



## **Prayer for Peace on June 8th: Bartholomew will be there too**

At the encounter to pray for peace in the Holy Land, called by Pope Francis at the Vatican on Sunday, June 8th there will be also the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew. Vatican Insider received this confirmation from authoritative sources of the patriarchy. The decision will be made official most likely tomorrow, after the meeting of the synod during which the patriarch will present the initiative.

It was Pope Francis who invited Bartholomew during the meeting held at the Greek-orthodox Patriarchate on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. The patriarch of Constantinople had accepted the invitation, though reserving the right to respond.

The presence of the Successor of the Apostle next to the Successor of the Apostle Peter, on the occasion of the arrival of the Israeli and Palestinian presidents at the Vatican, is an important sign of the commitment of Christians for Peace in the Holy Land. It testifies that the “Sister” Churches intend to continue along this path undertaken in Jerusalem.

As we recall, the meeting to pray for peace, in the initial intention of Francis, was to be held during the three-day pilgrimage, but political and organizational problems prevented it. For this Sunday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, from Bethlehem, the Pope announced the initiative after obtaining the approval of Abu Mazen and Shimon Peres.

Even Bartholomew, during his stay in Israel and Palestine met the two presidents who will be in the Pope’s home on the day of Pentecost. Francis explained that this is not a diplomatic initiative or mediation, but only a prayer for peace.