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Apostolic Trip of the Holy Father Francis to Myanmar and Bangladesh (26 November – 2 December 2017) – Words of the Holy Father to a group of Rohingya refugees

The following are the words the Holy Father Francis addressed to a group of Rohingya refugees at the end of the Interreligious and Ecumenical Meeting, which took place this afternoon in the garden of the archbishopric of Dhaka.

Words of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters, we are all close to you. What we can do is little, because your tragedy is very great. But we make space in our heart. On behalf of everyone, of those who persecute you, of those who have harmed you, and especially for the world's indifference, I ask your forgiveness. Forgiveness. Many of you have told me of the great heart of Bangladesh, which has welcomed you. Now I appeal to your great heart, that it may be capable of granting us the forgiveness we ask for.

Dear brothers and sisters, the Judeo-Christian account of creation says that the Lord Who is God created man in His image and semblance. We are all this image. These brothers and sisters too. They too are the image of the living God. One of your religious traditions says that God, at the beginning, took a little salt and threw it in the water, which was the soul of all men; and each one of us carries within a little of that divine salt. These brothers and sisters carry within them the salt of God.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us simply show the world what the selfishness of the world does with the image of God. Let us continue to do good to them; let us continue to act so that their rights may be recognized. Let us not close our hearts, let us not look the other way. The presence of God today is also called "Rohingya". May each one of us give his own response.
