SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
BOLLETTINO

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS
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BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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Audience with an International Jain Delegation

This morning, the Holy Father Francis received in audience, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, an international Jain delegation, to whom he addressed the following words of greeting:

Greeting of the Holy Father

Dear friends, good morning!

I extend a warm welcome to you as you gather here from different parts of the world, brought together by the Institute of Jainology in London. I am pleased that your meeting is part of the now decades-old and growing dialogue between Jains and Christians, promoted by the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue.

During this meeting, you and several members of the Dicastery will discuss proposals on how to work together for a better future, touching on issues such as diversity and inclusion. I would like to share some unfortunate news with you. The head of the Dicastery, Cardinal Ayuso, is in very poor health and in the final stages of life. Let us pray for him. I thank you for your efforts to seek together ways of caring for the earth, the poor and the most vulnerable in society. These areas of reflection and action have become increasingly important in our times, and call for initiatives undertaken with seriousness and commitment, as well as a sense of shared responsibility.

Many of the problems that plague society today are the result of an individualism and indifference that lead people to disregard the dignity and rights of their neighbours, especially in multicultural settings. There are some groups that intimidate and exclude minorities, turning a deaf ear to the “cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” (*Laudato Si’*, 49). Yet there are others that promote social friendship and seek to favour solidarity and lasting peace. Three things always to keep in mind: social friendship, solidarity and peace.

Sadly, those constructive efforts often encounter obstacles and roadblocks. Nonetheless, we must not grow discouraged or be afraid to continue spreading hope through initiatives that foster a sense of humanity in

believers and in all. This persevering commitment to fraternal solidarity is based on the fact that it is “God who has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity, and who has called them to live together as brothers and sisters” (*Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*, Abu Dhabi, 4 February 2019). We must never forget about universal fraternity. Every person of good will can spread love and help others in need, while at the same time respecting their differences. This approach to life continually revitalizes our efforts to care for one another and for our common home.

Interfaith meetings, such as this that you have organized, help strengthen our common desire to work together for a better world.

I thank you for your visit and your commitment, and I wish you all a serene and fruitful dialogue. Thank you!