
Russia: young religious leaders meet in Moscow to foster dialogue and cooperation between faiths and communities. Mgr. Pezzi, “promote brotherhood”

“I think that ours is an era of great change, but at the same time, it is an era where we can do a lot and, most importantly, we can work or, even better, serve the cause of brotherhood among all peoples”. Archbishop Paolo Pezzi of Moscow said this in his greetings to the participants in the 1st Moscow Interreligious Youth Forum, which was held yesterday, 7 April, at the largest mosque in the Russian capital. “Brotherhood is neither a kind of ideology nor utopia, but a chance to take a new look at each other”, Mgr. Pezzi continued. “Brothers can argue, disagree on many things, but they have to acknowledge that they have only one Father, God the Almighty Creator; and it is on this belonging that we must base our activities, seeing each other as brothers and sisters”, he concluded. The theme of the meeting was “Consensus of the different: towards interfaith and intergenerational cooperation”. The initiative, promoted by the International Muslim Forum, aims to create a “platform for fruitful dialogue and exchange of experiences between young leaders and scholars”, the organizers explained, “whose scientific interest is in issues related to religion, the organization of youth work, the implementation of youth policies, and to understanding interreligious relations in a multicultural Russia”. Representing the Archdiocese of Moscow were Oksana Oimenova, head of the Archdiocese’s Youth Centre, and Father Stephan Lipke, Secretary General of the Bishops’ Conference, who spoke about dialogue. The Youth Forum was attended by representatives of the main religious communities in Russia.

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