



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON THE OCCASION OF THE 75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE D-DAY LANDINGS IN NORMANDY

On the occasion of the recent celebrations commemorating the 75th anniversary of “D-Day”, when Allied forces landed on the beaches of Normandy, beginning the liberation of France and Western Europe from Nazi occupation, the Pope made an appeal to “Christians of all confessions”, to “believers of other religions”, and to “men and women of good will”, to “promote a true universal fraternity, favouring a culture of encounter and dialogue” that is “attentive to the little ones and the poor”.

In a message addressed to Bishop Jean-Claude Boulanger of Bayeux-Lisieux and published on the diocesan website, the Pontiff expressed the hope that the commemoration of those events would “allow all generations, in Europe and in the world, to vehemently reaffirm that peace is based on respect for every person, independent of his or her history, on respect for the law and for the common good, for the creation that has been entrusted to us and for the moral richness passed on by past generations”.

Drawing on his [Message for the World Day of Peace 2019](#) — Francis’ words included an homage to the soldiers who died on the battlefield: “We know that the 6 June 1944 landings, right here in Normandy, were decisive in the fight against Nazi brutality”, he writes, “and that paved the way to the end of this war which deeply wounded Europe and the world”. He also expressed his gratitude to the combatants “from various countries, including France”, who “had the courage to dedicate themselves and give their lives for freedom and peace”. Entrusting them “to the Lord’s infinitely merciful love”, the Pontiff also recalled the millions of WWII victims, as well as those who fought on behalf of Germany “in obedience to a regime animated by a murderous ideology”.