



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Dear brothers and sisters of many different faiths,

Once again, we are forced to express our firm opposition to the use of force and violence which has again erupted in the **Holy Land**. This conflict has been dragging on for too many years now, leaving behind so many victims and unspeakable suffering. Even more, hatred, resentment, thirst for revenge and other bad feelings have accumulated that risk igniting new conflicts over time. Although there is no lack of examples of peaceful coexistence, cooperation and understanding, unfortunately the option of arms seems to have once again prevailed, sowing terror and killing the innocent. After seventy years of armed conflict, those who have pursued the path of violence should honestly admit that the facts do not prove them to be right and that at least other paths should be tried and intensified.

For our part we would like to attempt to unite the spiritual forces present in everyone. Abraham's children consider that land "holy", but it is held in high esteem and regarded with utmost respect by all religions. For this reason, we should all feel the strong urge to turn to God to rekindle the hope of peace even when it seems lost and, in the wake marked by the "spirit of Assisi" starting from the historic meeting in 1986, to renew in each one of us the desire for peace, the need for conversion of heart, and the will for dialogue in mutual recognition. For these reasons I propose to all people and the Christian community and of every other religion, to join in prayer right now. Above all we will join our supplication in the course of the next 27th, turning to God to implore that his gift of peace be finally accepted by all the people who live in Israel and Palestine.

May the Lord give you peace

Assisi, May 2021

+ Domenico Sorrentino, Bishop