

October 12, 2016



INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE - We announce a major national prayer to be held on Sunday, October 16, 2016: all the Bishops, all the priests, religious and laity, will animate Masses, liturgies, vigils and prayers for the good of the nation. We call on all men and women of good will to join us and pray for our beloved country, invoking God's blessing on our population": is the appeal launched by Cardinal Baselios Cleemis, President of the interritual Episcopal Conference of India (CBCI) - which brings together the Bishops of the Latin, Malabar and Malankara rite - in response to the Kashmir crisis and the escalation that is registered on the border region with Pakistan.

In the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, on the Pakistani border, the curfew is still in force. The conflict between the army and separatist groups inflamed after the killing, which occurred in July, of Burhan Wani, a well-known militant, which was followed by an escalation of attacks. Tension is high and the population live under military control, while schools, universities and businesses have come to a halt. Even feasts and religious assemblies have been suspended.

Cardinal Cleemis' message, sent to Fides, invites believers of all religions to unite in a prayer for peace, the value that unites all faiths: "On October 2, we celebrated the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi; October 4 was the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, messenger of peace. On October 11 we celebrate the Hindu feast of Dusserah, which is the victory of good over evil; Muharram, significant feast for Muslims, falls on October 12; on October 20 Sikhs recall the birth of Guru Granth, while on October 30 we will celebrate Deepavali, the feast that marks the victory of light over darkness. Among all these religious feasts, our beloved country faces an extraordinary challenge, especially on its borders. The Catholic Church, with all other believers, wants to pray for justice, peace, prosperity, harmony and unity", concluded the Cardinal.

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