

# Fraternity and peace for the unity of peoples

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Excerpted from a talk given by the author, *Fraternity and peace for the unity of peoples*, at the Convention on Peace, Solidarity and Fraternity, in Rimini, Italy, on June 22, 2002.

Universal fraternity is not a new idea; it has long been present in the minds of deeply spiritual persons. “The golden rule,” said Mahatma Gandhi, “is to be friends of the world and to consider as 'one' the whole human family.”<sup>1</sup> . . .

Martin Luther King said: “I have a dream . . .”, a dream that one day we will realize that all men and women were created to live as brothers and sisters, and that brotherhood will become the order of the day for businessmen and politicians alike.<sup>2</sup> . . .

But the one who brought fraternity as the essential gift to humanity was Jesus who prayed for unity before he died: “Father, may they all be one” (see Jn 17:21). In revealing to us that God is our Father and consequently, that we are all brothers and sisters, he introduces the idea of humanity as one family, the idea of the “human family”. Consequently, God knocks down the walls separating those who are “the same” from those who are “different”, friends from enemies. He loosened all peoples from the bonds imprisoning them, from the thousand forms of oppression and slavery, and from every unjust relationship, bringing about an authentic existential, cultural, and political revolution.

Thus the idea of universal brotherhood, of fraternity, began to pave its path through history. Each one of us, even those working in politics, are called to this.

<sup>1</sup> *In buona compagnia* ('In good company'), edited by Claudio Mantovano, Roma 2001, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> See Martin Luther King, speech delivered on the steps at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. on August 28, 1963.