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教宗方濟各

2020年復活節文告

於伯多祿大殿 2020年4月12日復活主日

文目 愛的弟兄姊妹們,復活節快樂!

今天,全世界都迴響著教會的宣報:「耶穌基督已復活了!」-「祂真的復活了!」

這個喜訊如同在黑夜中點燃的一道嶄新火焰:這滿布時代性挑戰的世界,此刻受到病毒大流行的磨難,我們人類大家庭陷入嚴峻考驗的黑夜。教會的聲音在這黑夜中迴響著:「基督——我的希望,已經復活!」(復活節的繼抒詠)

這是另一種「感染」,從人心擴散到人心,因為每一個

人心中都期待著這喜訊。那是希望的感染:「基督——我的希望,已經復活!」這並非是什麼神奇妙語,能使問題消失。不,基督的復活絕非如此,而是愛戰勝邪惡根基的勝利,是一種不「迴避」痛苦和死亡的勝利。它穿越痛苦和死亡,在深淵中開啟一條通道,且化惡為善:這是天主大能的獨特標記。

復活主就是那被釘者,不是另一位。在祂光榮的肉體上帶著不可泯滅的傷痕:創傷變成希望的縫隙。讓我們把 日光轉向祂,讓祂醫治受苦人類的創傷。

今天,我特別念及直接遭受新冠病毒打擊的人們:病患、亡者,以及那些因喪失摯愛而哀悼的人們——他們中有些人甚至無法跟亡者訣別。願生命之主接納亡者進入祂的國度,恩賜仍在考驗中的人慰藉和希望,尤其是年長者和孤獨的人。願上主使身處脆弱處境中的人,如那些在療養院服務、或在軍營及監獄裡生活的人,不缺乏安慰和所需的援助。為許多人來說,這是一個孤單的復活節;從肉身的痛楚到經濟上的問題,人們都活在疫情帶來的憂苦和不安之中。

這疫症奪走的不只是情感的交流,也剝奪了眾人親自透過聖事——特別是聖體聖事及和好聖事——所能汲取的慰藉。這期間,在許多國家都無法領受這些聖事,但上主並沒有留下我們孤獨一人!在同心合一的祈禱中,我們確信祂的手將我們蔭庇(參閱:詠139:5),並向我們高聲重複說:不要害怕,「我已經復活了,而且與你同在!」(參閱:《羅馬彌撒經書》)

願耶穌,我們的逾越節,賜予各地的醫護人員力量和希望,他們透過對近人竭盡所能的照顧與關愛作出見證,甚至經常犧牲自己的健康。我們應向他們,一如向那些努力不懈確保民眾生活所需提供基本服務的人,以及向那些在許多國家為緩和人民的困難和苦楚而作出貢獻的軍警人員,致上關愛與感激之情。

在過去幾週,上百萬人的生活突然受到改變。為許多人,留在家中提供了他們一個契機去反省、中止生活繁忙的步伐、與摯愛在一起並享受他們的陪伴。可是,為許多人這也是一個對未來不確定而擔憂的時期,面臨失業的風險,以及現今危機帶來的其他後果。我鼓勵所有局負政治責任的人士,為人民的福祉積極努力,提供必須的方法和工具,致使所有的人能過一個具有尊嚴的生活;並在環境許可的情形之下,使日常生活能恢復正常的運作。

現在不是冷漠的時候,因為全世界都在受苦,而世人必須要團結一致去面對這次的全球疫情。願復活的耶穌賜予希望給所有的窮人、所有的邊緣人,以及難民和無家可歸的人。願居住在世界各地城市和偏鄉的這些最弱小弟兄姊妹們不會孤獨無助。我們別讓他們缺乏基本必需品,由於許多工作現在停擺,醫藥等必需品難以取得,適當的醫療照顧機會更是難上加難。鑒於種種情況,但願國際制裁得以暫緩,因為這些制裁阻撓多個國家為本國國民接收充分的援助;但願所有國家有能力應對人民此刻最主要的需求,若不能直接免除最貧困國家的債務,至少要避免加重它們的預算。

現在不是自私的時候,因為我們正在面對的挑戰凝聚我們眾人,不分彼此。在世界上遭受新型冠狀病毒打擊的許多地區,我特別想到歐洲。在第二次世界大戰之後,歐洲大陸能再次崛起,是由於它具體的精誠團結精神,使它得以克服過去的敵對。這精誠團結的精神從未像此刻這般急迫,尤其是在當前處境下。願過去的這種敵對不會死灰復燃,而應是所有的人都視彼此為獨一無二的大家庭的一分子,並且守望相助。今天,歐盟面對一個時代性的挑戰,這不僅攸關歐盟的未來,更影響到全世界的前途。願大家不會錯過這機會來繼續證明精誠團結的精神,同時也尋找創新的解決問題辦法。另一個選擇純粹是自私自利和重蹈覆轍的誘惑,它恐怕會導致和平共處及後代發展陷入嚴峻考驗。

現在不是分裂的時候。願基督,我們的和平,光照衝突中所有的負責人員,好使他們有勇氣響應在全球範圍內立即停火的呼籲。現在不是繼續花費龐大資金製造和販賣武器的時候,而那些資金應是用在治療病人和搶救性命。反而,此刻該當終止心愛的敘利亞長期的浴血戰爭、也門衝突,以及伊拉克和黎巴嫩的緊張局勢。願現在是以色列人和巴勒斯坦人再次對話的時刻,為尋求穩定和持久的解決問題辦法,使雙方和平共處。願生活在烏克蘭東部地區的人們不再受煎熬。願在非洲多個國家眾多無辜百姓遭受的恐怖攻擊得以終止。

現在不是遺忘的時候。願我們現在面對的危機不會讓我 們忘記,許多其它緊急狀況令許多人受折磨。在亞洲, 以及在非洲的許多人民,如在莫桑比克的北部德爾加杜

角的百姓,正在經歷嚴重的人道危機。願生命之主讓他們感覺到祂親近他們。願上主溫暖眾多逃離戰爭、旱災和饑荒的難民和流離失所者的心靈。願上主賜予眾多的移民和難民保護,其中有許多是兒童,他們的生活條件令人難以忍受,在利比亞,以及在希臘和土耳其的邊界尤其如此。我也不想忘記萊斯沃斯島。願上主恩祐委內瑞拉境內達成具體和立即的解決方案,讓飽受政治、社會-經濟和醫療的嚴峻局勢之苦的人民能得到國際救援。

親愛的弟兄姊妹們:冷漠、自私、分裂、遺忘,真的並非是我們現在願意聽到的詞語。我們希望能永遠摒除這些詞語!當恐懼和死亡在我們心中得勝的時候,也就是說,當我們不讓主耶穌在我們的心中和我們的生活中戰勝時,這些詞語就好像占優勢。主耶穌戰勝了死亡,開啟了永恆救恩的途徑,願祂驅散我們可憐人類的黑暗,並引領我們進入祂永不日落的光榮日子。

藉著這些省思,我渴望祝福你們大家復活節快樂!

(梵蒂岡新聞網中文翻譯)



教宗方濟各

第57屆世界聖召祈禱日 文告

聖召的關鍵詞

2020年5月3日

文月愛的弟兄姊妹們:

去年8月4日為亞爾斯本堂神父聖若翰·衛雅逝世160周年,我當時決定寫一封信給所有司鐸:他們日日奉獻自己的生命,為服務天主的子民,以回應上主的召叫。

當時,我選用4個關鍵詞:痛苦、感謝、鼓勵和讚美,藉 此向所有司鐸們致謝並支持他們的鐸職。如今,我相信 這4個關鍵詞,在世界聖召祈禱日這一天,福音所記載有 關耶穌和伯多祿在加里肋亞海上風雨交加的奇妙經歷為 背景,也適用於全體天主子民。(參閱瑪14:22~33)

增餅奇蹟曾經使群眾大為驚異;在此之後,耶穌要祂的門徒們上船而先祂抵達對岸;在此同時,祂遣散了群眾。門徒們橫渡水面的景象,喚起我們自己的生命歷程。的確,我們生命的小船緩慢地前進,無時無刻都在尋找一處安全的避風港,隨時準備好在海上面對危險和

尋求希望,同時相信船上的舵手最終會引領我們航向正道。不過,小船偶而也會偏離航道,因海市蜃樓而迷航,不僅未受燈塔的指引返家,反而更因困難、疑惑和恐懼的風暴而顛簸不已。

那些受召跟隨納匝肋人耶穌為師傅的人,在他們心中也會遭遇類似的情況;他們必須有所超越,放棄安穩的生活,方能成為主的門徒。可能承擔的風險包括:黑夜降臨、逆風咆哮、船隻受巨浪拋擲,以及害怕失敗、無法活出自己的召叫……以上種種,都會使他們不知所措。

然而,福音告訴我們,在這趟充斥著挑戰的歷程上,我們並不孤單。耶穌在波濤洶湧的水面上步行朝向門徒們,如同在暗夜中發出的第一道曙光;在驚濤駭浪中, 池邀請伯多祿到祂跟前來;當耶穌見他在下沉時,便向 他伸出手來救他,而祂一上船就使風浪平息。

