



(ZENIT, Rome, September 20, 2016).- Pope Francis has returned to the Italian town of Assisi today, just over a month after his Aug. 4 visit, this time to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Meeting of Prayer for Peace, desired by John Paul II on Oct. 27, 1986.

According to a statement released by the Holy See Press Office, at 10:55 a.m. Rome time, Francis' helicopter took off from the Vatican heliport for the visit to Assisi for the World Day of Prayer, in the ambit of the event "Thirst for Peace: Religions and Cultures in Dialogue," promoted by the diocese of Assisi, by the Franciscan Families and by Rome's Sant'Egidio Community.

Once the helicopter landed in the Migaghelli sports field, the Pope was received at Santa Maria degli Angeli by Archbishop-Bishop of Assisi-Nocera Umbra-Gualdo Tadino, Monsignor Domenico Sorrentino; by the Honorable Catuscia Marini, President of the Umbria Region; by Raffaele Cannizzaro, Prefect of Perugia and by Stefania Proietti, Mayor of Assisi.

The Pope went by car to the Sacred Convent of Assisi and was received by the Custos, Father Mauro Gambetti; by His Holiness Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople; by Abbas Shuman, Vice-President of Al Azhar (Egypt); by His Grace Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury; by His Holiness Ephrem II, Syro-Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and by the Chief Rabbi of Rome, Riccardi Di Segni.

They all arrived together at the Sixtus IV Cloister, where they were awaited by representatives of the world churches and religions, and bishops of Umbria. The Holy Father greeted all the representatives individually.

At 1:00 pm, Francis took part in a lunch at the refectory of the Sacred Convent, which included refugees from suffering countries, who currently are being offered housing by the Sant'Egidio Community. In the course of the pleasant meeting, Marco Impagliazzo, President of Sant'Egidio Community,

recalled the 25th anniversary of the Patriarchy of His Holiness Bartholomew I.

Sant'Egidio has informed ZENIT that the menu for today's lunch consisted of an appetizer with bresaola, arugula and mozzarella, trofie pasta with pesto, turkey with beans and a roasted mushroom, and a fruit tart for dessert.