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The Pope praises the work of the Royal Institute for Inter-faith Studies in Amman

Vatican City, 4 May 2016 – Before today's general audience the Pope received in audience, in the study adjacent to the Paul VI Hall, thirty members of the Royal Institute for Inter-faith Studies of Amman, Jordan, currently attending a meeting organised by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. The Royal Institute for Inter-faith Studies (RIIFS) was founded in 1994 in Amman, with the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal. It is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation which offers a space for the interdisciplinary study of intercultural and interreligious issues with the aim of reducing tensions and promoting peace at regional and global levels.

"I remember with great joy my visit to Jordan", said Francis. "Your work is a task of construction. We live in a time in which we are accustomed to the destruction wrought by war. The work of dialogue and of bringing people together always helps us to construct. In a meeting of this type the most important word is dialogue. And dialogue means coming out of yourselves, with your word, and listening to the word of others. The two words encounter and two thoughts encounter one another. It is the first part of a journey."

"After this encounter of the word, hearts meet and begin a dialogue of friendship, that leads to a handshake. Word, heart, hand. It is simple. A child knows how to do this, so why can we not do it too? And this – very small – is the step of construction, of friendship, of society. We all have a common Father: we are brothers. Let us go along this path, which is good! I thank you as you are convinced that it is good to take this road."

"Thank you again. I humbly ask you to pray for me and I promise I will pray for you", concluded the Holy Father.