因此,聖召的第一個關鍵詞,就是感謝。我們能夠踏上正途,並非只靠自己的能力,也不僅取決於我們所選擇的旅程而已。我們如何能找到生命的圓滿,這不僅只是我們每個人各自所作的決定,而是我們對從天上而來的召叫所作的回應。上主向我們指出我們的目的地,即在對岸,並給予我們上船的勇氣。祂召叫我們,並成為我們的掌舵人;祂陪伴我們,引導我們;祂使我們不致在猶豫不決的泥灘地上擱淺,甚至使我們能在滔滔水面上行走。

每一個聖召都出自上主愛的目光, 祂來與我們相遇, 甚至可能是在我們的船隻被暴風雨襲擊的時刻。「聖召, 不僅是我們個人的選擇, 更是我們對天主白白召叫的回應。」

(《寫給司鐸們的一封信》2019年8月4日);一旦我們在感恩中敞開心門,並在生命中體察天主的蹤跡,我們將能成功地發現並擁抱我們的聖召。

當門徒們看見耶穌在水面上步行朝向他們時,他們一開始以為祂是鬼,所以非常害怕。耶穌立刻向他們說話,安慰他們說:「放心,是我;不要害怕!」(瑪14:27)這句話應持續不斷地陪伴我們的生命和聖召的歷程。這就是我希望給你們的第二個關鍵詞:鼓勵。

某些「鬼」使我們心煩意亂,經常對我們的歷程和成長造成阻礙,使我們無法放心選擇上主為我們劃定的道路。當我們被召叫要離開安全的岸邊,接受另一種生活型態,例如:婚姻、鐸職和獻身生活時,我們的第一個反應,常是「不信」,以為是見到了「鬼」。這當然不是我的聖召!這真的是正確的途徑嗎?上主真的要我去這樣做嗎?

這些思想可能會不斷地擴大;我們不停地尋找理由和藉口,並在心中盤算利弊,無法下定決心,於是顯得徬徨無力,一直在準備啟程的岸邊躊躇。我們覺得自己可能判斷錯誤,應該沒有能力迎接挑戰;或者以為自己是看到了鬼,應該把牠趕走。

上主知道人生的重要抉擇,比如:婚姻,或者是全然獻身事奉主,都需要勇氣。祂認識我們心中的那艘船,會因問題、疑問和困難而不停地晃蕩,所以祂安慰我們說:「放心,是我;不要害怕!」我們在信德中知道祂與我們同在,並來與我們相遇,甚至在暴風兩興起的水面上,與我們同行。有了這認知,我們不再沮喪,不再

如我所說的充滿「甜膩的憂傷」(《寫給司鐸們的一封信》2019年8月4日),即失去內在的熱忱,使我們難以經驗到自身聖召的美好。

在《給司鐸的一封信》中,我也提到了痛苦,但在此, 我想用另一個字來表達,就是勞苦。每一個聖召都帶有 一份責任。上主召叫我們,因為祂要賦予我們能力「步 行水面」,如同伯多祿那樣,換句話說,即為我們的生 命負起責任,效法耶穌,以具體和平常的方式,尤其藉 不同形式的聖召生活(平信徒、司鐸和獻身生活者), 日日為福音服務。然而,我們一如聖伯多祿,心中雖然 懷有熱忱和渴望,卻也必須面對失敗和恐懼。

如果我們因婚姻生活或司鐸職務中迎面而來的重責大任,或可能遭遇的艱難困苦而感到畏縮,那麼我們就是在拒絕耶穌愛的目光;我們會像伯多祿一樣,開始下沉。從另一個角度來看,儘管我們會有軟弱與貧乏,信德卻使我們得以走向復活的主,安然度過每一場暴風雨;當疲憊和畏懼令我們開始下沉時,耶穌向我們伸出祂的手來,祂賜予我們所需的熱情,以喜樂和殷切期盼的心活出我們的聖召。

當耶穌終於上了船,頓時風平浪靜!可見上主在我們生命中屢次遭遇的湍流和暴風雨中,能行何等奇事;祂平息風浪,使得邪惡、恐懼和怯懦,不得在我們身上施展。

當我們履行我們自身的聖召時,逆風有可能使我們一時動搖,陷於軟弱;在此,我所想到的,是那些在世俗社會中局負重任的人們——那些我願意稱為「勇士」的為

人夫妻者,特別是那些全心度獻身生活和司鐸聖召的人。我知道你們努力工作,有時疏離感重壓心頭;也擔心因慣於例行公事而使聖召的熱火日漸消退, 感受到日子不安和不確定的重擔,並憂心著未來。放心,不要害怕!耶穌站在我們這邊,如果我們承認祂是我們生命中唯一的主,祂會向我們伸開雙手,扶助我們,拯救我們。

即使在暴風興起的浪濤澎湃水面上,我們的生命卻正向 讚美敞開!這是聖召的最後一個關鍵字,邀請我們效法 童貞榮福瑪利亞內心的態度:她感謝上主的垂顧,在驚 恐和困惑時,仍然保持忠信,並勇敢地擁抱她的聖召, 使她的生命成為一首讚美天主的永恆詩歌。

親愛的朋友們,我不只特別在這一天,我也在我們所隸屬的團體的日常牧靈生活中,要求教會繼續鼓勵聖召。但願她觸動信徒們的心,使他們都能懷著感恩,為發現天主在他們生命中作出的召叫,並獲得勇氣向天主說:「我願意!」藉著在基督內的信德,克服一切困頓勞苦,使他們的生命成為一首獻於天主,為兄弟姊妹和為全世界所吟詠的讚美詩歌。

願童貞瑪利亞陪伴我們, 並為我們轉求。

方濟各

發自羅馬,拉特朗聖若望大殿

2020年3月8日——四旬期第二主日

(臺灣地區主教團 恭譯)

2020 / No.378

教宗方濟各

第54屆世界傳播日文告

「你將講給你的子孫聽。」 (出十2) 生命成為故事

大個主題上,因為我相信,我們若不要失去人生的方向,我們就必須從美好的故事汲取真理,而這些故事是能夠建立,而非拆毀,能幫助我們再次尋根和獲得力量,一起向前邁進。我們身處的環境,充斥著嘈雜混亂的聲音與訊息;因此,我們需要一則深具人性的故事來表達我們自己,並闡述我們心中的美善。這則故事,以溫柔的眼光,看待我們的世界和正發生在其中的大小事件;這則故事告知我們,我們每個人猶如一張生命的掛毯上各個不同的部分,環環相扣;這則故事,可以顯示出那些使我們彼此交織相連的縷縷絲線,一覽無遺。

一、編織故事

人們總愛「講故事」。從童年開始,我們渴望聽故事就 好像飢餓時渴望食物一樣。故事有著各種不同的形式, 比如童話、小說、電影、歌曲、新聞等等,在不知不覺 中影響著我們的生命。通常,我們根據自己所認同的故 事情節和人物角色,來判定何者為是,何者為非。許許 多多的故事在我們的心中烙下印記,堅定我們的信念, 塑造我們的行為,並幫助我們認識自己究竟是誰,同時 表現出自己的特質。

我們人類不僅是唯一需要衣裝來遮蓋自己脆弱地方的受造物(參閱:創三21),也是唯一需要藉由故事來「遮蓋」並維護我們生命的一群。我們不只編織衣裝,也編織故事。的確,由於人類有「編織」的能力(拉丁文「texere」),因而產生編製織物(textile),或編輯文本(text)這兩個詞彙。不同世代的故事,都由同一台「織布機」織就:而敘事的絲線,則包括許多甚至是日常生活上的「英雄人物」,他們追求夢想,卻屢屢遭遇困境,並與邪惡對抗;然而,他們是在一股力量一一愛的驅使之下,才變得勇敢。我們將自己沉浸於故事中,我們就找到充分的理由,效法其中的英雄人物,英勇地面對生命中的挑戰。

人們總愛「講故事」,正因為我們自己投身於一個不斷成長的過程,我們才不停地發現自己,使我們度每日的生活,猶如編織一張掛發,日漸華麗豐盛。然而,一開始,我們的故事就受到威脅:邪惡在人類歷史中蜿蜒來回。

二、並非所有的故事都是美好的故事

「吃了這果子,你們將如同天主一樣」(參閱:創三

4):蛇對人的誘惑,將一個死結編織在類歷史這匹織 布上。時至今日,仍然有人利用這套講故事的手法,來 達到剝削他人的目的:「一旦你擁有……,你就能成 為……,你就能辦到……。」這個訊息,正由他們口中 悄悄說出。有多少故事, 麻木我們的感覺, 一再要我們 相信:要快樂,就要不斷地獲得、擁有和消耗。我們甚 至沒有發現到,自己是多麼地會於閒聊八卦,又不停地 消費暴力與謊言。然而,有建設性的、有強化社會連繫 和文化結構功能的故事, 通常在各種溝通平台上不容易 找到;取而代之的,卻是毀滅性和破壞性的故事,不僅 造成損害,還令那些使我們互相連結成為一個社會卻又 容易斷裂的絲線,頻頻脫落。若人們一直將未經確認的 無關緊要的論據,發送著充滿敵意的訊息,散播仇恨, 這不但沒有為編織人類歷史助一臂之力,反而處處剝奪 他人的尊嚴。

