

**LETTER OF JOHN PAUL II
TO ALL THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT
OF THE WORLD AND DECALOGUE OF ASSISI FOR
PEACE**

To Their Excellencies Heads of State or Government

A month ago, the Day of Prayer for Peace in the world took place in Assisi. Today my thoughts turn spontaneously to those responsible for the social and political life of the countries that were represented there by the religious authorities of many nations.

The inspired reflections of these men and women, representatives of different religious confessions, their sincere desire to work for peace, and their common quest for the true progress of the whole human family, found a sublime and yet concrete form in the "Decalogue" proclaimed at the end of this exceptional day.

I have the honour of presenting to Your Excellency the text of this common agreement, convinced that these ten propositions can inspire the political and social action of your government.

I observed that those who took part in the Assisi Meeting were more than ever motivated by a common conviction: humanity must choose between love and hatred. All of them, feeling that they belong to one and the same human family, were able to express their aspiration through these ten points, convinced that if hatred destroys, love, on the contrary, builds up.

I hope that the spirit and commitment of Assisi will lead all people of goodwill to seek truth, justice, freedom and love, so that every human person may enjoy his inalienable rights and every people, peace. For her part, the Catholic Church, who trusts and hopes in "the God of love and peace" (II Cor 13,11), will continue to work for loyal dialogue, reciprocal forgiveness and mutual harmony to clear the way for people in this third millennium.

With gratitude to Your Excellency, for the attention you will be kind enough to give my Message, I take the present opportunity offered to assure you of my prayerful best wishes.

From the Vatican, 24 February 2002.