

Pontiff Calls Interfaith Dialogue the Road to Peace

Notes Security Is More Than the Absence of Threats

JERUSALEM, MAY 11, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://zenit.org)).- In his second public address in Israel, Benedict XVI is affirming the importance of interreligious dialogue in the pursuit of peace.

The Pope said this today in a reception hosted by President Shimon Peres at the presidential palace in Jerusalem, on his first day of a visit to Israel that is the second leg of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, under way through Friday.

During the courtesy visit, the Pontiff symbolically planted a tree in the palace garden in the presence of numerous political and religious personalities. After this, there was a moment of spontaneous exchange between the Israeli leader and the Holy Father.

Benedict XVI then addressed those present, affirming that peace is above all a divine gift that we find when we seek God "with all our heart."

He noted that "the particular contribution of religions to the quest for peace lies primarily in the wholehearted, united search for God."

The Pope added, "It is God's dynamic presence that draws hearts together and ensures unity." He stated that security "arises from trust and refers not just to the absence of threat but also to the sentiment of calmness and confidence."

"Security, integrity, justice and peace," the Pontiff said, are inseparable "in God's design for the world."

"No individual, family, community or nation is exempt from the duty to live in justice and to work for peace," he affirmed.

The Holy Father stated: "I hear the cry of those who live in this land for justice, for peace, for respect for their dignity, for lasting security, a daily life free from the fear of outside threats and senseless violence.

"And I know that considerable numbers of men and women and young people are working for peace and solidarity through cultural programs and through initiatives of compassionate and practical outreach; humble enough to forgive, they have the courage to grasp the dream that is their right."

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On ZENIT's Web page:

Full text of Pope's address: <http://zenit.org/article-25859?l=english>

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