

**Letter of the Jewish-Christian Friendship Association  
[Amicizia Ebraico Cristiana] of Naples**

S.S. Papa Benedetto XVI, Città del Vaticano  
Cardinal Walter Kasper, Città del Vaticano  
Rav. Giuseppe Laras - Milano  
UCEI – Roma; UGEI - Milano  
Colloqui Ebraico Cristiani di Camaldoli  
Comunità Ebraica di Napoli  
Card. Crescenzo Sepe- Arcivescovo di Napoli  
Mons. Vincenzo Paglia  
International Council of Christians and Jews  
Amicizie Ebraico Cristiane di Italia

Do not allow twenty years of dialogue to be erased—twenty years which we have consciously lived out as a dialogue between equals! For this is how many years our Association has been in existence, founded in Naples at the invitation of Cardinal Corrado Ursi, and which numbers among its founding partners the Rabbi of Naples, Cesare Eliseo, the pastors of the Christian churches located in the city and, among the Catholics, Father Bruno Forte (who is today the Archbishop of Chieti-Vasto).

Twenty years—and more—of growth, of a patient, undaunted, demanding but constant path of growing familiarity and friendship, opening ourselves also to Islamic culture, as the reality of the times suggested, and as was highlighted last May by Rabbi Dr. Giuseppe Laras, on the occasion of the Assembly for our 20th anniversary.

The re-introduction of a prayer with a view toward “conversion” is cause for a profound uneasiness. It transports us back to a pre-conciliar era, and dangerously revives a past which, we had thought, was buried.

Having borne witness to thousands of young people that, apart from dialogue, there is no future for humanity, or for a world of greater justice and peace, this has been—and remains—the commitment of so many of us. For this reason, we are deeply pained to find ourselves today faced with difficulties and obstacles which run the risk of either slowing down—or interrupting entirely—such dialogue.

The experience that we have lived during these years, the attentiveness—indeed, the affection—that we feel for each other compels us not to stop, even momentarily. On the contrary, it pushes us to expand, strengthen, multiply and create every possible opportunity for authentic dialogue, fully respecting every culture and every type of difference, in order that the human family—which is a *single* family—might come to live together peacefully [*per realizzare la pacifica convivenza dell'unica famiglia umana*<sup>1</sup>].

On behalf of the leadership team,  
Diana Pezza Borrelli, President

---

<sup>1</sup> Literally, the Italian suggests: “so that the peaceful living-together of the one human family might become a reality”. The Italian term “convivenza” certainly seems intended to conjure up the *convivencia* of the “Golden Age” of Spain, during which Jews, Christians and Muslims lived together in peace, harmony and in a mutually fruitful relationship of cooperation