

## **Re-dedication of Boston's Holocaust Memorial Menorah**

Ladies and gentlemen,  
dear brothers and sisters of the faith of the Fathers and Mothers of Israel,  
dear friends:  
my most cordial *Shalom!*

With deep emotions I participate in this celebration of the re-dedication of Boston's Holocaust Memorial Menorah. In re-dedicating this memorial we commemorate the unprecedented and most atrocious event of the last century, the Holocaust or the Shoah. We bow our heads before the millions of victims of this until then unimaginable tragic event and we offer our profound sympathy for the survivors and the relatives of those who suffered and died in concentration camps, oppressed by profoundly inhuman conditions. We remember them in our prayers.

The memory of the inhuman treatment suffered by Jews in Europe during the second World War – the *Shoah* – remains engraved in our minds and causes further painful suffering. The memory of what happened now 65 years ago cannot be forgotten. No Holocaust denial, which is a new injustice to the victims, can be allowed or permitted.

The memory must be a *memoria futuri*, a memory for the future we hand down to future generations. We have to commemorate it and must learn many lessons from this sorrowful memory in order to ensure that such horrors are never repeated again in any situation; we must work together in opposing all forms of anti-Semitism, racism, genocide and discrimination on the basis of race or colour, culture or religion. Today we must strive together and to form a decisive 'no' to all forms of terrorism, particularly to terrorism disguised behind the mask of religion or other misrepresentations.

Saying this we can already witness that the painful memory of the Holocaust has borne good fruits. The "no" to such an horrific event has promoted a "yes" to a new partnership and friendship between Jews and Christians. Jews and Christians have rediscovered their common roots; after a long difficult and complex history they

rediscovered, that they are both the children of Abraham, our common father in faith. We share a faith in the one and only God, the Creator of heaven and earth. We share the Ten Commandments, and thus the fundamental values of our private and communal lives, and we share hope that in the end the Almighty will establish his reign and that then justice and peace will reign and the good definitively will prevail over the evil.

We gratefully remember all those who have guided us with tenacious perseverance on a path that has not always been simple. We recall the many Jewish people who have all furthered this dialogue: Franz Rosenzweig and Martin Buber, Gerhart Riegner, Joseph Lichten, Zachariah Schuster, Marc Tanenbaum. We recall the popes, from Blessed John XXIII to John Paul II and Benedikt XVI. The Declaration “Nostra aetate” of the II. Vatican Council in some sense was also a fruit of the shocking experience of the Holocaust. It was the historical turning point and must remain the point of no return – the Magna Charta for future Jewish-Christian relations.

I remember, when Pope Benedict visited the Synagogue in Cologne the Rabbi said: My mother who died in Auschwitz could never imagine that one day her son would greet a German Pope visiting her Synagogue destroyed during the II World War and then rebuilt. Yes, we initiated a new relationship built on our common roots, with mutual respect also regarding what differentiates us and in a common willingness to cooperate in providing a better world for our children and the children of our children, a world where such terrible events will never again happen, a world of justice and peace, a world of mutual respect for all faiths and all convictions.

Many things, unimaginable 65 years ago, have happened in the meantime. Not only visits of Popes in Synagogues and visits of Jewish representatives in the Vatican, not only many common congresses and symposiums, official and non official meetings, but above all, friendships and partnerships. But we all know that the world, we long for, we work for and we pray for is not yet ours. The memory of the Holocaust is still an unfinished agenda. Thus this memorial may remind us of the past as well of what is our common duty and our common responsibility for the future: To work and pray for schalom/ peace for the tortured region of the Holy Land is, to work and pray for

schalom/peace for the whole world, to work and to pray for schalom/peace for this country and this city, to work and to pray for schalom /peace for us all. Schalom!