



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI  
TO H.E. Mr IDRISS JAZAÏRY,  
AMBASSADOR OF ALGERIA  
ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE\***

*Thursday, 1 December 2005*

*Mr Ambassador,*

I am pleased to welcome you at the presentation of the Letters accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to the Holy See. I warmly thank you, Mr Ambassador, for your kind words on your own behalf and on that of the President of the Republic, and also on behalf of the Government and the Algerian People.

I was deeply touched by the expressions of sympathy that arrived from Algeria on the occasion of the death of Pope John Paul II, and especially during the funeral at which H.E. Mr Abdelaziz Bouteflika was present. I would be grateful if you would reciprocate by conveying to him my best wishes, especially for his health and for the accomplishment of his lofty mission at the service of his fellow citizens. I pray the Most High to bless the efforts of the Algerian People in the work of building a Nation that is ever more brotherly and supportive.

Mr Ambassador, you mentioned the serious violence that your Country has had to face in recent years. Authentic reconciliation alone can enable people to live in harmony and peace with one another. Renunciation of vengeance and the firm commitment to the process of forgiveness are the means, worthy of the human being, with which to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and solidarity.

As my venerable Predecessor, Pope John Paul II, said: "The ability to forgive lies at the very basis of the idea of a future society marked by justice and solidarity" (*Message for World Day of Peace 2002*, n. 9).

Forgiveness leads people towards a deeper and richer humanity, awakening in each one the best of himself or herself. But this attitude that helps men and women develop is necessarily associated with the demands of justice. Forgiveness is not a sign of weakness and they cannot ignore the legitimate claims of the victims of injustice, who are asking that their rights be recognized and reparation made for the damage caused to them.

Forgiveness is, in a certain way, the perfecting of the frail and imperfect human justice, making it possible to heal the wounds that have sometimes permanently marked people in their very depths and to re-establish in the best possible way the human relations that have been destabilized.

To defend the sacred value of the human person and encourage respect for others and for religious freedom, it is necessary, therefore, that the spirit of reconciliation and justice be inculcated in the young generations, especially in the family and in education. Societies will thus be able to progress in solidarity and brotherhood, so that violence may no longer be advocated as a solution to the problems that confront them and so that religion may never be used to justify such a decision nor to create inequalities between people.

Mr Ambassador, you have recalled some of the great figures of peace and reconciliation between communities who have marked the ancient and contemporary history of your Country. Very recently the Church paid a special tribute to Charles de Foucauld, who lived in your Country, desiring to be close to everyone as a "universal brother".

As I have already had the opportunity to say, the Catholic Church intends to pursue an open and sincere dialogue with believers of other religions in search of the true good of man and of society. I therefore rejoice at knowing the quality of the relations maintained in your Country between the Catholic Community and the Muslim Community. An encounter in truth between the believers of the different religions is a demanding challenge for the future of peace in the world and requires great perseverance.

To overcome ignorance and reciprocal prejudices, it is important to create bonds of trust between people, especially through the sharing of daily life and work done together, so that the free expression of differences in belief are not a cause of mutual exclusion but rather an opportunity to learn to live together with mutual respect for the identity of the other.

Through you, Mr Ambassador, I am delighted to greet with affection the Catholic Community of Algeria, united around its Bishops. In recent years, it has courageously shared the trials of the Algerian People, bearing an important witness of universal brotherhood in the desire to continue generously in its mission for the good of the whole Country.

Mr Ambassador, today you are beginning your noble mission representing your Country to the Holy See. Please accept my most cordial good wishes for its successful outcome and rest assured

that you will always find with my collaborators the necessary understanding and support! Upon you, Your Excellency, and upon your family, your collaborators and all of your compatriots and their leaders, I wholeheartedly invoke an abundance of divine Blessings.

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