

**MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
OLYMPIAD IN RIO DE JANEIRO**

**Paul VI Audience Hall**

**3 August 2016**

I would now like to address a warm greeting to the people of Brazil, in particular to the city of Rio de Janeiro, which is hosting the athletes and fans from throughout the world for the occasion of the Olympiad. In a world which thirsts for peace, tolerance and reconciliation, I hope that the spirit of the Olympic Games may inspire all, participants and spectators, to fight “the good fight” and to finish the race together (cf. 2 Tim 4:7-8), hoping to obtain as a prize not a medal but something far more precious: the achievement of a civilization in which solidarity reigns, based on the recognition that we are all members of a single human family, independent of differences in culture, skin colour or religion. For the Brazilian people who, with characteristic joy and hospitality, have organized the Celebration of Sports, I hope that this may be an opportunity to overcome difficult times and to give your all to “work as a team” in order to build a safer and more just country, betting on a future full of hope and joy. May God bless you all!

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