



DICASTERY FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

MESSAGE FOR THE MONTH OF RAMADAN AND *'ID AL-FITR*
1447 H. / 2026 A.D.

Vatican City

Dear Muslim brothers and sisters,

It is with great joy that I address you on the occasion of the month of Ramadan, which culminates in the Feast of the Breaking of the Fast, *Eid Al-Fitr*. This important annual observance offers me a welcome opportunity to express my closeness, solidarity and respect for you, believers in God, “who is one, living and subsistent, merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has also spoken to humanity” (Second Vatican Council, Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, 28 October 1965, 3).

This year, through a providential convergence of calendars, Christians observe this period of fasting and devotion alongside you during the holy season of Lent, which leads the Church toward the celebration of Easter. During this spiritually intense period, we seek to follow God’s will more faithfully. This shared journey allows us to acknowledge our inherent fragility and to confront the trials that weigh upon our hearts.

When we suffer trials — whether personal, familial or institutional — we often believe that understanding their causes will reveal a clear path forward. Yet we frequently discover that the complexity of these situations exceeds our strength. In an age marked by an overload of information, narratives and competing viewpoints, our discernment can become clouded, and our suffering even more acute. At such moments, a question naturally arises: how can we find a way forward? From a purely human perspective, the answer may appear elusive, leaving us with a sense of helplessness.

It is precisely then that the temptation can emerge to yield to despair or to violence. Despair can seem like an honest response to a broken world, while violence may present itself as a shortcut to justice that bypasses the patience required by faith. Yet neither can ever be an acceptable path for believers. A true believer keeps his or her gaze fixed upon the invisible Light who is God — the Almighty, the Most Merciful, the only Just One — who “rules the peoples with fairness” (*Ps* 96:10). Such a believer strives, with every ounce of strength, to live according to God’s commandments, for in him alone are found both the hope of the world to come and the peace so deeply desired by every human heart.

Indeed, we — Christians and Muslims, together with all people of good will — are called to imagine and to open new paths by which life may be renewed. This renewal is made possible through a creativity nourished by prayer, the discipline of fasting that clears our inner vision, and concrete acts of charity. “Do not be overcome by evil,” the Apostle Paul exhorts us, “but overcome evil with good” (*Rom* 12:21).

Dear Muslim brothers and sisters, especially those among you who struggle or suffer in body or spirit because of your thirst for justice, equality, dignity and freedom: please be assured of my spiritual closeness, and know that the Catholic Church stands

in solidarity with you. We are united not only by our shared experience of trial, but also by the sacred task of restoring peace to our broken world. We are truly “all in the same boat” (Francis, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, 3 October 2020, 30).

Peace — this is my fervent wish for each of you, for your families, and for the nations in which you live. It is not of an illusory or utopian peace, but as Pope Leo XIV emphasized, of one born from the “disarmament of heart, mind and life” (*Message for the 59th World Day of Peace*, 1 January 2026). Such peace is a gift received from God and nurtured by defusing hostility through dialogue, practicing justice, and cherishing forgiveness. Through this shared season of Ramadan and Lent, may our inner transformation become a catalyst for a renewed world, where the weapons of war give way to the courage of peace.

With these sentiments, I pray that the Almighty may fill each of you with his merciful love and divine consolation.

From the Vatican, 17 February 2026



Cardinal George Jacob Koovakad
Prefect



Msgr. Indunil J.K. Kodithuwakku
Secretary

DICASTERY FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

00120 Vatican City

Tel.: +39.06.6988 4321

E-mail: dialogo@interrel.va

www.dicasteryinterreligious.va