



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Dear brothers and sisters of many different faiths,

The information we are receiving from **Haiti** arouses concern and distress because it tells of the lives of the inhabitants living as hostages to criminal gangs that control entire neighborhoods and cities. Since we cannot be passive spectators, we want to turn to the purest source known to all religions, which is prayer. Our prayer is to the God of peace to implore protection and tranquility to the people of that land. We also pray for the instigators of violence that they listen to God's voice, lay down their weapons, and choose to live in peace.

Our prayer is also a warm request to the international community, regional and supranational institutions to study the most appropriate way to intervene and offer their cooperation so that peaceful coexistence and democratic order can be restored.

Haiti's population is among the hardest hit by misery, so much so that an estimated 5.5 million need assistance. As is often the case, it is the most helpless, the children, who bear the painful burden of this condition the most. On March 27, therefore, let us join together in prayer that the danger of a drift toward civil war, which is even more widespread and ruthlessly violent, will be averted. On those days Christians celebrate Holy Week, Jews the eight days of Pesach, and Muslims Ramadan. Let us all welcome the gift of peace that God himself generously bestows on those who open their hearts to him.

May the Lord give you peace

Assisi, March 2024

+ Domenico Sorrentino, Bishop