



The Holy See

FRATERNAL MEAL WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATIONS
WHO PARTICIPATED AT THE "DAY OF PRAYER
FOR PEACE IN THE WORLD" IN ASSISI

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II

Friday, 28 January 2002

Distinguished Guests,

Dear Friends,

What happened yesterday in Assisi will live long in our hearts and will, we hope, have a profound echo among the peoples of the world. Let me thank each of you for your generosity in responding to my invitation. I recognize that your coming here has meant a great effort. I thank you above all for your willingness to work for peace, and for your courage in declaring before the world that violence and religion can never go together.

From the hills of Umbria we have come to the hills of Rome, and with great joy, I welcome you to my own home. The door of this house is open to all people, and you come to this table not as strangers but as friends. Yesterday we gathered in the shadow of Saint Francis. Here we gather in the shadow of the fisherman, Peter. Assisi and Rome, Francis and Peter: the places and the men are so different. Yet they were both bearers of the message of peace sung by Angels at Bethlehem: *Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to his people on earth!*

With all our differences, we sit at this table, united in our commitment to the cause of peace. That commitment, born of sincere religious sentiment, is surely what God expects of us. It is what the world seeks in religious men and women. That commitment is the hope we have to offer at this special time. May God grant us all to be humble and effective instruments of his peace.

May he bless us and these foods which come to us from the gracious bounty of the earth which he

has created. Amen.

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