



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS
SIGNED BY SECRETARY OF STATE,
TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE 36th ANNUAL TAIZÉ COMMUNITY MEETING***
(Strasbourg, 28 December 2013 - 1 January 2014)

Dear Young People,

Rome remembers with joy your European meeting last year and especially the beautiful prayer that brought together thousands of young people in St Peter's Square with Pope [Benedict XVI](#). Pope Francis feels close to you who are now gathered in Strasbourg and in the towns and villages of Alsace and Ortenau: a land torn by wars that have created countless victims, but also a land that bears a great hope, that of the building of the European family. Since it is taking place simultaneously in two countries, your meeting is a sign. Europe, which has gone through and is still going through difficult times, needs your commitment, your faith and your courage.

You are together to "seek visible communion among all who love Christ". This is the project that you have set for yourselves for the meetings in Taizé throughout the year 2014. You are aware that the division among Christians is a formidable obstacle to the accomplishment of the mission entrusted to the Church and that "the credibility of the Christian message would be much greater if Christians could overcome their divisions" (Apostolic Exhortation [Evangelii gaudium](#), n. 244). The Pope shares with you the conviction that we can learn so much from each other, because the realities that unite us are many.

The Pope is counting on you so that, by means of your faith and your witness, the spirit of peace and reconciliation of the Gospel may shine forth among your contemporaries. From the bottom of his heart he extends his blessing to you, the young participants in the meeting, to the brothers of Taizé, as well as to the pastors and to all those who are welcoming you in Alsace and Ortenau.

Pietro Parolin
Secretary of State

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