



**PONTIFICAL COUNCIL
FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE**

***CHRISTIANS AND HINDUS
FORMING THE YOUNG GENERATION INTO PEACE-MAKERS***

MESSAGE FOR THE FEAST OF DEEPAVALI

2012

Vatican City

Dear Hindu Friends,

1. The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue sends its warmest greetings and congratulations on the occasion of this year's Deepavali celebrations. May fellowship and fraternity shine forth more and more in your families and communities.

2. At this point in time in human history, when various negative forces threaten the legitimate aspirations in many regions of the world for peaceful co-existence, we would like to use this cherished tradition of sharing with you a reflection to explore the responsibility that Hindus, Christians and others have in doing everything possible to form all people, especially the young generation, into peace-makers.

3. Peace is not merely absence of war, nor is it a pact or treaty which ensures a tranquil life; rather, it is being complete and intact, a restoration of harmony (*cf.* BENEDICT XVI, *Ecclesia in Medio Oriente*, 9) and a fruit of charity. Parents, teachers, elders, religious and political leaders, peace-workers, those in the world of communications and all those who have the cause of peace at heart are called to educate the young generation, and are called to foster such wholeness.

4. To form young men and women into people of peace and builders of peace is an urgent summons to collective engagement and common action. If peace is to be authentic and enduring, it must be built on the pillars of truth, justice, love and freedom (*cf.* JOHN XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 35), and all young men and women need to be taught above all to act truthfully and justly in love and freedom. Furthermore, in all education for peace, cultural differences ought surely to be treated as a richness rather than a threat or danger.

5. The family is the first school of peace and the parents the primary educators for peace. By their example and teachings, they have the unique privilege of forming their children in values that are essential for peaceful living: mutual trust, respect, understanding, listening, sharing, caring and forgiving. In schools, colleges and universities, as young people mature by relating, studying and working with others from different religions and cultures, their teachers and others responsible for their training have the noble task of ensuring an education that respects and celebrates the innate dignity of all human beings and promotes friendship, justice, peace and cooperation for integral human development. With spiritual and moral values as the bedrock of education, it becomes their ethical imperative also to caution the students against ideologies that cause discord and division.

While states and individual leaders in the social, political and cultural fields, generally have their own important roles to play in strengthening the education of the young, religious leaders in particular, by reason of their vocation to be spiritual and moral leaders, must continue to inspire the young generation to walk the path of peace and to become

messengers of peace. Since all means of communication greatly shape the way people think, feel and act, those involved in these fields must, to the utmost possible extent, contribute to promoting thoughts, words, and works of peace. Indeed, young people themselves ought to live up to the ideals they set for others, by employing their freedom responsibly and by promoting cordial relationships for a culture of peace.

6. Evidently, the wholeness which peace conveys will shape a more fraternal world and a “new kind of fraternity” among people in which “a shared sense of the greatness of each person” will prevail. (cf. BENEDICT XVI, *Apostolic Journey to Lebanon, Meeting with Members of the Government, Institutions of the Republic, the Diplomatic Corps, Religious leaders and Representatives from the world of culture, 15 September 2012*).

7. May all of us seek, always and everywhere, to adhere to the moral and religious imperative to inspire the young as they strive to become peace-makers.

Wish you all a Blessed Deepavali!

Jean-Louis Card. Tauran

Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran
President

P. Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot

P. Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot, M.C.C.J.
Secretary

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE
00120 Vatican City

Tel: +39.06.6988 4321 / 06.6988 3648

Fax: +39.06.6988 4494

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/index.htm

E-mail: dialogo@interrel.va