



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI  
TO MR. LARS MØLLER  
AMBASSADOR OF DENMARK TO THE HOLY SEE\***

*Consistory Hall  
Thursday, 14 December 2006*

*Mr Ambassador,*

I am pleased to receive you and to accept the Letters of Credence by which you are appointed Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary of Denmark to the Holy See. I am grateful for the message of greetings which you have brought from Queen Margrethe II. I recall with pleasure my meeting with Her Majesty last spring and I ask you kindly to convey to her my own warm greeting, together with my prayerful good wishes for the happiness and prosperity of the Danish people.

In this, the twenty-fifth year since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Denmark, I wish to express the Holy See's esteem for your country's efforts to promote an effective solidarity with poorer nations by supporting integral development and by working to alleviate the tragic situation of poverty, violence, hunger and disease which weighs upon so much of the human family. Denmark has been in the forefront of international efforts to implement the Millennium Development Goals and has generously contributed to the establishment of mechanisms for security and peacebuilding in areas of the world scarred by armed conflicts. These praiseworthy initiatives have been inspired by a sober recognition that global problems require global solutions. Coordination between national governments, the various institutions and agencies of the international community, and the many regional and local bodies committed to strengthening the social fabric, represent a sure path to increased respect for fundamental human rights and the promotion of justice and peace at every level.

I am grateful for your words of appreciation for the Holy See's presence and contribution within the international community. This service to peace is grounded in a firm conviction, inspired by faith, of

the unity of the human family and the God-given dignity and rights of each person. Peace, in the words of the prophet Isaiah (32:17), is the fruit of justice, but it is also the fruit of love, which surpasses what justice alone can ensure (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 78). In her proclamation of the Gospel and her service of charity, the Church wishes to cooperate with all men and women of good will in building a global community in which hatred and intolerance, injustice and violence will give way to mutual understanding, reconciliation and generous cooperation in the pursuit of the common good. Only such cooperation, capable of transcending national, ethnic and religious boundaries, can ultimately prevail against the many contemporary threats to peace, including the scourge of international terrorism and the ideologies which inspire it.

As the Danish people confront complex political and ethical issues which will determine the future of your society, the nation's rich heritage of Christian faith can serve as a source of wisdom and inspiration in the demanding task of respecting Denmark's distinct identity and cultural heritage, while addressing the challenges of the present time. A vigorous public life benefits from the contribution of believers and a creative dialogue with the nation's religious tradition and values, since a healthy democracy requires a solid ethical foundation and respect for "the moral structure of freedom" (cf. *Ecclesia in Europa*, 98). For her part, the Church is ready "to contribute to the purification of reason and reawaken those moral forces without which just structures are neither set in place nor prove effective in the long run" (*Deus Caritas Est*, 29). I assure you that Denmark's Catholic community, though small in number, desires to play its part, in cooperation with other Christian believers, in this work of discernment and the elaboration of wise and far-sighted social policies. This is especially so with regard to the fundamental role and mission of the family founded upon marriage, the education of children, respect for God's gift of life from conception to natural death, and the responsible stewardship of the environment.

Mr Ambassador, as you begin your mission, I offer my best wishes for the work you will undertake in the service of your nation, and I assure you of the constant readiness of the offices of the Roman Curia to assist you in the fulfilment of your responsibilities. I am confident that your representation will help to consolidate the good relations existing between the Holy See and Denmark. Upon you and your family, and upon all the beloved Danish people, I cordially invoke God's blessings of joy and peace.

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