



Florence, Religions on the Road

Florence, Italy, February 3, 2018

By Aldo D'Onofrio

On Sunday 3 February, in Florence, the **First Interreligious Walk** took place, involving about 22 different religious and spiritual traditions, including: Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, Unificationist, Buddhist, Hindu, etc.

The event was promoted by the City of Florence, with the theme: **"Florence, Community on the road; to dialogue, to meet, to welcome oneself."**

The initiative is part of the World Interfaith Harmony Week promoted by the UN.

The event, organized for the first time in Florence and unique in its nature, was born from the need to strengthen mutual knowledge and hospitality in the Florentine community to be united also in diversity.

About 2,000 people have taken part today in the lay walk, through the

places symbolically referable to the various religions.

"The idea of this walk was born a few months ago and like all the beautiful ideas that come from the heart has grown on the street, up to today" – said Florence Mayor Dario Nardella intervened at the end of the walk in Piazza della Signoria. - "I thank all the spiritual confessions and religious communities that participated in the name of the city of Florence because today you have given a beautiful message not only to Florence but to the whole country. It is the first time that so many communities gather together to make a journey, it is a brick that we put into the common home that is our community. Florence is a universal symbol of dialogue, peace and acceptance, which speaks to the whole world. I would like this path to be repeated every year involving people from all over the region and tomorrow we hope from all over Italy".

"Florence is an open city and this event has shown it - said the commissioner for relations with religious confessions and intercultural policies Massimo Fratini - It 'been a beautiful day and great sharing, I'm really excited by the great response of people we have had".

There were eight stages, including the Lutheran Church, the Ponte alle Grazie, the Synagogue, the Islamic Center, and other Catholic Churches. At each of these stages, there was an intervention by a representative of religious traditions, including Pastor Aldo D'Onofrio, Family Federation for World Peace and Unification-Tuscany.

It is an important recognition for our Church, since it is the first time that we have had such visibility in Florence.

So let's look forward to 2019 with great hope and determination.





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