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Speech to Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Vatican

Pope Francis

In his annual address to diplomats accredited to the Holy See, Pope Francis highlighted the plight of migrants and refugees and called on the international community to rethink “entrenched habits and practices” to solve the worldwide crisis. Speaking Jan. 11 at the Vatican, the pope made a special appeal on behalf of those fleeing war and religious persecution, saying they often find themselves at the mercy of “the powerful who exploit the weak.” He criticized a worldwide “culture of waste” that sacrifices “men and women before the idols of profit and consumption.”

“The greatest challenge we face is that of overcoming indifference and working together for peace.”

Pope Francis also reviewed his own travels to Africa, North and South America and Asia during 2015, saying they were linked by a common theme of mercy, especially in areas suffering from the effects of war, poverty, social inequality and persecution. He said the current Year of Mercy can serve as an opportunity to overcome indifference and work for lasting peace in the world. The pope spoke in Italian; a Vatican translation of his speech follows, copyright © 2016 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

I offer you a cordial welcome to this annual gathering. It allows me to offer you my best wishes for the new year and to reflect with you on the state of our world, so loved and blessed by God, and yet fraught with so many ills. I thank your new dean, His Excellency Armindo Fernandes do Espírito Santo Veira, the ambassador of Angola, for his kind greeting in the name of the entire diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See. In a special way, I would also like to remember the late ambassadors of Cuba, Rodney Alejandro López Clemente, and Liberia, Rudolf P. von Ballmoos, both of whom left us in this past month.

This occasion also allows me to offer a particular word of welcome to those of you who join us for the first time. I note with satisfaction that the number of resident ambassadors in Rome has increased over the past year. This is an important sign of the interest with which the international community

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