

The recent Apostolic Journey of Pope Francis to Turkey, November 28-30, 2014, was the occasion for the Holy Father to deliver important statements on interreligious and ecumenical dialogue.

On Friday, November 28, Pope Francis met with Turkish political leaders and visited the office of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) and delivered an address to Muslim and Christian political and religious leaders. He stated, "As religious leaders, we are obliged to denounce all violations against human dignity and human rights. Human life, a gift of God the Creator, possesses a sacred character. As such, any violence which seeks religious justification warrants the strongest condemnation because the Omnipotent is the God of life and peace." Link to the address is available on the [Holy See website](#) .

On Sunday, November 30, the Feast of Saint Andrew, Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I released a joint statement highlighting the vital importance of dialogue, noting, "The grave challenges facing the world in the present situation require the solidarity of all people of good will, and so we also recognize the importance of promoting a constructive dialogue with Islam based on mutual respect and friendship." Link to the joint statement is available on the [Holy See website](#) .

The Pope spoke with the press on his return flight to Rome, highlighting the importance of spiritual ecumenism – praying, working, and carrying out charitable works together. The Pope remarked that the ecumenical efforts with the Eastern Orthodox Church have proved fruitful thanks to our sacramental and apostolic traditions. Pope Francis echoed the challenge given by Saint John Paul II in the encyclical *Ut unum sint*, asking Orthodox faithful to help in articulating a form of Papal Primacy acceptable to the Orthodox Churches. The report on the Pope's in-flight press engagement can be viewed on the [Holy See Website](#)

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