

# origins

CNS documentary service

## Christmas Message *Urbi et Orbi*

### Pope Francis

*Pope Francis' thoughts turned to the suffering of refugees and other victims of war as he delivered his blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) on Christmas Day. An estimated 50,000 people packed St. Peter's Square for the midday message Dec. 25. "Only God's mercy can free humanity from the many forms of evil, at times monstrous evil, which selfishness spawns in our midst," Pope Francis said. With Christ's birth, he said, hope and peace are possible. The pope mourned the fact that "tensions and violence persist" even in the land where Jesus was born, and urged Israelis and Palestinians to resume direct dialogue. He also called for quick resolution of the violence and atrocities in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, sub-Saharan Africa and*

*"Happy Christmas! Christ is born for us, let us rejoice in the day of our salvation!"*

*other places and prayed for the victims of the Russian airliner bombed in Egyptian airspace and terrorist attacks in Beirut and Paris; Bamako, Mali; and Tunis, Tunisia. Pope Francis thanked those who help the world's many migrants and refugees to "build a dignified future for themselves and for their dear ones, and to be integrated in the societies that receive them." The pope spoke in Italian; a Vatican translation of his message follows, copyright © 2015 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.*

**d**ear 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" that 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 that dispels the darkness of fear and anxiety. A day of peace that makes for encounter, dialogue and, above all, 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 savior is born of the Virgin Mary. The crib makes us see the "sign" that 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 that is renewed yearly in the church.

*continued on page 526*



#### contents

- 525 Christmas Message *Urbi et Orbi*  
*by Pope Francis*
- 527 Christmas Midnight Mass Homily  
*by Pope Francis*
- 528 Speech to Roman Curia  
*by Pope Francis*
- 531 Rejecting Hatred: Fifty Years of Catholic Dialogue With Jews and Muslims Since *Nostra Aetate*  
*by Father Patrick J. Ryan, SJ*
- 540 Datebook
- 540 On File

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