

APPEAL FOR PEACE

Men and women of different religions, we have gathered together in Rome upon the invitation of the Community of Sant'Egidio. We have done so at a time when the world seems to have stopped dreaming of a better future. The economic crisis has made everyone poorer. But it is not only economic poverty, it is poverty of ideas, hopes, dreams. It is hopelessness before history: before wars, before violence.

The courage to hope is necessary. Hope enables to see what cannot yet be seen. Religions are aware of the secret, lived by millions of believers. Pessimism and hopelessness in the end reinforce evil. The courage to hope is essential. We feel this is an appropriate time for a rebellion of hope that starts with ourselves.

We want the youth to grow at the school of peace. Enough with the culture of the enemy that prevents us from seeing in the other a source of richness for ourselves. To be faithful to our respective religious roots does not distance us from each other, rather it urges us one towards the other.

With the strength of our religions, we reaffirm our commitment to peace. We tell everyone: no one should exploit religion for violence. We solemnly reject religious terrorism: to use the name of God to kill is blasphemous. Religious terrorism denies religion at its root.

History has taught us, that from hatred, hatred is born. War leads to war. Too many conflicts have been left to fester! The cry of many innocent victims cannot be left unheard. War is conquered only by peace. A global movement for peace: this is what is needed! Nothing is impossible if we turn to God in prayer. Nothing is impossible if we practice dialogue. Prayer and dialogue grow or perish together. Men and women of different religions, from Rome, we commit ourselves to make this great movement for peace grow.

Rome, 1st October 2013