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Pope Calls Religious Leaders to Promote Justice in Holy Land

Israeli Interreligious Group Meets With Benedict XVI

VATICAN CITY, NOV. 10, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- At a meeting with religious leaders from Israel today, Benedict XVI affirmed that a rightly lived relationship with God is a force for peace.

A delegation of Israel's Council of Religious Communities met with the Pope at the Vatican today, representing Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Druze communities.

The council was established in 2007 and the Holy Father met with members of the group when he visited the Holy Land in 2009.

"We share a grave responsibility to educate the members of our respective religious communities, with a view to nurturing a deeper understanding of each other and developing an openness towards cooperation with people of religious traditions other than our own," the Pontiff told them.

"Unfortunately, the reality of our world is often fragmentary and flawed, even in the Holy Land. All of us are called to commit ourselves anew to the promotion of greater justice and dignity, in order to enrich our world and to give it a fully human dimension.

"Justice, together with truth, love and freedom, is a fundamental requirement for lasting and secure peace in the world. Movement towards reconciliation requires courage and vision, as well as the trust that it is God himself who will show us the way. We cannot achieve our goals if God does not give us the strength to do so."

A statement from the Council at the end of the meeting reiterated the participants' commitment to protecting the Holy Land.

"We inherited the Holy Sites from our forebears, and we are required to preserve their religious sanctity and cultural significance," the statement noted. "(...) The unity and special character of the Holy Sites must be protected from all violence and desecration. It is the responsibility of the religious leaders to strengthen this approach and to call on their communities to ensure that the Holy Sites of other religious communities are not harmed."

On ZENIT's Web page:

Pope's speech: www.zenit.org/article-33805?l=english

Council's statement: www.zenit.org/article-33806?l=english

Address from Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem: www.zenit.org/article-33808?l=english