



## Francis Personally Signs Ramadan Message

Speaks of Respect as Common Value for Muslims, Christians

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Pope Francis chose to personally sign the Vatican's message to Muslims for the end of Ramadan. In the past, the president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue has been the one to sign the message.

In the message, the Pope proposes a theme of common reflection "that concerns both Muslims and Christians: Promoting Mutual Respect through Education."

Saying respect is a mutual "process" of kindness, Pope Francis invited Muslims and Christians to respect each person "first of all his life, his physical integrity, his dignity and the rights deriving from that dignity, his reputation, his property, his ethnic and cultural identity, his ideas and his political choices. We are therefore called to think, speak and write respectfully of the other, not only in his presence, but always and everywhere, avoiding unfair criticism or defamation. Families, schools, religious teaching and all forms of media have a role to play in achieving this goal."

Where interreligious relations are concerned, "especially between Christians and Muslims," the Pope said, "we are called to respect the religion of the other, its teachings, its symbols, its values. Particular respect is due to religious leaders and to places of worship. How painful are attacks on one or other of these!"

In educating our Muslim and Christian youth, the Pope said, "we have to bring up our young people to think and speak respectfully of other religions and their followers, and to avoid ridiculing or denigrating their convictions and practices."

Reiterating "the great importance of dialogue and cooperation among believers, in particular Christians and Muslims," Pope Francis said these need to be "enhanced" and he expressed his hope that people of both faiths "may be true promoters of mutual respect and friendship, in particular through education."

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On ZENIT's Web page:

Full text:

<http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/francis-message-to-muslims-for-end-of-ramadan>

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