



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,
Dear brothers and sisters of different faiths,

this month of August brings to mind the deep sadness of the tragic anniversaries of the atomic bombs dropped on the Japanese cities of **Hiroshima** and **Nagasaki** seventy-five years ago. It was a real defeat for humanity. The brutal violence against helpless people prevailed over dialogue and mutual understanding. Despite the horrors produced by that senselessness, the death of the nuclear weapon project has not come to an end. The arsenals of new, even more destructive weapons are growing. For this reason, considerable resources are invested in the research, production and safekeeping of these devices of death. In this regard, **Pope Francis** affirmed that *"the use of atomic energy for purposes of war is today, more than ever, a crime not only against the dignity of human beings but against any possible future for our common home"* (Pope Francis at the Peace Memorial of Hiroshima, Nov. 24, 2019).

Therefore, on August 27, I invite you to join your prayers to that of all people of good will so that the **2017 UN Treaty** banning research, construction, possession and use of nuclear weapons is definitively approved. There are many countries that have signed and ratified it up to now, including the Vatican, but not enough to bring it into force. We also ask **Italy**, which hosts nuclear warheads, to firmly adhere to the Treaty.

May the Lord give you peace

Assisi, August 2020

+ Domenico Sorrentino, Bishop