



PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR
INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

*Christians and Hindus:
Promoting hope among families*

MESSAGE FOR THE FEAST OF DEEPAVALI
2016

Vatican City

Dear Hindu Friends,

1. On behalf of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, we offer our best wishes as you celebrate Deepavali on 30 October 2016. May your celebrations around the world deepen your familial bonds, and bring joy and peace to your homes and communities.
2. The health of society depends on our familial bonds and yet we know that today the very notion of family is being undermined by a climate that relativizes its essential significance and value. So too, family life is often disrupted by harsh realities such as conflicts, poverty and migration, which have become all too commonplace throughout the world. There are, however, strong signs of renewed hope due to the witness of those who hold fervently to the enduring importance of marriage and family life for the wellbeing of each person and society as a whole. With this abiding respect for the family, and keenly aware of the global challenges daily confronting us, we wish to offer a reflection on how we, Christians and Hindus together, can promote hope in families, thus making our society ever more humane.
3. We know that the family is “humanity’s first school” and that parents are the “primary and principal” educators of their children. It is in the family that children, led by the noble example of their parents and elders, are formed in the values that help them develop into good and responsible human beings. Too often, however, the optimism and idealism of our youth are diminished by circumstances that affect families. It is especially important, therefore, that parents, together with the wider community, instil in their children a sense of hope by guiding them towards a better future and the pursuit of the good, even in the face of adversity.
4. Providing a formation and education in hope is thus a task of paramount importance for families (cf. POPE FRANCIS, Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, 274-275), as it reflects the divine nature of mercy which embraces the disheartened and gives them purpose. Such an education in hope encourages the young themselves to reach out, in charity and service, to others in need, and so become a light for those in darkness.
5. Families, therefore, are meant to be a “workshop of hope” (POPE FRANCIS, Address at the Prayer Vigil for the Festival of Families, Philadelphia, 26 September 2015), where children learn from the example of their parents and family members, and experience the power of hope in strengthening human relationships, serving those most forgotten in society and overcoming the injustices of our day. Saint John Paul II said that “the future of humanity passes by way of the family” (Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, 86). If

humanity is to prosper and live in peace, then families must embrace this work of nurturing hope and encouraging their children to be heralds of hope to the world.

6. As Christians and Hindus, may we join all people of good will in supporting marriage and family life, and inspiring families to be schools of hope. May we bring hope's light to every corner of our world, offering consolation and strength to all in need.

We wish you all a joyful *Deepavali*!

Jean Louis Card. Tauran

Jean-Louis Cardinal Tauran
President

+ Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot

+ Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot, MCCJ
Secretary

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE
00120 Vatican City

Tel: +39.06.6988 4321

Fax: +39.06.6988 4494

E-mail: dialogo@interrel.va
<http://www.pcinterreligious.org/>