



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Dear brothers and sisters of many different faiths,

The worst industrial disaster in the history of Bangladesh occurred on April 24, 2013. The Rana Plaza, which housed textile workshops where apparel was produced for many Western brands, collapsed, killing 1,138 people, mostly women, and 2,500 were injured. The building located on the outskirts of Dhaka was eight stories high and did not meet the legal safety requirements. We are reminded of this by the women who survived the collapse and who ten years later demonstrated to demand compensation, health care, decent wages, and due process for those responsible.

The God of life commanded that **work** should serve life and never the other way around. All believers in the one God pray and work that every man and woman's dignity and rights be respected and that there be no abuse of power and exploitation of their fellow human beings. This was reiterated by Pope Francis and Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb in the Abu Dhabi Document (2019): "An end must be brought to all those inhuman and vulgar practices that denigrate the dignity of women. Efforts must be made to modify those laws that prevent women from fully enjoying their rights". Therefore, I ask that on April 27, as we approach May 1, the celebration of workers' day and, for us Christians, of St. Joseph the Worker, we be spiritually united in unceasingly praying that every person be accorded full respect especially in carrying out his or her work.

May the Lord give you peace

Assisi, April 2023

+ Domenico Sorrentino, Bishop