然而,那些被人利用、拿來爭權奪利的故事,如同曇花一現,轉瞬即逝;美好的故事卻能超越時空,歷久彌新,即使數世紀過去,仍然合乎時宜,因為它滋養生命。

在這個篡改及假冒手法愈見高明(比如:偽造技術,「deepfake」),且發展日益猖獗的年代,我們要有智慧去傳承和講述真實又美好的故事;我們要有勇氣去棄絕那些虛假和惡劣的故事;我們要有耐心和分辨能力去重新發現那些能幫助我們的許多故事,使我們身處於現時諸多的煎熬困厄,仍不失去生活方向;我們需要一些故

事,透過其中的無名英雄,來報導我們的真實身分。

三、故事中的故事

聖經是故事中的故事,不知有多少事件、民族和人物,藉由它展現在我們眼前!聖經從一開始就向我們顯示天主是誰:祂兼具「造物主」和「述說者」的身分。的確,天主一發聖言,萬物化生(參閱:創一);祂身為「述說者」,一說就有,最後創造了男人和女人,成為祂的同伴,和他們自由地交談;他們與天主共同造就歷史。在聖詠中,受造物向造物主傾訴:「祢造成了我的五臟六腑,祢在我母胎中締結了我。我讚美祢,因我被造,驚奇神奧,祢的工作,千奇萬妙(……)。我何時在暗中構形,我何時在母胎造成,我的骨骸祢全知情」(詠一三九:13~15)。我們雖被生下來,卻還不完美,需要不斷地被「織造」與「締結」。生命已賜給了我們,邀請我們繼續織造那屬於我們的「千奇萬妙」。

所以,聖經可說是天主和人之間偉大的愛情故事,耶穌位居中心:祂的故事,使得天主對我們的愛,達致滿全;也使得我們對天主的愛,達致滿全。因此,世世代代的一眾男女都受召重新講述並勉力懷想這「故事中的故事」裡最重要、也最具意義的情節。

今年世界傳播日文告的標題摘自出谷紀,是聖經記載裡 面最早發生的故事,天主在其中不斷地參與並投入人類 的歷史。當受奴役的以色列子民向天主哀號時,祂立即 俯聽,並且想起了過去:「天主記起了祂與亞巴郎、依 撒格和雅各伯所立的盟約;天主遂眷顧了以色列子民,

特別垂念他們」(出二24~25)。天主一想起自己的盟約,就藉著一連串的奇蹟妙事帶來釋放,使以色列子民不再受壓迫。然後,天主再將這些奇蹟的意義,逐一告訴梅瑟:「好叫你將我怎樣戲弄了埃及人,在他們中行了什麼奇蹟,都講給你的子孫聽,使你們知道我是上主」(出十2)。由出谷紀,我們有了經驗:對天主的認識,主要是以講故事的方式——講述天主如何持續臨在,代代相傳。賜予生命的天主是藉著講述生命的故事來自我啟示。

耶穌自己不用抽象的概念來談論天主,而是運用比喻和 日常生活中會發生的小故事。由此,生命成為故事;對 聽故事的人來說,故事有了生命:故事進入那些聽故事 人們的生命中,改變了他們。

福音也是故事,這並非偶然。福音在對我們談論耶穌時,使我們有「倣效」祂的能力,「使我們相似祂。福音要求讀者投入同一信仰,為能分享同一生命。若望福音告訴我們,「講故事」的最佳典範——天主聖言本身成為故事:「只有那在父懷裡的獨生者,身為天主的,祂給我們詳述了」(若一18)。原文中所使用的動詞「解經」(exegésato),也可以翻譯作「啟示」和「闡述」。天主親自在人類當中與我們往來如織,帶給了我們一個嶄新的方式去編織我們的故事。

四、一則不斷更新的故事

基督的故事並非是已成過去的歷史遺產,而也是我們的故事,並且永遠切合實際。祂的故事告訴我們:天主關心人類、我們的肉身和我們的故事,甚至降生成人,取得肉軀,進入歷史;我們也由此確知,沒有任何一則人類的故事是無關緊要或微不足道的。既然天主成為故事,每一則人類的故事,就某種意義上來說,也是天主的故事。天父在每一個世人的故事中都看到祂降生成人的聖子的故事。每一則人類的故事都具有不可遏抑的尊嚴。由於耶穌將人性提升到令人驚歎震撼的高度,因此人類所有的故事更應達到此一人性高度。

聖保祿寫道:「你們就是來自基督的書信,卻由我們所 寄發出去,不是用墨水寫的,而是以生活的天主聖神; 不是寫在石板上,而是在血肉的心版上」(格後三3)。 天主聖神一一天主的愛,在我們內寫錄。而當祂在我們 內寫錄時,祂便在我們內築造良善,提醒我們,謹記於 心。意思是說,要將這份良善「銘刻」心中。藉著聖神 的德能,不論那一則故事,即使是最被人遺忘的故事, 或是寫錄成最艱澀難懂的故事,都能受到啟發,獲致重 生而成為巨作,變作福音的延伸。如同聖奧斯定的《懺 悔錄》、聖依納爵的《朝聖者之旅》。嬰孩耶穌小德蘭 的《靈心小史》,以及《約婚夫婦》、《卡拉馬助夫兄 弟們》等等,還有其他數之不盡的故事,都呈現了天主 的自由與人的自由,兩者的相遇與交會,令人讚嘆。我 們每個人都知道許多不同的故事,它們都散發出福音的 芬芳,見證了天主轉變生命的愛。這些故事,亟需透過

¹ 參閱:本篤十六世,《在希望中拯救》通諭,2:「基督信仰的 訊息不只具有『知識性』,還具有『效能性』。也就是說:福音 不只寫來讓人知道而已;福音成就諸事,目能改變生命。」

各種語言、運用各樣方式,被人分享和傳述,使它們世 世代代都成為生活的故事。

五、一則使我們煥然一新的故事

我們自己的故事都出現在每個偉大的故事中。當我們閱 讀聖經、聖人故事,以及那些光照人心並闡述其美好的 章節和段落時,聖神在我們心中自由的揮灑,藉此使我 們憶起我們在天主面前的模樣。當我們憶起那份創造我 們並拯救我們的愛時,當我們將愛注入我們每日發生的 故事中時,當我們把慈悲纖進我們人生的掛發裡時,我 們便棄舊圖新。我們不再回憶過去所受的傷害,不再被 懊惱與悲傷捆綁;經由向他人敞開自己,我們也將自己 向那偉大的「述說者」——天主敞開,擁有與祂相同的 視野。向天主訴說我們的故事,絕非毫無助益:儘管發 牛媧的事情不會再改變,但是我們看事的角度和其中所 蘊含的意義卻一直在改變。向天主訴說我們的故事,是 進入祂那對我們和對他人滿懷憐憫之愛的目光。我們可 以向祂一再就說我們的故事,把我們生活中充斥著的各 種人物和各樣境遇帶到袖跟前。我們可以和袖一起重新 梳理牛命的脈絡,修補撕裂和破碎。這正是我們每一個 人都需要去致力完成的!

因這位偉大「述說者」的目光,唯有祂的視野遠及極終目的,我們就接近故事的其他人物、我們的弟兄姊妹們,以及今天與我們身為同一故事裡的那些人物。在這個世界的舞台上,沒有人是臨時演員;每一個人的故事,都有可能改變。即使當我們講述邪惡時,我們可以

學習給救贖預留空間;在敗壞中,我們仍能認出慈善的動力,並給它騰出空間。

因此,不是以現世的思維講故事,也並非是要作宣傳或自我標榜,而是要紀念在天主眼中的我們,並為聖神在我們心中所寫錄的一切作見證,同時讓眾人知道,每一個人的故事都記載一些奇妙異工。為能達到目的,讓我們將自己託付給童貞聖母瑪利亞:正如聖經所載,她在母胎中締結了天主的人性,並如同福音所說的,將她生命中所發生的一切編織起來。她「把一切事默存在自己心中,反覆思想」(路二19)。讓我們求她援助,因為她懂得如何以愛的溫柔力量去化開我們生命的癥結:

哦,瑪利亞,妳是女人,又是母親,妳在妳胎中締結了 天主聖言,妳用自己的生命述說天主偉大的工程。請妳 聆聽我們的故事,將之保存在妳的心中,並將那些沒有 人要聽的故事,一一轉化成妳的故事。請教導我們認出 那條引領人類歷史前進的美善主線。請垂視那些使我們 的記憶停滯不前的許多糾結:經過妳溫柔的手,每一個 結,都能被解開。充滿聖神的婦女、我們信賴的母親, 請來,並啟發我們。請幫助我們建立和平的故事、未來 的故事,並給我們指出共同踐實的途徑。

方濟各

發自羅馬,拉特朗聖若望大殿

2020年1月24日, 聖師方濟·沙雷主教紀念日

(台灣地區主教團 恭譯)

2020 / No.378



宗座宗教交談委員會

基督徒和穆斯林:共同護衛禮 拜場所

齋戒月和開齋節賀詞 伊斯蘭曆1441年/公元2020年 梵蒂岡

文見愛的穆斯林弟兄姊妹們:

齋戒月在你們的宗教中,無論是為個人、家庭或社會層面都是如此核心的。它是與貧乏者分享、增進與親友連結的靈性療癒及成長的契機。

為你們的基督徒朋友而言,這是我們問候你們、與你們相會,並在可能的情形之下與你們慶祝開齋,藉此進一步加深我們關係的良辰吉時。於是,齋戒月和開齋節成為穆斯林與基督徒培養弟兄情誼的特殊機緣。宗教交談委員會秉持這種精神,向你們各位虔誠地獻上最佳的祝福及衷心的祝賀。

