Pope Calls for Interreligious Day of Prayer for Peace

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Pope John Paul II has invited representatives of the world's religions to join in a Day of Prayer for Peace at Assisi, Italy, on January 24, 2002. The invitation echoes the similar event at Assisi in October 1986, as well as a follow-up 'Interreligious Assembly' held in Rome in October 1999. In his remarks, the Pope laid special emphasis on improving relations between Christianity and Islam at this time of world conflict. Both Muslim and Jewish leaders have responded cordially to the invitation. The president of the Union of Jewish Communities in Italy, Amos Luzzato, in an interview with the newspaper Il Corriere Sera, described the Pope's initiative as 'sincere' and 'fervent'. 'It is an invitation to which one cannot respond negatively,' he said.