

To all of you who seek for peace:

Peace!

On the 19th of January 2014, we celebrated the 100th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, in order to make the christian and humanitarian communities aware of the necessity to act in favor of these men and women forced to leave their lands, in search for a more dignified life. And yet, in spite of this strong mobilization, the drama of these people does not seem to come to an end.

The major symbol of this tragedy is a little Italian island - Lampedusa island -, 20,2 km<sup>2</sup> in area and about 5 000 inhabitants. Between Europe and Africa, this island has become the front door for those who wish to come into Europe out of the regulation. Tens of thousands of illegal immigrants landed there, on boats named "boats of hope", and paying it the high price. Without any safety whatsoever, the immigrants are crammed like sardines. We estimate that more than 20 thousand people lost their life in the crossing. The most recent case is that of the 3d of October 2013, when a boat which carried 500 immigrants caught fire and capsized, killing 350 people.

The question is not simple : must we greet all these immigrants to Europe ? Do we have to send them back ? Can we let them perish ? In 2007, two captains of Italian fishing boats were prosecuted to have attempted to help these "boats of hope", accused to help illegal immigrants to land on the territory. On July 8th 2013, Pope Francis himself went to this island to express solidarity towards all the victims and the community of Lampedusa that shows a constant charity towards the most needy. On this occasion, he also reminded us of our humanitarian responsibility in this situation : "How many of us, myself included, have lost our bearings; we are no longer attentive to the world in which we live; we don't care; we don't protect what God created for everyone, and we end up unable even to care for one another! And when humanity as a whole loses its bearings, it results in tragedies like the one we have witnessed." In his message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, published on August the 5th of 2013, he invited us to "a change of attitude towards migrants and refugees (...) moving away from attitudes of defensiveness and fear, indifference and marginalization - all typical of a throwaway culture - towards attitudes based on a culture of encounter, the only culture capable of building a better, more just and fraternal world."

World Peace depends mostly of the solution and the reply we will give towards migrants and refugees. Either peace will come for all of us, or peace will come for no-one: we have to establish a cosmopolitan order in which the world may become the house of all and in which all may be welcomed everywhere.

With the words of Pope Francis in Lampedusa, let us share our part of responsibility on this question :

*Lord, we ask for your forgiveness for our indifference towards many brothers and sisters. Father, we ask for forgiveness for the one who got accustomed to it and who retreated in his own comfort leading to an insensitivity of the heart, we ask for forgiveness for those who, by their decisions on a worldly scale, have created situations that lead to these dramas. Forgive us Lord! Lord, may we hear today your questions too : "Adam where are you?", "Where is the blood of your brother?". Amen.*

Best wishes,

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