我們珍惜往例,期盼今年與你們分享有關護衛禮拜場所的一些想法。

眾所皆知,無論是基督宗教、伊斯蘭教或其他宗教,禮拜場所都具有其重要地位。為基督徒與穆斯林而言,不論是個人或群體,教堂與清真寺都是為祈禱而保留的場所,其建築和裝潢都是為了有益於靜默、反省和默觀,使人能深入自我,在靜默中體驗神。因此,任何宗教的禮拜場所即是「萬民的祈禱所」。(依撒意亞先知書56:7)

禮拜場所也是靈性殷勤待客的所在,其他不同的宗教信徒因為一些特別的宗教儀式,也在那裡共同參與如:婚禮、喪禮以及團體的慶典等。當人們在尊重某一宗教而靜默的參與其宗教儀式時,他們也就分享那宗教的殷勤待客之道。這種做法是難能的見證,因為它使不同的宗教信徒聚集一起,絲毫無損或否認他們各自的信仰。

在此,值得回顧教宗方濟各於2016年10月2日週日,在拜訪位於(亞塞拜然共和國)巴庫的蓋達爾·阿利耶夫清真寺時所說的一番話:「彼此能因著手足情誼而在這個祈禱場所相會,這是一個有力的標記,顯示出不同宗教

基於人彼此間的關係,以及各宗教領袖的善意,能夠共同搭建和諧。」

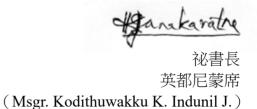
近年來,由於惡意之徒似乎認為教堂、清真寺及猶太會堂等禮拜場所,是他們盲目而又毫無意義之暴力的特定目標,值得我們注意《人類兄弟情誼文件》,那是教宗方濟各與阿茲哈清真寺大伊瑪目泰耶伯——塔耶布博士,在阿布達比於2019年2月4日所簽屬的,其中提到:「保護宗教場所——不論是會堂、教堂或是清真寺——是一份責任,應受各個宗教、人性價值、法律和國際協定所保障。每當有人意圖攻擊宗教場所,或以暴力襲擊、爆炸或毀滅予以要脅,就是偏離宗教教導,同時亦明顯地違反國際法。」

我們激賞國際社會在不同層面為保護全球宗教場所而付出的努力,在此同時,我們希望彼此的重視、尊敬及合作能強化真誠友誼的連繫,並使我們的團體能保障宗教場所,為將來的世代確保我們宣認自己信仰的基本自由。

謹此,再次致上敬意與兄弟般的問候,以宗座宗教交談 委員會的名義,致以友誼的慶賀:祝開齋節成果豐碩以 及齋戒月喜樂。



主席 基彌格樞機主教 (Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot, MCCJ)



(天主教會台灣地區主教團 宗教交談委員會 恭譯)



2020年主教團春季大會會議紀錄(摘要)

時間:2020年4月14~16日

地點: 主教團辦公大樓(台北市安居街39號)

主席:洪山川總主教

出席:劉振忠總主教、林吉男主教、黄兆明主教、

蘇耀文主教、李克勉主教、鍾安住主教

紀錄: 陳科神父

會前禱

主席會前致詞

甲、報告:

1. 宗座善會聯合會(PUM)募款原則。

2. 信理部最新法令「Quo magis」(添增1962《彌撒經書》新的聖人慶日)。

3. 聖座東方教會部:疫情當前,推遲聖週五為聖地募捐 活動新冠疫情當前,聖座東方教會部部長桑德里樞機日 前宣布推遲「為聖地募捐」活動。這項募款活動將延至9 月13日光榮十字聖架慶日前夕舉行。

- 4. 宗座聖事部頒布「為竭止大流行隨意彌撒法令」(香港教區及主教們禮儀委員會負中文翻譯)。
- 5.人類整體發展部會來承。
- 6. 亞洲明愛會電郵。
- 7. 為終止新冠病毒疫情祈禱文(修改)
- 8. 延期活動:
- a) 「為生命行走」(原定:5月2日六,台北聖家堂,延期至明年)
- b) FABC 中央委員會會議(原定:泰國芭達雅,2020年6月)、FABC會員大員(原定:泰國曼谷,2020年11月) 延期,直到最新通知。 31
- c) 宗座善會聯合會(PUM)祕書長Fabrizio Meroni神父訪 台日期暫改在7月。
- 9. 愛德協會
- 10. 總務報告(參閱祕書處提案)
- 11. 祕書處人事報告

乙、提案:

提案單位一:祕書處

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提案單位二:健康照護牧靈委員會

提案單位三:福傳委員會青年組

提案單位四:總修院(聖職委員會)

提案內容:

祕書處

提案A:主教團祕書處108年決算及執行業務報告。

說明:1、參閱附件【108年度決算書】及【108年度執行業務報告】。

2、本案提請董事會討論議決通過後,報請主管機關核備。

決議:同意,通過。

提案B:泰山區貴和段212地號遭鄰房五戶佔用申請鑑界 釐清說明。

說明:主教團與輔大土地互易案之所屬泰山區貴和段212 地號,已被貴子路67巷34號(貴和段28)、貴子路67巷 32弄1號(貴和段27)、貴子路67巷32弄3號(貴和段 26)、貴子路67巷32弄5號(貴和段25)、貴子路67巷32 弄7號(貴和段24)等共5戶占用中,因此申請鑑界,討 論後續的相關法律作為。

決議:請輔大協助申請鑑界,鑑界時會同鄰地上述五戶確認佔地事實;再商討歸還程序為:

1. 拆屋還地、2. 鑑價出售、3. 出租、4. 訴諸法律行動。

提案C:聖週四聖油彌撒

說明:鑑於疾管署於3月25日公布建議停辦100人以上之室內集會,除此以外,與會者必要戴口罩並需要保持安全距離1.5公尺。4/9聖週四聖油彌撒必須全體司鐸與主教一起共祭,祝聖聖油,並向主教重發聽命誓願,人數容易超過100。建議主教團決議:原則各教區依照以往時間舉行,若要延期,移至9月14日光榮十字架慶日。

決議:同意,通過。

提案D:全國福傳大會原定於今年8月5~8日在輔仁大學 舉行。是否因疫情的關係要延期或改期?

說明:在延期的前提之下,2020~2021年全國福傳大會進度計畫:

- 1. 2020年4月到9月,舉行福傳大會教區階段第一個部分:每個教區召集本堂神父、修女和教友代表(最好是固定成員)安排足夠會議時間(請本堂神父務必參與)。
- 1.1每個教區開檢討會評估1988年全國福傳大會12項決議 案在該教區的執行情形:
- (A) 哪些部分執行了?
- (B) 哪些部分還沒有執行,但值得繼續努力與完成?
- 1.2 每個教區評估2019年福傳大會堂區階段的結果:

- (1) 堂區福傳會議報告繳交執行情形。
- (2)哪些議題堂區討論較多以及以什麼解決方法為優先?
- 2. 執行長、副執行長和主教團祕書長分析網路調查資料與準備全國福傳大會的草案: 堂區牧靈及福傳指南 (2020年9月完成)。
- 3. 2020年9月,全國福傳大會聯合籌備會議,討論延期及如何進行福傳大會教區階段。把全國福傳大會的草案給每個教區來審閱,並提出建議或修正。
- 4. 2020年9月到2021年5月底,舉行福傳大會教區階段第二個部分:
- 4.1每個教區討論全國福傳大會的草案(堂區牧靈及福傳 指南)。
- 4.2 每個教區根據本地情況決定自己的決議案和執行計劃。
- 4.3 每個教區準備福傳大會之教區階段報告,包括決議案 和執行計劃。
- 4.4 每個教區選全國福傳大會的代表。
- 5. 2021年6月,全國福傳大會聯合籌備會議,最後全國福 傳大會的籌備。
- 6. 2021年8月4日傍晚至8月7日中午,在輔仁大學舉行全國福傳大會。

- 7. 2021年9至10月,籌備福傳大會中心委員會將編寫一份 全國福傳大會的報告,並在2021年11月主教團秋季會議 中分享。
- 8. 主教團秋季會議將撰寫一封牧函,總結整個台灣天主教會牧靈福傳的方向,作為全國福傳大會的結論。

決議:同意延期到2021年8月4日(傍晚)~7日(中午),並按照上計畫進行。

二、健康照護牧靈委員會

A、**案由**:陳請同意健康照護牧靈委員會參與國健署「慈悲關懷社區」政策計畫相關標案。

說明:

- 1. 衛福部國民健康署自2016年積極推動「慈悲關懷社區」¹ 政策,每年並邀請不同單位參與相關計畫。今年四月國健署將邀請天主教會、台北醫學大學癌症中心邱仲峰院長及史懷哲基金會共同合作,在台灣推動以民間團體力量推動慈悲關懷社區模式。今年標案申請由「主教團健康照護牧靈委員會」提出投標。
- 2. 如同教宗在2020年第28屆世界病友日所說:

