



DICASTERY
FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Pilgrims of Hope: Walking Together Towards the Future of a Better World

MESSAGE TO FOLLOWERS OF SHINTO
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW YEAR 2025

Vatican City

Dear Shinto Friends,

As we welcome the New Year, we extend our heartfelt wishes for peace and prosperity to you, and we accompany you in prayer as millions of pilgrims gather at Shinto shrines to seek blessings for the year ahead.

This New Year, in the 7th year of the Reiwa Era (2025), holds special significance for Catholics as we celebrate a Jubilee, an ancient tradition rooted in the Bible that proclaims a year of grace and joy. Like Shinto pilgrims, many Catholics will embark on spiritual journeys to “oases of faith,” drawing from the “wellsprings of hope” (*Spes Non Confundit*, 5). The ancient tradition of pilgrimage, grounded in faith and driven by hope, paves the way to profound spiritual experiences.

“In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring” (*Spes Non Confundit*, 1). Hope sustains humanity, giving strength in difficult times. Moreover, it is a core value of all religions and has inspired believers throughout history to act with compassion towards those in need.

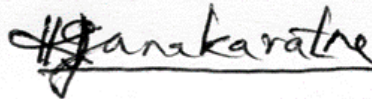
Today’s world, marred by natural disasters and wars, calls us to embark on this Jubilee as a global pilgrimage of hope. We move forward with a shared goal: building a more peaceful, humane world, that will foster harmony within the human family and our common home. “The first sign of hope should be the desire for peace in our world, which once more finds itself immersed in the

tragedy of war” (*Spes Non Confundit*, 8). This universal need for peace is a challenge for all of us and requires concrete action.

As we begin this New Year, we invite our Shinto friends to join us on this pilgrimage. Let us unite our efforts, walking together towards a more hopeful and harmonious future for our world. In this shared journey of hope, profoundly rooted in our respective religious traditions, let us seek to deepen the spiritual foundations of our observances, affirming the divine origin and dignity of both humanity and nature.

With this appeal, we once again offer you our sincere best wishes for the New Year.

AKEMASHITE OMEDETŌ GOZAIMASU!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Indunil Janakaratne". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Rev. Msgr. Indunil Janakaratne Kodithuwakku Kankanamalage
Secretary

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