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Greeting of the Holy Father to participants in the Conference of the “International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee”

The following is the text of the greeting delivered by the Holy Father at the end of this morning’s General Audience to the participants in the 24th Conference of the “International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee” (ILC):

Greeting of the Holy Father

Dear Friends,

I offer you a warm welcome and I thank you for everything you do. Your gathering is something like a general assembly of all those professionally engaged in Jewish-Catholic dialogue. I am grateful to the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), to the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, and to the Italian Episcopal Conference, for having made possible this twenty-fourth Meeting of your Committee.

From the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate* until now, Jewish-Catholic dialogue has borne good fruit. We share a rich spiritual patrimony that can and must be ever more esteemed and appreciated as we grow in mutual understanding, fraternity and shared commitment on behalf of others. In this regard, your Meeting aims to help develop points of convergence and to promote a greater degree of cooperation. It is fitting, too, that you deal with timely issues such as our approach to refugees and how best to help them, the fight against the troubling recrudescence of anti-Semitism, and concern for the persecution of Christians in various parts of the world. To say nothing of the state of Jewish-Catholic dialogue in Italy and in Israel, and its broader prospects.

I offer you my encouragement, for dialogue is the way to better understand one another and to work together in building a climate not only of tolerance but also of respect between religions. Our strength is the gentle strength of encounter, not of the extremism emerging in certain quarters today, which leads only to conflict. One never errs in seeking dialogue. Scripture points out that “deceit is in the mind of those who plan evil, but those who

counsel peace have joy” (*Prov 12:20*). I pray that your gathering may be an encounter in peace and for peace. May the blessing of the Most High be with you, grant you the tenacity of gentleness and the courage of patience. Shalom!