『對於那些因體能衰退、病痛和虛弱而焦慮不安的人們,耶穌沒有將法律強加在他們身上,而是施予祂的慈悲——祂本身,使人能復原…』

1 慈悲關懷社區簡單定義——用熱情、敞開心胸去了解當地民眾需求,並將臨終關懷與安寧緩和照護在地化,與當地民眾協力合作,並與他們發展健康服務的夥伴關係及組織行動。

『教會越來越渴望成為善心的撒瑪黎雅人——即基督——的「客店」(參閱:路十34),意思是成為一個家,讓人們獲享祂的恩寵,讓人倍感親切,同時使人覺得被接納,並得到安慰。在這個家中,你們可以遇到那些在軟弱中被天主的慈悲所治癒的人們,他們能幫助你們背負你們自己的十字架,使你們的創傷為你們展開一個嶄新的視角,超越自身的疾病,給你們的生命帶來光明和清新的氣息。』

3. 藉由這個投標計畫,我們將可以把教會的服務理念更 廣泛地推廣給更多民間團體,共同合作將天主的慈悲傳 揚出去。

決議:同意,通過。

B、天主教會台灣地區主教團針對《病人自主權利法》之 聲明。

說明: (參閱以下文件)

天主教會台灣地區主教團針對

《病人自主權利法》之

聲明

衛生福利部於2019年1月6日正式實施《病人自主權利法》(以下簡稱《病主法》)。該法預立醫療決定書中提供兩種醫療照護方式「維持生命治療」及「人工營養及流體餵養」。這兩種醫療照護方式的倫理評估十分不同,首先我們先評估「人工營養及流體餵養」,接下來

再評估「維持生命治療」。

一、關於「人工營養及流體餵養」,《病主法》預立醫 療決定書的醫療照護方式列出四個意願選項提供民眾勾 骥,此四個選項如下:第1「我不希望接受人工營養及流 體餵養」、第2「我希望在(一段時間內),接受人工營 養及流體餵養的嘗試, 之後請停止; 但本人或醫療委任 代理人得於該期間內,隨時表達停止的意願」、第3「如 果我已經意識昏迷或無法清楚表達意願,由我的醫療委 任代理人代為決定」、第4「我希望接受人工營養及流體 餵養」。民眾勾選、簽署並註記在健保卡之後,一旦經 醫師確診為末期病人,或不可逆轉之昏迷、或永久植物 人狀態、或極重度失智、或經中央主管機關公告之疾病 狀況,醫院即可根據該法第14條「醫療機構或醫師得依 其預立醫療決定終止、撤除或不施行維持生命治療或人 工營養及流體餵養之全部或一部, 然病人因缺乏生存 基本的水分和養分而死亡,而非因本身的疾病而死,此 舉已造成該為而不為之的被動安樂死。為何執行此撰項 為被動安樂死?說明如下:

(一)水分和養分為人類基本生存所需之物,不能因為提倡拒絕醫療權而將其歸為治療項目。教宗若望保祿二世於1995年頒布的《生命的福音》通諭第65號明確指出,醫院必須提供病人水分和養分這兩樣基本生存之物。

(二)水分和養分的要求適用於以下臨床病人:末期、 不可逆轉之昏迷、永久植物人狀態、極重度失智、經中 央主管機關公告之疾病狀況(目前已公告十一種罕見疾

病:多發性系統萎縮症、裘馨氏肌肉失養症、遺傳性表皮分解性水泡症、亨丁頓氏舞蹈症、肢帶型肌失養症、Nemaline 線狀肌肉病變、脊髓小腦退化性動作協調障礙、脊髓性肌肉萎縮症、肌萎縮性側索硬化症、囊狀纖維化症、原發性肺動脈高壓,衛福部日後將陸續公告其他種類罕見疾病),一般情況下,這些病人並非處於瀕死狀態(瀕死定義見以下(六))。

- (三)美國主教團曾去信教廷徵詢是否提供病人水分和 養分的問題,信理部明確回應醫院必須給予,即使是人 工方式亦屬必要處置;
- (四)因此,不提供水分和養分,即使連人工方式亦不 給予以致病人死亡,根據天主教會的教導,此即被動安 樂死;
- (五)若病人的消化系統已失去功能,不再能接受食物或水分,就不需要強迫給予,也不需要長期使用靜脈注射;
- (六)若病人只剩數日或數小時的生命,此為瀕死狀態(請注意,病人情況確定為瀕死而非末期,dying condition not terminal condition),如意識呈現嗜睡至昏迷狀態、不正常的呼吸型態、有噪雜的呼吸音(death rattle:死前喉音)、血壓和脈搏會越來越難測量、肢體愈來愈冰冷及發紺、對外界的刺激反應會愈來愈慢、眼睛顯得呆滯沒有焦點。面對瀕死狀態病人(瀕死而非末期),此時不再需要以人工方式給予水分和養分,因為病人正因自己的疾病趨向死亡,而非因為缺乏水分和養

分而死。

天主教會醫院基於良心抗辯權,不能犯下第五誡一勿殺無辜者的理由,不得執行被動安樂死的行為,特此聲明。同時依2018年10月3日衛生福利部公布之《病人自主權利法施行細則》第16條,「醫療機構或醫師依本法第十四條第三項規定不施行病人預立醫療決定時,應建議病人轉診,並提供協助。」教會醫院於道義上,及在無法執行的前提下,透過醫院運作機制,提供病人轉診(介)之協助。

二、關於「維持生命治療」,天主教會的倫理評估較為複雜。首先,《病主法》並沒有把「末期病人」和「嚴重虛弱狀態(但非末期)的病人」區分開來。末期病人,例如經醫生判斷只能存活3~6個月的癌末患者;而嚴重虛弱狀態但非末期狀況的病人,例如不可逆轉之昏迷、或永久植物人狀態、或極重度失智、經中央主管機關公告之疾病狀況的病人,實際上這兩者(只能存活3~6個月的癌末病人,與嚴重虛弱狀態(但非末期)的病人)之間並不相同。為那些非末期、但嚴重虛弱狀態的病人(如上述不可逆轉之昏迷、或永久植物人狀態、或極重度失智、經中央主管機關公告之疾病狀況),給予一般維生治療是他們應有的權利,例如以抗生素治療感染肺炎的永久植物狀態病患;而撤除維生治療也就是使他們被動安樂死,如感染肺炎的永久植物狀態病患,因得不到抗生素的治療而死亡。

關於醫師已宣判生命只剩短期的末期病人,天主教會有一般治療與特殊治療,或相稱與不相稱醫療照護的區

別。亦即,為末期病人而言,人可以本著良心拒絕不再 適合病人真正情況的治療方式,因為這種治療已與預期 的結果不相稱;或是因為這種治療對病人和家屬造成過 度的負擔。例如癌症末期病人(如只剩三個月生命), 不需要在道德上要求他接受痛苦和昂貴的心臟手術;只 需給病人一般正常的照顧及提供基本的水分和養分即 可。

三、關於《病主法》預立醫療決定書,醫療照護方式的 第四個選項一「我希望接受維持生命治療」和「我希望 接受人工營養及流體餵養」,無論為天主教信友或非天 主教信友,這個選項都不能是完全正確的決定,原因如 下:

(一)「我希望接受人工營養及流體餵養」,假如病人的消化系統已喪失功能,或正瀕臨死亡狀態,都沒有必要強迫給予水分和養分,也沒有必要給予靜脈注射。因為無論是消化系統已喪失功能,或正瀕臨死亡狀態,都不需要加給病人、家屬及醫院沒有必要的負擔。

(二)「我希望接受維持生命治療」,同樣,由於教會教導已審慎說明,為末期病人(terminal illness state),沒有必要再給予以過度不相稱方式延續生命的治療。若此時繼續給予以過度不相稱方式延續生命的治療,是加給病人、家屬及醫院過度、不相稱的負擔,這點一樣不符合教會的教導。

結 論

關於「人工營養及流體餵養」,根據以上的說明可知,天主教徒不能選擇醫療照護的第1、或第2、或第3 選項,因為這三個選項表達的是自願安樂死;而且天主 教會醫院也不能同意執行這三個選項,因為所執行的是 被動安樂死(第3選項同樣不能勾選是因為代理人可能會 選擇決定「停止給予」)。至於第4選項(我希望接受人 工營養及流體餵養)雖非任何形式的安樂死,卻不夠仔 細,容易加給病人、家屬和醫院沒有必要的負擔。

關於「維持生命治療」,根據以上的說明可知, 天主教徒不能選擇醫療照護的第1、或第2、或第3選項, 因為表明的是在以下這些臨床條件之下自顧安樂死:不 可逆轉之昏迷、永久植物人狀態、極重度失智,經中央 主管機關公告之疾病狀況。而天主教會醫院不能執行這 些要求,因為所執行的是被動安樂死(第3撰項同樣不 能勾選是因為代理人可能會選擇決定「停止給予」)。 至於第4撰項(我希望接受維持生命治療)雖非任何形式 的安樂死,對於末期病人卻同樣不夠仔細,容易加給病 人、家屬和醫院沒有必要的負擔。「末期病人」和「嚴 重虚弱狀態(非末期)的病人」不同;末期病人可以拒 絕以過度不相稱方式持續生命的治療,依照台灣法律 《安寧緩和醫療條例》,其中「預立安寧緩和醫療暨維 生醫療抉擇意願書」和「不施行心肺復甦術同意書」的 簽署,已經保障末期患者的權益,這一點與天主教會的 教導相符合。

綜上所述,天主教會台灣地區主教團的教導如下:無論「維持生命治療」或是「人工營養及流體餵養」,天主教徒不能選擇第1、或第2、或第3選項,天主教會醫院不能執行這幾項要求,因為是執行被動安樂死,主教團這份針對《病人自主權利法》之聲明的首要表達重點即在於此。

