



# CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

## ENGLAND AND WALES

### Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue

### Message for the Feast of Deepavali 2010

VATICAN CITY

#### **Christians and Hindus: Towards Enhancing of Mutual Respect, Trust and Cooperation**

Dear Hindu Friends,

1. As in the past, we join you in the celebration of *Deepavali*, sending you our sincere greetings and congratulations on behalf of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. May God, the Supreme Light illumine your minds, enlighten your hearts and strengthen the human bonds in your homes and communities! We wish you all a joy-filled *Deepavali*!
2. On this occasion, I would like to reflect on how best we can strengthen our friendship and cooperation by mutually ensuring and enhancing respect and trust.
3. Respect is the proper regard for the dignity which naturally pertains to every person irrespective of any external recognition. Dignity implies the inalienable right of every individual to be protected from any kind of violence, neglect or indifference. Mutual respect, therefore, becomes one of the fundamentals for peaceful and harmonious co-existence as well as progress in society.
4. Trust, on the other hand, nourishes every genuinely human relationship, both personal and communitarian. Mutual trust, besides creating an environment conducive to growth and the common good, shapes a shared conviction that we can depend on each other to achieve a common purpose.
5. This shared conviction creates in individuals and communities a readiness and willingness to enter into productive cooperation not only in the area of doing good in general, but also, addressing the grave and unresolved challenges of our times.
6. Applying the above to our engagement in appreciating and promoting interreligious dialogue and relations, we well know that respect and trust are not optional extras but the very pillars on which the edifice of our engagement itself stands. This engagement involving all of us, believers and people who seek the Truth with a sincere heart, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, is "... together to become artisans of peace, in a reciprocal commitment to understanding, respect and love." (*Address to the delegates of other Churches and Ecclesial communities and of other Religious traditions, 25 April 2005*).

Thus, the greater our engagement in interreligious dialogue, the fuller our respect and trust become, leading us to an increase in cooperation and common action. Pope John Paul II, of happy memory, on his first visit to India, said: "Dialogue between members of different religions increases and deepens mutual respect and paves the way for relationships that are crucial in solving the problems of human suffering" (*Address to non-Christian leaders, Madras – Chennai, 5 February 1986*).

7. As people who hold in common the well-being of individuals and communities, may we give greater visibility with every means in our power to a culture that promotes respect, trust and cooperation.

Once again, most cordially, I wish you a happy *Deepavali*.

**Jean-Louis Cardinal TAURAN**  
*President*

**Archbishop Pier Luigi Celata**  
*Secretary*

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