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Tomorrow at 1 p.m., the world will stop for a minute to pray for peace

Vatican City, 7 June 2016 – On the second anniversary of the prayer meeting to pray for the gift of peace, requested by Pope Francis, together with the Israeli president Shimon Peres and the Palestinian Abu Mazen, the International Forum of Catholic Action, WUCWO, the Italian Catholic Action, the Argentinian Catholic Action and the National Justice and Peace of the Argentinian Episcopal Conference are once again launching the initiative “A minute for peace”. In response to the constant appeal by Pope Francis never to tire of praying and working for peace, the promoters of this initiative are asking their members and all men and women of good will to stop for a minute at 1 p.m. on 8 June – at the workplace, in the street, at home – to pray for peace.

The Tonga Islands will be the first to pray for peace. In the capital Nuku'alofa, at 1 p.m. on 8 June, the women of WUCWO (World Union of Catholic Action Women Organisations) will stop in recollection, while in Italy, at that time, the new day will just have dawned.

In Argentina at 1 p.m., the 8th June, the bells of many churches in the different dioceses will ring to invite the faithful to unite in prayer. Many institutions and organisations, which have joined in this initiative, among these, the Council for Religious Freedom, the Department for the Laity, the Islamic Centre of the Republic of Argentina, the Scouts, the Sant'Egidio Community, the Focolare Movement, the Christian Family Movement, the Federation of Catholic Workers' Circles and the Catholic University of Argentina.

In Rome, at the general audience in St. Peter's Square, there will be a group of young people, which symbolically represents all the promoters of this initiative. Then at 1 p.m., in the Chiesa di Santo Spirito in Sassia, there will be a prayer session, presided over by Mgr. Rino Fisichella, President of the Council for the Promotion of New Evangelisation and Coordinator of the Jubilee of Mercy.

In Bethlehem, the local Catholic Action is organising a prayer session in the Nativity Grotto. In Medellin, Colombia, young people and adults, as well as the very young, are preparing coloured banners. In Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi, the scene of continual violence during these last months, leaders and assistants of Catholic Action Movements will join together in prayer and will also involve the whole population through the radio.

The appeal for peace is this year available in more than 30 languages. Besides Italian, English, French and Spanish, it may also be found in Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Birmanian, in the language of the Guarani Indos of Latin America, in the Hausa language spoken in Mali, the Togo Ewe and the Kikuyu of north Kenya thanks to the collaboration of leaders from the different countries.

This year, in a special way, let us remember refugees and asylum seekers, refugees who desperately flee from wars, so as to tell them that they are not alone and to confirm our commitment to welcome them and to show them solidarity.
