

**Special Report**  
**Assisi Interfaith Gathering**  
**"Pilgrims of Truth, Pilgrims of Peace"**  
**27 October 2011**



*"Violence and terrorism are incompatible with the authentic spirit of religions."* Rt Rev Dr Munib Younan, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land

*"From Krishna to Buddha, from Mahatma Gandhi to Martin Luther King Jr to Bishop Tutu - all these pilgrims of truth declare 'There is no way to peace. Peace itself is the way.'"* Acharaya Shri Shrivatsa Goswami, Hindu representative from the Sri Radharamana Temple in Vrindavan in India

*"For St Francis of Assisi, the condition of all dialogue was poverty ..... We need the poverty of silence if we are to hear what the other says; and we need the poverty of recognizing that the other has a gift that we need if we are to be changed by the encounter."* Archbishop Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

*"We must always remember that our own religion, along with the religions practiced by other people, are valid and precious in the eyes of the Almighty, who created all of us with such plural and different ways of life and belief systems."* Wande Abimbola of Nigeria, representing Africa's traditional Yoruba religion

*"We affirm that building peace requires loving one's neighbour."* Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople

*"We commit ourselves to ... dialogue, refusing to consider our differences an insurmountable barrier."* Allama Zubair Abid, President of the Pakistan Ulama Mashaikh Council

*"We, humanists in dialogue with believers, commit ourselves together with all men and women of good will to building a new world in which respect for the dignity of each and every person ... is the foundation for life in society."* Guillermo Hurtado, Mexican philosopher

*"Through interfaith dialogue, we can unite in common cause to lift the afflicted, make peace where there is strife, and find the way forward to create a better world for ourselves and our children."* US President Barack Obama, via Suzan Johnson Cook, U.S. ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom, and Miguel H. Diaz, U.S. ambassador to the Vatican

*"Let us remember that there is no peace without justice; that there is no justice without forgiveness."* Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity

*"Violence never again! War never again! Terrorism never again! In the name of God, may every religion bring upon the earth justice and peace, forgiveness and life, love."* Pope Benedict XVI

# LINKS TO SPEECHES

**Greeting by Cardinal Turkson:** *“We come from different religious traditions and from various parts of the world to renew and strengthen a quest for the truth that each of us, out of our own tradition, is ceaselessly committed to. We come also to bear witness to the great power of religion for good, and to renew a common commitment to building peace, to reconciling those in conflict and to bringing man back into harmony with creation.”* <http://www.zenit.org/article-33744?l=english>

**Address by His Grace Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury:** *“So we are here not to affirm a minimum common ground of belief, but to speak out of the depth of our traditions in all their distinctiveness, so that the human family will be more fully aware of how much wisdom there is to draw upon in the struggle against the foolishness of a world still obsessed with fear and suspicion, still in love with the idea of a security based on defensive hostility, and still capable of tolerating or ignoring massive loss of life among the poorest through war and disease.”*  
<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/2233/archbishop-attends-day-of-reflection-dialogue-and-prayer-for-peace-in-assisii#Address>;

For the Archbishop’s contribution to the commemorative volume see:

<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/2233/archbishop-attends-day-of-reflection-dialogue-and-prayer-for-peace-in-assisii>

**Address by Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, Secretary-General, World Council of Churches:**  
<http://www.zenit.org/article-33745?l=english>

**Address by Rabbi David Rosen, representing the Grand Rabbinate of Israel:**  
<http://www.worldjewishcongress.org/uploads/documents/d7950fbe4d1839ddf4d5ace7cf825d13648880f7.pdf>

**Address by Kyai Haji Hasyim Muzadi, Secretary-General of the International Conference of Islamic Schools:**  
*“A similarity in every religion is a hope for the creation of human harmony, justice, prosperity and an improved standard of human life. An opposing idea between religions is an issue of theology and ritual. For that reason, so as to attain lasting harmony and co-existence amongst religions, therefore what is not similar should not and must not be forced to be opposing, and what views are not shared should not be imposed. By doing this, the preservation of co-existence amongst religions may be assured in accordance to each individual religious faith.”* <http://www.zenit.org/article-33747?l=english>

**Address by the Holy Father Benedict XVI:** *“As a Christian I want to say at this point: yes, it is true, in the course of history, force has also been used in the name of the Christian faith. We acknowledge it with great shame. But it is utterly clear that this was an abuse of the Christian faith, one that evidently contradicts its true nature. The God in whom we Christians believe is the Creator and Father of all, and from him all people are brothers and sisters and form one single family.”*  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2011/october/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20111027\\_assisii\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2011/october/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20111027_assisii_en.html)

**Farewell by the Holy Father Benedict XVI:** *“We are not being separated; we will continue to meet, we will continue to be united in this journey, in dialogue, in the daily building of peace and in our commitment to a better world, a world in which every man and woman and every people can live in accordance with their own legitimate aspirations.”*  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2011/october/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20111027\\_assisii-congedo\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2011/october/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20111027_assisii-congedo_en.html)

# MEDIA REPORTS

“Among Assisi Participants, A Sense of Deeper Crisis in Modern Society” by John Thavis of *Catholic News Service*:  
<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1104228.htm>

“Believers must Oppose Violence to Promote Peace, True Faith, Pope Says” by Cindy Wooden of *Catholic News Service*:  
<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1104224.htm>

“Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims Join Pope, Urge Peace” by Nicole Windfield, *Associated Press*:  
<http://www.todayonline.com/World/EDC111027-0000464/Rainbow-of-religious-leaders-join-pope-for-peace>

“Pilgrims of Truth, Pilgrims of Peace” by *Vatican Radio*: <http://www.news.va/en/news/pilgrims-of-truth-pilgrims-of-peace-3>

“Pope Benedict’s Interfaith Outreach” by Francis Rocca, *Wall Street Journal*:  
[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203554104576655260189888354.html?mod=ITP\\_opinion\\_0](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203554104576655260189888354.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0)

“What’s Different about Assisi III – and What’s Not?” by Austen Ivereigh in *America*:  
[http://www.americamagazine.org/blog/entry.cfm?blog\\_id=2&entry\\_id=4693](http://www.americamagazine.org/blog/entry.cfm?blog_id=2&entry_id=4693)

**Summary Video Report:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CtDkBTUMcs> [4.13 min]

**Complete Video Coverage:** [http://player.rv.va/vaticanplayer.asp?language=it&tic=VA\\_N2GDSIOH](http://player.rv.va/vaticanplayer.asp?language=it&tic=VA_N2GDSIOH) [2 hrs 41 min]