其次,這份聲明的另一個重點是關於第4個選項 (我希望接受維持生命治療和人工營養及流體餵養)。 此選項雖非安樂死,然由於所使用的方式並不全然符合 天主教會的教導,易為病人、家屬、醫院帶來沒有必要 的負擔,為求謹慎,天主教徒最好也不選擇第4個選項。

天主教會台灣地區主教團

日期:2020年4月15日

決議:同意,通過。

三、主教團福傳委員會青年組

案由:因今年武漢肺炎疫情影響,2020台灣青年日辦理 及是否延期,經第一次全國籌備會議後有以下建議方 案,呈請主教們討論裁示:

- 1、如期於2020年7月30日至8月3日由花蓮教區承辦,依 衛生福利部疾病管制署相關規定調整人數及空間使用。
- 2、延期一年,改於明年夏天舉行,日期由花蓮教區決定 後再行通知各教區,其他第三輪承辦教區順移。

3、今年取消辦理,明年進入台灣青年日第三輪,由台北 教區承辦。

說明:1、主教團2018年秋季會議通過自2021年起由各教區「於沒有辦世界青年日或亞洲青年日的該年」輪流承辦台灣青年日。又於主教團2019年秋季會議通過2021年輪流承辦順序為:台北、新竹、台中、嘉義、台南、高雄、花蓮。

- 2、亞洲青年日原訂2021年於印度舉辦,但印度已宣布無 法承辦,故2021年無世界青年日或亞洲青年日舉辦。
- 3、疾管署於3月25日公布建議停辦100人以上之室內集會及500人以上之室外群眾集會。

決議:延期一年,改於明年夏天舉行,日期由花蓮教區 決定後再行通知各教區,其他第三輪承辦教區順移。

四、總修院

提案:總修院牧靈年課程與生活規劃

一、目標:

- 1.讓修士置身在牧靈生活中,以服務的精神,逐漸擔負起 牧靈職責。
- 2.努力做適當的準備,為了鐸職而接受特別的陪伴。
- 3. 準備候選人融入持續培育的階段。
- 二、依據:培育團隊按照新的據Ratio(《司鐸聖召的禮

物》74~79)精神去調整修院的培育,去年培育團隊讓修士們整個培育的期程更加清楚、明確,為了使培育更加完整,總修院培育團隊需要改變牧靈年的模式,如聖召的禮物74號所提到的;牧靈年階段(或聖召綜合階段)包括從離開修院,經過授予執事聖秩,直到領受司鐸的時間段。並且讓修院的培育模式更符合國際性的培育。

三、方法:

- 1.為提供最好的陪伴,也幫修士分辨領受司鐸聖職,我們建議成立一個培育團體,包括:教區主教、聖召負責人、修院院長、本堂神父與和他一起合作的教友代表; 團隊召集人為院長,每學期可以選擇固定的時間,在堂區或修院針對修士的服務做考核與陪伴。
- 2.每個月讓牧靈修士或執事回本教區參與牧靈工作三個星期,在主教與本堂神父的帶領下,讓修士或執事體驗牧靈上的工作;講道、善會團體陪伴、牧靈關懷…等,也能長期體驗司鐸的日常生活。
- 3.每個月有一個星期的時間,在總修院內繼續完成一些必要的課程、並回顧堂區牧靈工作與生活中面對的問題、 困難或新的經驗,與所學課程做整合,並持續提供修士或執事一個支持與陪伴的友善環境。
- 4.為了讓修士準備領受執事聖秩與司鐸聖秩,我們會按照 教會法的要求、安排修士的避靜。

決議:原則上通過總修院牧靈年的客制化。修正《總修院培育手冊》牧靈年相關條文部分,送主教團核准。

臨時提案

一、主教團採用視訊進行會議

說明:鑑於無法預知新型冠狀病毒防大流行時期何時結束,而病情可能隨時惡化,在防疫時期,人民的行動亦會受到限制,以致使主教們面對無法親臨會議現場參與教會會議,故必須開始準備以視訊方式舉行會議。

決議:同意,通過。祕書處請真理電台提供舉行視訊會 議方式及工具。

二、出版《天主教手册》

說明:《天主教手册》上次出版是在2017年,至今已有3年。資訊更新後可以再版。

決議:同意,通過。

備忘錄

一、主教團與男女修會合作協會

時間:2020年5月19日,10:00

地點:主教團辦公大樓(台北市安居街39號1/F)

主教團決定延期,直到最新通知。

二、司鐸進修班

時間:2020年8月17~21日

地點:總修院(新北市新莊區三泰路58號)

三、秋季會議常務委員會

時間: 2020年11月4日三15:00

地點:主教團辦公大樓(台北市安居街39號)

四、秋季常年大會

時間: 2020年11月24~26日

地點:主教團辦公大樓(台北市安居街39號)



The Apostolic Nunciature and Friends make second donation to Italy through the "Italy-Taiwan Healthy Together" campaign organized by the Italian Economic, Trade and Cultural Promotion Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

教廷駐華大使館及其友伴第二次捐贈給義大利,響應義大利經濟貿易文化推廣辦事處 (IETCPO)和外交部共同舉辦的「義大利/台灣一起健康」贊助活動。



The Apostolic Nunciature in the ROC (Taiwan) and its friends made a second donation of medical equipment and protective instruments to Italy, that is still combatting COVID-19, through the campaign that was organized by the Italian Economic, Trade and Cultural Promotion Office (IETCPO) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), on 22 April 2020 at the premises of the Nunciature at Daan District.

2020年4月22日教廷駐華大使館及其友伴,在大安區使館內向仍處於COVID-19大流行嚴重打擊的義大利捐贈了第二批醫療設備和防護工具,支持義大利經濟貿易文化推廣辦事處(IETCPO)和外交部合辦的「義大利/台灣一起健康」贊助活動。

Present for the turn-over ceremonies were Mr. Johnson Sen Chiang; Director of the European Department of the MOFA, Msgr. Arnaldo Catalan; Charge d' Affaires, a.i., Mr. Davide Giglio; Director of the IETCPO and Mr. Giuseppe Izzo; Chairman of the European Chamber of Commerce Taiwan, who transported the items to Italy.

出席這次儀式者包括外交部歐洲司司長姜森先生、教廷 駐華大使館代辦佳安道蒙席、義大利經濟貿易文化推廣 辦事處代表紀大為先生,暨歐洲在台商會協會主席伊佐 先生(負責承運物品送至義大利)。

This second donation to Italy concludes the initiative of the Nunciature since Italy will also be benefited by the successful fund drive organized by the Camillian Fathers of Yilan and receive assistance from the government of Taiwan.

教廷駐華大使館以此第二批捐助,完成了對這項贊助活動的義舉,而且義大利另由靈醫會義籍神父成功地發起的募款,及受到台灣政府的援助,將受益匪淺。

The Apostolic Nunciature thanks all its friends and those who generously contributed to help those fighting the pandemic.

教廷駐華大使館對所有慷慨捐贈的友伴,以及幫助那些 在新冠疫情中抗鬥的人們表示感謝。



Urbi Et Orbi Message of His Holiness Pope Francis

Easter 2020

Saint Peter's Basilica Easter, 12 April 2020

Pear brothers and sisters, Happy Easter!

Today the Church's proclamation echoes throughout the world: "Jesus Christ is risen!" – "He is truly risen!".

Like a new flame this Good News springs up in the night: the night of a world already faced with epochal challenges and now oppressed by a pandemic severely testing our whole human family. In this night, the Church's voice rings out: "Christ, my hope, has arisen!" (Easter Sequence).

This is a different "contagion", a message transmitted from heart to heart – for every human heart awaits this Good News. It is the contagion of hope: "Christ, my hope, is risen!". This is no magic formula that makes problems vanish. No, the resurrection of Christ is not that. Instead, it is the victory of love over the root of evil, a victory that does not "by-pass" suffering and death, but passes through them, opening a path in the abyss, transforming evil into

good: this is the unique hallmark of the power of God.

The Risen Lord is also the Crucified One, not someone else. In his glorious body he bears indelible wounds: wounds that have become windows of hope. Let us turn our gaze to him that he may heal the wounds of an afflicted humanity.

Today my thoughts turn in the first place to the many who have been directly affected by the coronavirus: the sick, those who have died and family members who mourn the loss of their loved ones, to whom, in some cases, they were unable even to bid a final farewell. May the Lord of life welcome the departed into his kingdom and grant comfort and hope to those still suffering, especially the elderly and those who are alone. May he never withdraw his consolation and help from those who are especially vulnerable, such as persons who work in nursing homes, or live in barracks and prisons. For many, this is an Easter of solitude lived amid the sorrow and hardship that the pandemic is causing, from physical suffering to economic difficulties.

This disease has not only deprived us of human closeness, but also of the possibility of receiving in person the consolation that flows from the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist and Reconciliation. In many countries, it has not been possible to approach them, but the Lord has not left us alone! United in our prayer, we are convinced that he has laid his hand upon us (cf. Ps 138:5), firmly reassuring us: Do not be afraid, "I have risen and I am with you still!" (cf. Roman Missal, Entrance Antiphon, Mass of Easter Sunday).

