glory of God. To all I cordially impart my Episcopal Blessing.

DECEMBER 8, 2015

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Opening of the Jubilee Year of Mercy

+ BISHOP BOSCO LIN CHI-NAN, D.D.

Bishop of Tainan

President, Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral

Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

Chinese Regional Bishops' Conference

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