



To the esteemed Professor Marco Impagliazzo, President of the Community of Sant'Egidio, our beloved in the Lord: Grace be to you and peace from God.

It is with heartfelt joy that we communicate with you in order to convey our warmest congratulations, as well as those of the Ecumenical Patriarchate collectively, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of your blessed community. For a half century, your Christ-loving community has fervently dedicated its time, talents and treasures for the promotion of three very important virtues and concepts: prayer, philanthropy and peace. Indeed, for us, these three ideas are interwoven in the Christian life, most especially in our age, where pure activism shadows the spiritual life, consumerism marginalizes peoples, and vain interests incite violence and war. In response to these provocations, your community has valiantly promoted societal transformation, both locally and globally, by fostering collaboration among churches and religions, philanthropic organizations and all people of goodwill.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate throughout the centuries has pursued a plethora of ways to address the problems of the times. It has done so, especially in our day, by hosting and promoting initiatives that cultivate dialogue and openness towards the other with the aim of establishing peaceful coexistence, mutual respect and fruitful cooperation. Indeed, it is our deep conviction that in all these fields, the contribution of religions and Christian Churches is crucial as people of faith are normally found to be motivated, inspired and empowered to selflessly work toward such ends.

On this day of celebration, we particularly honor Prof. Andrea Riccardi, the founder of the Community of Sant'Egidio, a man of vision and faith who has eminently contributed to promoting peace and solidarity in our world. On our common path to building a global society that is more just and respectful of human dignity, we are pleased to reaffirm our unwavering support and commendation to him and to the members of this noble movement as we have common concerns and visions for our present and future. It is our fervent prayer that the Holy Spirit will continue to inspire, empower and strengthen people of all nations to work concretely for the establishment of world peace and justice.

May the oil of faith granted to us all become an ointment that soothes and heals the wounds of the world, as well as ignite the everlasting flame of love in the heart and soul of every human being. With these words of appreciation and prayerful commendation, we invoke upon you the grace and mercy of Almighty God, and we remain with much love and honor.

At the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the tenth of February, 2018

Prayerfully yours,

✠ BARTHOLOMEW
Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome
and Ecumenical Patriarch