***Prayer for the International Meeting***

***of the European Secretaries of Justice and Peace***

*Initial song*

**Greeting from the Celebrant**

**Cel.** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**A. Amen.**

**Cel.** God the Father, who fills all creatures with his presence and tenderness, Jesus Christ, who looked at this world with eyes of mercy, and the Holy Spirit, that with its light directs the world towards Love, be with you all.

**A.** **And with your spirit.**

**Cel.** Dear brothers and sisters, God desires to continually lay his gaze of mercy on each of us. We pray to prepare our hearts to welcome his presence that does not look at our sin, but to our being his children in His Son Jesus.

*A brief moment of silence, then the celebrant continues*

**Cel.** O Lord, God and Creator you asked us to inhabit the common home as creatures, giving us goodness, we ask your forgiveness for replacing you, Creator, considering ourselves owners of the world.

**A.** **Kyrie eleison** *(sang)*

**Cel.** Creating everything, you Lord wanted to tell us that our life comes from you and it is always in your hands, forgive us when we have little confidence in your love as a generous and provident Father.

**A.** **Kyrie eleison** *(sang)*

**Cel.** Every living being is under your gaze of a Father in love with his creatures, forgive us when we have the presumption that we can control everything.

**A.** **Kyrie eleison** *(sang)*

**Cel.** Let us pray

O God, you have made all things good, to be a sign of your wisdom; help us to gather the praise that rises to you from all creation, to give glory to your name with our whole life. For our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who is God, and lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for all ages.

**A. Amen.**

*Be seated*

**From the life of Saint Francis, *The Legend of Three Companions***

While he was walking by the church of San Damiano, he was told in the Spirit to go inside for a prayer. Once he entered, he began to pray intensely before an image of the Crucified, which spoke to him in a tender and kind voice: “Francis, don’t you see that my house is being destroyed? Go, then, and rebuild it for me.” Stunned and trembling, he said: “I will do so gladly, Lord.” For he understood that it was speaking about that church, which was near collapse because of its age. He was filled with such joy and became so radiant with light over that message, that he knew in his soul that it was truly Christ crucified who spoke to him.

Upon leaving the church, he found a priest sitting nearby and, putting his hands into his pouch, he offered him a handful of coins. “My Lord,” he said, “I beg you, buy some oil and keep the light before the Crucified burning continually. When this money runs out, I will again give you as much as you need.”

*A brief pause in silence*

*The assembly stands to sing the Gospel Acclamation*

**A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to John** (8,1-11)

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commended us to stone such woman. So what do you say?” They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them: “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone to her.” Again he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him. Then Jesus straightened up and said to her: ”Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She replied: “No one, sir.” Then Jesus said: “Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**A. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*After a brief pause of silence, the celebrant invites those present to pass in front of the crucifix to "stare into his eyes" with these or other similar words:*

**Cel.** The appointment with the gaze is here, for us, tonight. Like the adulteress of the Gospel and like Francis of Assisi we too are awaited by the eyes of Christ. Jesus has no speeches or other things ready for us, but only a silent appointment. And in silence, in line, we will pass in front of Jesus, we will look at him and he will look at us.

*While a suitable song is being sung, those present pass in front of the Crucifix, fixing their gaze on the gaze of the crucifix. In the meantime, each can personally read in silence the following passage, in which imagines the thoughts of St. Francis at the end of his life:*

**FOR PERSONAL READING**

Those eyes! Even now that I no longer see are here, in front of me! I cannot explain why I entered San Damiano that day. Yet something made me look inside ... I never imagined I would meet His gaze. The big, open, alive eyes of the crucifix looked at me, looked at me! Infront of such beauty, I was worth nothing, less than a worm. Yet I was looked at by that Crucifix with a mercy and a compassion so great that I could no longer look away. Those eyes! They called me to do great things, to repair His house! What did it mean to repair his house? Which house?

I, Francesco, felt so small. Where do I start repairing something so big?! Yet, the Lord from that cross had spoken to me and infused in me such great joy and enthusiasm! I had to trust in Him, with Him I shouldn't have feared anything. His love would rebuild the foundation. His forgiveness would heal rifts and divisions. Never again did I want to look at the world with the same eyes as before! To truly rebuild His house, I had to look at everyone as He had looked at me, I had to learn to recognize His Face reflected in every creature...

*After the gesture, follows the following prayer from Pope Francis.*

*Prayer from the Laudato Si’ of Pope Francis*

1. Father, we praise you with all your creatures.

They came forth from your all-powerful hand;

they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.

Praise be to you.

1. Son of God, Jesus,

through you all things were made.

You took shape in the maternal womb of Mary

you became part of this earth,

and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.

Today you are alive in every creature with your risen glory.

Praise be to you!

1. Holy Spirit, by your light

you guide this world towards the Father’s love

and accompany the groan of creation

You also dwell in our hearts

and inspire us to do what is good.

Praise be to you!

1. Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,

teach us to contemplate you

in the beauty of the universe,

for all things speak of you.

1. Awaken our praise and thankfulness

for every being that you have made.

Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that exists.

God of love, show us our place in this world

as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth,

for no one of them is forgotten by You.

1. Enlighten those who possess power and money

that they may avoid the sin of indifference,

that they may love the common good, advance the weak,

and care for this world in which we live.

**A.** **The poor and the earth are crying out.**

**O Lord, seize us with your power and light,**

**help us to protect all life,**

**to prepare for a better future,**

**for the coming of your Kingdom**

**of justice, peace, love and beauty.**

**Praise be to you!**

**Amen.**

**Ending prayer**

**Cel.** Blessed are you God, Creator and Father of the universe.

You have made all things beautiful, a sign and imprint of your goodness.

You have entrusted everything to man and woman, your beloved creatures, so that through work will guard the immense work of creation.

In the basket of our fragility, together with the fruits of the earth and our work, your gift and sign of your generosity that never fails, we lay down our commitment to recognize each other as brothers and sisters, so that our being sons and daughters in the Son, Jesus may be manifested, in profound communion with you, Father, who are blessed for ever and ever.

**A. Amen.**

**Final Blessing**

**Cel.** The Lord be with you.

**A.** **And with your spirit.**

**Cel.** The Lord bless you and keep you.

**A.** **Amen.**

**Cel.** Let his face shine upon you

and give you his mercy.

**A.** **Amen.**

**Cel.** Turn his gaze on you

and give you his peace.

**A.** **Amen.**

**Cel.** And the blessing of almighty God,

Father and Son + and Holy Spirit,

descend upon you, and remain with you always.

**A.** **Amen.**

**Cel.** Glorify the Lord with your life. Go in peace.

**A.** **We give thanks to God.**

*Final song*