



The Holy See

VIDEO MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON THE OCCASION OF HIS UPCOMING APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO JAPAN

[23 - 26 NOVEMBER 2019]

[Multimedia]

Dear friends:

As I prepare for my imminent visit to Japan, I would like to address these words of friendship to you.

The theme chosen for my visit is “Protect All Life”. This strong instinct, which resonates in our hearts, to defend the worth and dignity of every human person, takes on particular importance in the face of the threats to peaceful coexistence that the world faces today, especially in armed conflicts. Your country is well aware of the suffering caused by war. Together with you, I pray that the destructive power of nuclear weapons will never be unleashed again in human history. Using nuclear weapons is immoral.

You also know how the importance of the culture of dialogue, of fraternity, especially among the different religious traditions, which can help to overcome division, promote respect for human dignity and advance the integral development of all peoples. I trust that my visit will encourage you on the path of mutual respect and encounter, which leads to a peace that is secure and lasts in time, which does not go back. Peace is beautiful, and when it is real, it does not retreat: it is defended tooth and nail.

I will also have the opportunity to appreciate the great natural beauty that characterizes your nation, and express the shared desire to promote and strengthen the protection of that life which includes the earth, our common home, and which your culture symbolizes so beautifully with

cherry blossoms.

I know that there are many people who are working to prepare for the visit. I sincerely thank you for these efforts. And in the hope that the days we will spend together will be rich in grace and joy, I assure you of my prayer of solidarity for each and every one of you. And I ask you, please, to also pray for me. Thank you very much.

**Bulletin of the Holy See Press Office, 18 November 2019*

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