May Jesus, our Passover, grant strength and hope to doctors and nurses, who everywhere offer a witness of care and love for our neighbours, to the point of exhaustion and not infrequently at the

expense of their own health. Our gratitude and affection go to them, to all who work diligently to guarantee the essential services necessary for civil society, and to the law enforcement and military personnel who in many countries have helped ease people's difficulties and sufferings.

In these weeks, the lives of millions of people have suddenly changed. For many, remaining at home has been an opportunity to reflect, to withdraw from the frenetic pace of life, stay with loved ones and enjoy their company. For many, though, this is also a time of worry about an uncertain future, about jobs that are at risk and about other consequences of the current crisis. I encourage political leaders to work actively for the common good, to provide the means and resources needed to enable everyone to lead a dignified life and, when circumstances allow, to assist them in resuming their normal daily activities.

This is not a time for indifference, because the whole world is suffering and needs to be united in facing the pandemic. May the risen Jesus grant hope to all the poor, to those living on the peripheries, to refugees and the homeless. May these, the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters living in the cities and peripheries of every part of the world, not be abandoned. Let us ensure that they do not lack basic necessities (all the more difficult to find now that many businesses are closed) such as medicine and especially the possibility of adequate health care. In light of the present circumstances, may international sanctions be relaxed, since these make it difficult for countries on which they have been imposed to provide adequate support to their citizens, and may all nations be put in a position to meet the greatest needs of the moment through the reduction, if not the forgiveness, of the debt burdening the balance sheets of the poorest nations.

This is not a time for self-centredness, because the challenge we are facing is shared by all, without distinguishing between persons. Among the many areas of the world affected by the coronavirus, I think in a special way of Europe. After the Second World War, this continent was able to rise again, thanks to a concrete spirit of solidarity that enabled it to overcome the rivalries of the past. It is more urgent than ever, especially in the present circumstances, that these rivalries do not regain force, but that all recognize themselves as part of a single family and support one another. The European Union is presently facing an epochal challenge, on which will depend not only its future but that of the whole world. Let us not lose the opportunity to give further proof of solidarity, also by turning to innovative solutions. The only alternative is the selfishness of particular interests and the temptation of a return to the past, at the risk of severely damaging the peaceful coexistence and development of future generations.

This is not a time for division. May Christ our peace enlighten all who have responsibility in conflicts, that they may have the courage to support the appeal for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world. This is not a time for continuing to manufacture and deal in arms, spending vast amounts of money that ought to be used to care for others and save lives. Rather, may this be a time for finally ending the long war that has caused such great bloodshed in beloved Syria, the conflict in Yemen and the hostilities in Iraq and in Lebanon. May this be the time when Israelis and Palestinians resume dialogue in order to find a stable and lasting solution that will allow both to live in peace. May the sufferings of the people who live in the eastern regions of Ukraine come to an end. May the terrorist attacks carried out against so many innocent people in different African countries come to an end.

This is not a time for forgetfulness. The crisis we are facing should not make us forget the many other crises that bring suffering to so many people. May the Lord of life be close to all those in Asia and Africa who are experiencing grave humanitarian crises, as in the Province of Cabo Delgado in the north of Mozambique. May he warm the hearts of the many refugees displaced because of wars, drought and famine. May he grant protection to migrants and refugees, many of them children, who are living in unbearable conditions, especially in Libya and on the border between Greece and Turkey. And I do not want to forget the island of Lesvos. In Venezuela, may he enable concrete and immediate solutions to be reached that can permit international assistance to a population suffering from the grave political, socio-economic and health situation.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Indifference, self-centredness, division and forgetfulness are not words we want to hear at this time. We want to ban these words for ever! They seem to prevail when fear and death overwhelm us, that is, when we do not let the Lord Jesus triumph in our hearts and lives. May Christ, who has already defeated death and opened for us the way to eternal salvation, dispel the darkness of our suffering humanity and lead us into the light of his glorious day, a day that knows no end.

With these thoughts, I would like to wish all of you a happy Easter.

Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for The World Day of Prayer for Vocations

3 May 2020

Words of Vocation

ear Brothers and Sisters,

On 4 August last year, the 160th anniversary of the death of the Curé of Ars, I chose to write a letter to all those priests who daily devote their lives to the service of God's people in response to the Lord's call.

On that occasion, I chose four key words – pain, gratitude, encouragement and praise – as a way of thanking priests and supporting their ministry. I believe that today, on this 57th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, those words can be addressed to the whole people of God, against the backdrop of the Gospel passage that recounts for us the remarkable experience of Jesus and Peter during a stormy night on the Sea of Galilee (cf. Mt 14:22-33).

After the multiplication of the loaves, which had astonished the crowds, Jesus told his disciples to get into the boat and precede him to the other shore, while he took leave of the people. The image of the disciples crossing the lake can evoke our own life's journey. Indeed, the boat of our lives slowly advances, restlessly looking for a safe haven and prepared to face the perils and promises of the sea, yet at the same time trusting that the helmsman will ultimately

keep us on the right course. At times, though, the boat can drift off course, misled by mirages, not the lighthouse that leads it home, and be tossed by the tempests of difficulty, doubt and fear.

Something similar takes place in the hearts of those who, called to follow the Teacher of Nazareth, have to undertake a crossing and abandon their own security to become the Lord's disciples. The risk involved is real: the night falls, the headwinds howl, the boat is tossed by the waves, and fear of failure, of not being up to the call, can threaten to overwhelm them.

The Gospel, however, tells us that in the midst of this challenging journey we are not alone. Like the first ray of dawn in the heart of the night, the Lord comes walking on the troubled waters to join the disciples; he invites Peter to come to him on the waves, saves him when he sees him sinking and, once in the boat, makes the winds die down.

The first word of vocation, then, is gratitude. Taking the right course is not something we do on our own, nor does it depend solely on the road we choose to travel. How we find fulfilment in life is more than a decision we make as isolated individuals; above all else, it is a response to a call from on high. The Lord points out our destination on the opposite shore and he grants us the courage to board the boat. In calling us, he becomes our helmsman; he accompanies and guides us; he prevents us from running aground on the shoals of indecision and even enables us to walk on surging waters.

Every vocation is born of that gaze of love with which the Lord came to meet us, perhaps even at a time when our boat was being battered by the storm. "Vocation, more than our own choice, is a response to the Lord's unmerited call" (Letter to Priests, 4

August 2019). We will succeed in discovering and embracing our vocation once we open our hearts in gratitude and perceive the passage of God in our lives.

When the disciples see Jesus walking towards them on the sea, they first think that he is a ghost and are filled with fear. Jesus immediately reassures them with words that should constantly accompany our lives and our vocational journey: "Take heart, it is I; have no fear" (Mt 14:27). This, then, is the second word I wish to offer you: encouragement.

What frequently hinders our journey, our growth, our choosing the road the Lord is marking out for us, are certain "ghosts" that trouble our hearts. When we are called to leave safe shores and embrace a state of life – like marriage, ministerial priesthood, consecrated life – our first reaction is often from the "ghost of disbelief". Surely, this vocation is not for me! Can this really be the right path? Is the Lord really asking me to do this?

Those thoughts can keep growing – justifications and calculations that sap our determination and leave us hesitant and powerless on the shore where we started. We think we might be wrong, not up to the challenge, or simply glimpsing a ghost to be exorcized.

The Lord knows that a fundamental life choice – like marriage or special consecration to his service – calls for courage. He knows the questions, doubts and difficulties that toss the boat of our heart, and so he reassures us: "Take heart, it is I; have no fear!" We know in faith that he is present and comes to meet us, that he is ever at our side even amid stormy seas. This knowledge sets us free from that lethargy which I have called "sweet sorrow" (Letter to Priests, 4 August 2019), the interior discouragement that hold us back from experiencing the beauty of our vocation.

In the Letter to Priests, I also spoke about pain, but here I would like to translate the word differently, as fatigue. Every vocation brings with it a responsibility. The Lord calls us because he wants to enable us, like Peter, to "walk on water", in other words, to take charge of our lives and place them at the service of the Gospel, in the concrete and everyday ways that he shows us, and specifically in the different forms of lay, priestly and consecrated vocation. Yet, like Saint Peter, our desire and enthusiasm coexist with our failings and fears.

If we let ourselves be daunted by the responsibilities that await us – whether in married life or priestly ministry – or by the hardships in store for us, then we will soon turn away from the gaze of Jesus and, like Peter, we will begin to sink. On the other hand, despite our frailty and poverty, faith enables us to walk towards the Risen Lord and to weather every storm. Whenever fatigue or fear make us start to sink, Jesus holds out his hand to us. He gives us the enthusiasm we need to live our vocation with joy and fervour.

When Jesus at last boards the boat, the winds die down and the waves are calmed. Here we have a beautiful image of what the Lord can do at times of turbulence and tempest in our lives. He stills those winds, so that the forces of evil, fear and resignation no longer have power over us.

As we live out our specific vocation, those headwinds can wear us down. Here I think of all those who have important responsibilities in civil society, spouses whom I like to refer to – note without reason – as "courageous", and in a particular way those who have embraced the consecrated life or the priesthood. I am conscious of your hard work, the sense of isolation that can at times weigh upon your hearts, the risk of falling into a rut that can gradually make the ardent flame of our vocation die down, the burden of

the uncertainty and insecurity of the times, and worry about the future. Take heart, do not be afraid! Jesus is at our side, and if we acknowledge him as the one Lord of our lives, he will stretch out his hand, take hold of us and save us.

