

Pope Stresses Peace Based on Respect for Persons

Notes Importance of Interreligious Dialogue

VATICAN CITY, NOV. 11, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI is underlining respect for human persons as an "indispensable" condition for building peace.

The Pope stated this in a letter sent to the president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, on the occasion of the visit to Tehran of Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The cardinal met Tuesday with Ahmadinejad.

The Pontiff stated, "It is my profound conviction that respect for the transcendent dimension of the human person is an indispensable condition for the construction of a just social order and a stable peace."

"Indeed," he continued, "one's relationship with God is the ultimate foundation for the inalienable dignity and sacred character of every human life."

The Holy Father affirmed that "when the promotion of the dignity of the human person is the primary inspiration of political and social activity that is committed to search for the common good, solid and enduring foundations are created for building peace and harmony between peoples."

"Peace is, above all, a gift from God," he stated, "which is sought in prayer, but it is also the result of the efforts of people of good will."

Cooperation

"In this perspective, believers of every religion have a special responsibility and can play a decisive role, cooperating in common initiatives," Benedict XVI pointed out.

"Interreligious and intercultural dialogue is a fundamental path to peace," he affirmed.

The Pope recalled the recent Special Assembly for the Middle East of the Synod of Bishops, which was held in Rome Oct. 10-24, as a moment to reflect on the challenges faced by the Catholic communities in that region.

"In some countries these communities face difficult circumstances, discrimination and even violence and they lack the freedom to live and publicly profess their faith," he said.

The Pontiff affirmed that "the Catholics present in Iran and those around the world make efforts to collaborate with their fellow citizens to contribute loyally and honestly to the common good of the respective societies in which they live, becoming builders of peace and reconciliation."

In this light, he expressed the hope "that the cordial relations already happily existing between the

Holy See and Iran will continue to progress, as well as those of the local Church with the civil authorities."

The Holy Father continued, "I am also convinced that the launch of a bilateral commission would be especially helpful in addressing questions of common concern, including that of the juridical status of the Catholic Church in the country."

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