

POPE SENDS ASSISI DECALOGUE FOR PEACE TO HEADS OF STATE

VATICAN CITY, MAR 4, 2002 (VIS) – John Paul 11 sent a letter accompanied by the “Assisi Decalogue for Peace” to all heads of State and government today. The Decalogue was signed at the end of the Day of Prayer for Peace in the World which was celebrated in Assisi on January 24, 2002.

In the letter, signed on February 24, 2002, the Pope affirms that “the participants in the meeting of Assisi were inspired more than ever by one common conviction: humanity must choose between love and hate.”

The Decalogue is as follows:

1. We commit ourselves to proclaiming our firm conviction that violence and terrorism are opposed to all true religious spirit and we condemn all recourse to violence and war in the name of God or religion. We undertake to do everything possible to eradicate the causes of terrorism.
2. We commit ourselves to educate people about respect and mutual esteem in order to achieve peaceful coexistence and solidarity among members of different ethnic groups, cultures and religions.
3. We commit ourselves to promote the culture of dialogue so that understanding and trust may develop among individuals and peoples as these are the conditions of authentic peace.
4. We commit ourselves to defend the right of all human beings to lead a dignified life, in accordance with their cultural identity, and to start their own family freely.

5. We commit ourselves to engage in dialogue with sincerity and patience, without considering what separates us as an insurmountable wall, on the contrary, recognising that facing our differences can become an occasion for greater reciprocal understanding.

6. We commit ourselves to pardon each order's errors and prejudices of the past and present, and to support one another in the common struggle against egoism and abuses, hatred and violence, and in order to learn from the past that peace without justice is not true peace.

7. We commit ourselves to stand at the side of those who suffer poverty and abandonment, speaking out for those who have no voice and taking concrete action to overcome such situations, in the conviction that no one can be happy alone.

8. We commit ourselves to make our own the cry of those who do not surrender to violence and evil, we wish to contribute with all our strength to give a real hope of justice and peace to the humanity of our time.

9. We commit ourselves to encourage all initiatives that promote friendship between peoples, in the conviction that, if a solid understanding between peoples is lacking, technological progress exposes the world to increasing dangers of destruction and death.

10. We commit ourselves to ask the leaders of nations to make every possible effort so as to build, at both national and international level, a world of solidarity and peace founded on justice.

AC/ASSISI DECALOGUE/ ... VIS 020304 (470)