

Rabbi pays remarkable tribute to Pope John Paul II at Sant'Egidio meeting

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Seven decades after the outbreak of World War II, the Sant'Egidio Community held its annual interfaith peace gathering in Krakow from September 6-8. Numerous political and religious leaders, including six cardinals, took part in 22 panel discussions on topics as varied as Auschwitz and the dialogue of faith and science.

In his keynote address, Sant'Egidio Community founder Andrea Riccardi emphasized the power of prayer over history, linking the prayers for peace at Assisi in 1986 with the collapse of European Communism in 1989. At the opening assembly, Rabbi David Rosen, the director of the American Jewish Committee's Department of Interreligious Affairs, paid a remarkable tribute to Pope John Paul II, linking him to the fulfillment of the prophecies in Isaiah:

This messianic vision is a vision of Universal peace, when "many nations will go up unto the mountain of the Lord" "nation will not lift up sword against nation and they shall learn war no more". In this messianic Age, the prophet envisages that "the wolf will dwell with the lamb and the leopard will lie down with the kid" ... it is the vision of Isaiah that gives us the greatest hope vision for the future and it was a son of Krakow who led us so remarkably towards that vision-- may it be fulfilled speedily in our days. Amen.

Founded in Rome in 1968, the Sant'Egidio Community is an international association of the faithful of pontifical right that works for peace and alleviates poverty. "The spiritual benchmarks of the Community," the Pontifical Council for the Laity noted in 2005, "have always been the first Christian community in the Acts of the Apostles, the Church's preferential love for the poor, and the primacy of prayer."

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