



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE 3rd WORLD MEETING ON HUMAN FRATERNITY

*Clementine Hall
Friday, 12 September 2025*

[Multimedia]

Dear brothers and sisters, peace be with you!

Welcome and thank you for being here. You have come from many parts of the world for the third World Meeting on Human Fraternity organized by Saint Peter's Basilica, the *Fratelli Tutti* Foundation, the Be Human Association, and the Saint Peter for Humanity Foundation.

The world is currently marked by conflicts and divisions, which makes it all the more important that you are united by a strong and courageous “no” to war and a “yes” to peace and fraternity. As [Pope Francis](#) taught us, war is not the right way to resolve a conflict. “The willingness to face conflict head on, to resolve it and to make it a link in the chain of a new process” ([Evangelii Gaudium](#), 227) is the wisest path, the path of the strong. Your presence bears witness to this wisdom, which unites cultures and religions, and is that silent force that enables us to recognize each other as brothers and sisters, despite all our differences.

According to Scripture, the first fraternal relationship between Cain and Abel immediately and tragically became conflictual. However, that first murder should not lead us to conclude that “it has always been this way.” No matter how ancient or widespread, Cain's violence cannot be tolerated as “normal.” On the contrary, the norm is revealed in God's question to the guilty party: “Where is your brother?” (*Gen* 4:9). It is in this question that we find our vocation, the rule and measure of justice. God does not take revenge on Cain for Abel, but asks him a question that echoes throughout the course of history.

Today more than ever, we must make this question our own as a principle of reconciliation. Once internalized, it will resonate in this way: “Brother, sister, where are you?” Where are you in the “business” of wars that shatter the lives of young people forced to take up arms; target defenseless civilians, children, women and elderly people; devastate cities, the countryside and entire ecosystems, leaving only rubble and pain in their wake? Brother, sister, where are you among the migrants who are despised, imprisoned and rejected, among those who seek salvation and hope but find walls and indifference? Where are you, brother, sister, when the poor are blamed for their poverty, forgotten and discarded, in a world that values profit more than people? Brother, sister, where are you in a hyper-connected life where loneliness corrodes social bonds and makes us strangers even to ourselves?

The answer cannot be silence. You are the answer, with your presence, your commitment, and your courage. The answer is choosing a different direction of life, growth and development.

Recognizing that the other person is a brother or sister means freeing ourselves from the pretense of believing that we are isolated individuals or from the logic of forming relationships only out of self-interest. It is not only self-interest that makes us enter into relationships. Great spiritual traditions and the maturation of critical thinking enable us to go beyond blood or ethnic ties, beyond those kinships that recognize only those who are similar and reject those who are different. It is interesting that in the Bible, as revealed by scientific exegesis, it is the most recent and mature texts that narrate a fraternity that transcends the ethnic boundaries of God’s people and is founded on a common humanity. The stories of creation and the genealogies bear witness that all peoples, even enemies, have the same origin, and the Earth, with its goods, is for everyone, not just for some.

At the heart of the Encyclical *[Fratelli Tutti](#)*, we read: “Social friendship and universal fraternity necessarily call for an acknowledgement of the worth of every human person, always and everywhere” (n. 106).

Fraternity is the most authentic name for closeness. It means rediscovering the face of the other. For those who believe, they recognize the Mystery: the very image of God in the face of the poor, the refugee and even the adversary.

Dear friends, I urge you to identify local and international ways of developing new forms of social charity, alliances between different areas of knowledge and solidarity between generations. These should be community-based approaches that also include the poor, not as recipients of aid, but as subjects of discernment and discourse. I encourage you to continue this work of silent sowing. This can give rise to a participatory process focused on humanity and fraternity, which is not limited to listing rights, but also includes concrete actions and motivations that make us different in our everyday lives. We need an extensive “covenant of humanity,” founded not on power but on care; not on profit but on gift; not on suspicion but on trust. Care, gift and trust are not virtues to be

practiced only in one's spare time: they are pillars of an economy that does not kill, but deepens and broadens participation in life.

I would like to thank the artists who, with their creativity, will send this message to the world from the magnificent embrace of Bernini's colonnade. A special thanks goes to the distinguished Nobel Prize winners present, both for drafting the [Declaration on Human Fraternity](#) of 10 June 2023, and for the witness they give in international forums.

Continue to nurture the spirituality of fraternity through culture, working relationships and diplomatic action. Always carry in your hearts the words of Jesus from the Gospel of John: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (13:34). May my blessing accompany and sustain you.