



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Dear brothers and sisters of many different faiths,

In this month of May, our prayers turn to the God of peace and life that he may bestow every good with superabundance to all creatures that dwell on the earth. For this to happen, human beings must open themselves to gratefully accept God's gifts, and the first of these is the gift of life. We are sorry to have learned that in the year 2022 the number of **executions** in the world stands out as the highest in the past five years. There were 883 lives suppressed in 23 countries. This dramatic leap was caused by the increase in the Middle East and North Africa, not to mention the fact that China does not provide data on executions that took place in its country.

In the ongoing prayer for peace that we have all pledged to follow since October 27, 1986, when so many people of different faiths met in Assisi to plead for peace, we ask that on May 27, prayers be raised that no one in the world will take control of another's life to the point of being able to take it away, at any stage of existence, from its beginnings in the womb to natural death. Let legal systems be instruments of life and not death, and seek effective alternatives that are avenues of redemption and not elimination for those who deserve severe punishment. Life is a gift from God.

May the Lord give you peace

Assisi, May 2023

+ Domenico Sorrentino, Bishop