



# The Holy See

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***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN XXIII  
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GREETING  
TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE\****

*23 December 1962*

... Public opinion, in general, has well understood that the Church works in the interest of mankind. In fact, she wants to help men fulfill their primary duty of recognizing the sovereignty of God; for she knows that from this will flow those blessings for which they hunger: peace and genuine happiness, in this world and in the next.

Often we have recalled that the Church does not pursue earthly goals alone; nor does she aspire to any temporal domination. The golden rule left by her divine Founder is the Lord's Prayer, the sublime prayer which establishes the true hierarchy of values: first, God's name, His kingdom, His will; then, each day's bread and other necessities.

A remarkable phenomenon which has impressed many thinkers and historians throughout the centuries is that the more the Church adheres to this program, despite human vicissitudes, the more successful is her work for man's happiness and, above all, for the great cause of peace....

If this peace is to be preserved and bolstered, it is clearly essential that international law, founded upon natural law, be respected at all times by everyone. Whoever fosters respect for law in international disputes works for the true welfare of mankind and accomplishes a task blessed by God.

One characteristic of today's world is the existence, on a world-wide scale, of institutions working for the observance of justice, for the avoidance of violence. We say without hesitation that all have an obligation to support and sustain these institutions; every effort must be made to insure the successful completion of their appointed tasks. Those who work in this manner, and those who will continue to work with determination and constant trust in the service of peace, will be blessed by

future generations. History will record their names in indelible letters.

Due to these men who foster thoughts of peace – *cogitationes pacis et non afflictionis* [thoughts of peace and not of suffering] – mankind can devote itself in honorable rivalry not only to the great economic and social tasks which require action, but also to space exploration and the boldest achievements of modern technology.

Whether it be the scholar's research, the technician's applications, the operator's daring, the Church applauds man's growing control over the forces of Nature. She rejoices in all progress, present and future, which allows man to understand better the infinite grandeur of the Creator, and to render to Him, with greater admiration and humility, the homage of adoration and thanksgiving which is His due.

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\**The Pope Speaks*, vol. 8 n°4 p.393-394.