



‘So That You Might Know Each Other’

FAITH AND CULTURE IN ISLAM

**COLLECTIONS FROM THE VATICAN ANIMA MUNDI
MUSEUM, THE SHARJAH MUSEUMS AUTHORITY
AND THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA**

Foreword

It is a source of joy for me to introduce this catalogue, published on the occasion of the exhibition, '*So That You Might Know Each Other*', at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra. In an unprecedented collaboration, the Vatican Museums, the Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization and the National Museum of Australia worked together to organise an exhibition to show arts from the world of Islam from Africa to Asia, and Australia.

In the Vatican Museums, Islamic artefacts are held in the *Anima Mundi* Museum, the section of the Vatican Museums that hosts art and religious objects from all over the world. A selection of these objects has been sent to Australia for the exhibition, giving testimony to the fruitful, cultural and artistic exchange that has taken place between Islam and Christianity over the centuries. These precious works of art have come to the Vatican Museums from many different parts of the world: Morocco to Indonesia, Zanzibar to China, Palestine to Iraq, the Ivory Coast to

the Philippines. Many of them were sent as gifts to Pope Pius XI on the occasion of a major exhibition held at the Vatican in 1925. They have all been carefully preserved as a cherished inheritance from the past and a treasure for future generations.

I find it significant that this exhibition, along with the catalogue that accompanies it, is taking place during the pontificate of Pope Francis. Mutual understanding and dialogue between cultures are clearly among the priorities of his ministry.

This catalogue is the fruit of a collaboration between prestigious cultural institutions from three continents. May it deepen the friendship that already exists and strengthen mutual respect and harmony.

Giuseppe Cardinal Bertello

President of the Governorate of Vatican City State