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Speech to Diplomats Accredited to the Vatican

Pope Francis

Pope Francis said world peace requires the defense of human dignity from violations such as world hunger, human trafficking and abortion. The pope made his remarks Jan. 13 in his first annual address to the Vatican diplomatic corps, offering a survey of world conflicts and crises he said were caused by “envy, selfishness, competition and the thirst for power and money.” Speaking in the Apostolic Palace’s Sala Regia, the vast “royal hall” where popes traditionally received Catholic monarchs, Pope Francis spoke of what he has frequently called a “throwaway culture,”

“God always forgives, we sometimes forgive, but when nature — creation — is mistreated, she never forgives!”

exemplified by widespread food waste that leaves children starving or malnourished. “Unfortunately, what is thrown away is not only food and dispensable objects but often human beings themselves, who are discarded as ‘unnecessary,’” the pope said. “It is frightful even to think that there are children, victims of abortion, who will never see the light of day; children being used as soldiers, abused and killed in armed conflicts; and children being bought and sold in that terrible form of modern slavery that is human trafficking, which is a crime against humanity.” The pope also lamented what he called rising numbers of “broken and troubled families,” which he attributed to both moral and material factors: the “weakening sense of belonging so typical of today’s world” as well as the “adverse conditions in which many families are forced to live, even to the point where they lack basic means of subsistence.” The pope spoke in Italian; a Vatican translation of his speech follows, copyright © 2014 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

It is now a long-established tradition that at the beginning of each new year the pope meets the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See to offer his greetings and good wishes, and to share some reflections close to his heart as a pastor concerned for the joys and sufferings of humanity. Today’s meeting, therefore, is a source of great joy. It allows me to extend to you and your families, and to the civil authorities and the peoples whom you rep-

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