Even amid the storm-tossed waters, then, our lives become open to praise. This is the last of our vocation words, and it is an invitation to cultivate the interior disposition of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Grateful that Lord gazed upon her, faithful amid fear and turmoil, she courageously embraced her vocation and made of her life an eternal song of praise to the Lord.

Dear friends, on this day in particular, but also in the ordinary pastoral life of our communities, I ask the Church to continue to promote vocations. May she touch the hearts of the faithful and enable each of them to discover with gratitude God's call in their lives, to find courage to say "yes" to God, to overcome all weariness through faith in Christ, and to make of their lives a song of praise for God, for their brothers and sisters, and for the whole world. May the Virgin Mary accompany us and intercede for us.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 8 March 2020, the Second Sunday of Lent Francis

Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for The 54th World Communications Day

"That you may tell your children and grandchildren" (Ex 10:2)
Life becomes history

I would like to devote this year's Message to the theme of storytelling, because I believe that, so as not to lose our bearings, we need to make our own the truth contained in good stories. Stories that build up, not tear down; stories that help us rediscover our roots and the strength needed to move forward together. Amid the cacophony of voices and messages that surround us, we need a human story that can speak of ourselves and of the beauty all around us. A narrative that can regard our world and its happenings with a tender gaze. A narrative that can tell us that we are part of a living and interconnected tapestry. A narrative that can reveal the interweaving of the threads which connect us to one another.

1. Weaving stories

Human beings are storytellers. From childhood we hunger for stories just as we hunger for food. Stories influence our lives, whether in the form of fairy tales, novels, films, songs, news, even if we do not always realize it. Often we decide what is right or wrong based on characters and stories we have made our own. Stories leave their mark on us; they shape our convictions and our behaviour. They can help us understand and communicate who we

are.

We are not just the only beings who need clothing to cover our vulnerability (cf. Gen 3: 21); we are also the only ones who need to be "clothed" with stories to protect our lives. We weave not only clothing, but also stories: indeed, the human capacity to "weave" (Latin texere) gives us not only the word textile but also text. The stories of different ages all have a common "loom": the thread of their narrative involves "heroes", including everyday heroes, who in following a dream confront difficult situations and combat evil, driven by a force that makes them courageous, the force of love. By immersing ourselves in stories, we can find reasons to heroically face the challenges of life.

Human beings are storytellers because we are engaged in a process of constant growth, discovering ourselves and becoming enriched in the tapestry of the days of our life. Yet since the very beginning, our story has been threatened: evil snakes its way through history.

2. Not all stories are good stories

"When you eat of it ... you will be like God" (cf. Gen 3:4): the temptation of the serpent introduces into the fabric of history a knot difficult to undo. "If you possess, you will become, you will achieve..." This is the message whispered by those who even today use storytelling for purposes of exploitation. How many stories serve to lull us, convincing us that to be happy we continually need to gain, possess and consume. We may not even realize how greedy we have become for chatter and gossip, or how much violence and falsehood we are consuming. Often on communication platforms, instead of constructive stories which serve to strengthen social ties and the cultural fabric, we find destructive and provocative stories that wear down and break the fragile threads binding us together

as a society. By patching together bits of unverified information, repeating banal and deceptively persuasive arguments, sending strident and hateful messages, we do not help to weave human history, but instead strip others of their dignity.

But whereas the stories employed for exploitation and power have a short lifespan, a good story can transcend the confines of space and time. Centuries later, it remains timely, for it nourishes life.

In an age when falsification is increasingly sophisticated, reaching exponential levels (as in deepfake), we need wisdom to be able to welcome and create beautiful, true and good stories. We need courage to reject false and evil stories. We need patience and discernment to rediscover stories that help us not to lose the thread amid today's many troubles. We need stories that reveal who we truly are, also in the untold heroism of everyday life.

3. The Story of stories

Sacred Scripture is a Story of stories. How many events, peoples and individuals it sets before us! It shows us from the very beginning a God who is both creator and narrator. Indeed, God speaks his word and things come into existence (cf. Gen 1). As narrator, God calls things into life, culminating in the creation of man and woman as his free dialogue partners, who make history alongside him. In one of the Psalms, the creature tells the creator: "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made ... My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth" (139:13-15). We are not born complete, but need to be constantly "woven", "knitted together". Life is given to us as an invitation to continue to weave the "wonderful" mystery that we

are.

The Bible is thus the great love story between God and humanity. At its centre stands Jesus, whose own story brings to fulfilment both God's love for us and our love for God. Henceforth, in every generation, men and women are called to recount and commit to memory the most significant episodes of this Story of stories, those that best communicate its meaning.

The title of this year's Message is drawn from the Book of Exodus, a primordial biblical story in which God intervenes in the history of his people. When the enslaved children of Israel cry out to Him, God listens and remembers: "God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel – and God knew" (Ex 2: 24-25). God's memory brings liberation from oppression through a series of signs and wonders. The Lord then reveals to Moses the meaning of all these signs: "that you may tell in the hearing of your children and grandchildren... what signs I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord" (Ex 10:2). The Exodus experience teaches us that knowledge of the Lord is handed down from generation to generation mainly by telling the story of how he continues to make himself present. The God of life communicates with us through the story of life.

Jesus spoke of God not with abstract concepts, but with parables, brief stories taken from everyday life. At this point life becomes story and then, for the listener, story becomes life: the story becomes part of the life of those who listen to it, and it changes them.

The Gospels are also stories, and not by chance. While they tell us about Jesus, they are "performative"[1]; they conform us to Jesus. The Gospel asks the reader to share in the same faith in

order to share in the same life. The Gospel of John tells us that the quintessential storyteller – the Word – himself becomes the story: "God's only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known" (Jn 1: 18). The original verb, exegésato, can be translated both as "revealed" and "recounted". God has become personally woven into our humanity, and so has given us a new way of weaving our stories.

4. An ever renewed story

The history of Christ is not a legacy from the past; it is our story, and always timely. It shows us that God was so deeply concerned for mankind, for our flesh and our history, to the point that he became man, flesh and history. It also tells us that no human stories are insignificant or paltry. Since God became story, every human story is, in a certain sense, a divine story. In the history of every person, the Father sees again the story of his Son who came down to earth. Every human story has an irrepressible dignity. Consequently, humanity deserves stories that are worthy of it, worthy of that dizzying and fascinating height to which Jesus elevated it.

"You" – Saint Paul wrote – "are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" (2 Cor 3:3). The Holy Spirit, the love of God, writes within us. And as he writes within us, he establishes goodness in us and constantly reminds us of it. Indeed, to "re-mind" means to bring to mind, to "write" on the heart. By the power of the Holy Spirit, every story, even the most forgotten one, even the one that seems to be written with the most crooked lines, can become inspired, can be reborn as a masterpiece, and become an appendix to the Gospel. Like the Confessions of Augustine. Like A Pilgrim's Journey of Ignatius. Like The Story

of a Soul of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus. Like The Betrothed, like The Brothers Karamazov. Like countless other stories, which have admirably scripted the encounter between God's freedom and that of man. Each of us knows different stories that have the fragrance of the Gospel, that have borne witness to the Love that transforms life. These stories cry out to be shared, recounted and brought to life in every age, in every language, in every medium.

5. A story that renews us

Our own story becomes part of every great story. As we read the Scriptures, the stories of the saints, and also those texts that have shed light on the human heart and its beauty, the Holy Spirit is free to write in our hearts, reviving our memory of what we are in God's eyes. When we remember the love that created and saved us, when we make love a part of our daily stories, when we weave the tapestry of our days with mercy, we are turning another page. We no longer remain tied to regrets and sadness, bound to an unhealthy memory that burdens our hearts; rather, by opening ourselves to others, we open ourselves to the same vision of the great storyteller. Telling God our story is never useless: even if the record of events remains the same, the meaning and perspective are always changing. To tell our story to the Lord is to enter into his gaze of compassionate love for us and for others. We can recount to him the stories we live, bringing to him the people and the situations that fill our lives. With him we can re-weave the fabric of life, darning its rips and tears. How much we, all of us, need to do exactly this!

With the gaze of the great storyteller – the only one who has the ultimate point of view – we can then approach the other characters, our brothers and sisters, who are with us as actors in today's story. For no one is an extra on the world stage, and everyone's story is open to possible change. Even when we tell of evil, we can learn

to leave room for redemption; in the midst of evil, we can also recognize the working of goodness and give it space.

So it is not a matter of simply telling stories as such, or of advertising ourselves, but rather of remembering who and what we are in God's eyes, bearing witness to what the Spirit writes in our hearts and revealing to everyone that his or her story contains marvellous things. In order to do this, let us entrust ourselves to a woman who knit together in her womb the humanity of God and, the Gospel tells us, wove together the events of her life. For the Virgin Mary "treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart" (Lk 2: 19). Let us ask for help from her, who knew how to untie the knots of life with the gentle strength of love:

O Mary, woman and mother, you wove the divine Word in your womb, you recounted by your life the magnificent works of God. Listen to our stories, hold them in your heart and make your own the stories that no one wants to hear. Teach us to recognize the good thread that runs through history. Look at the tangled knots in our life that paralyze our memory. By your gentle hands, every knot can be untied. Woman of the Spirit, mother of trust, inspire us too. Help us build stories of peace, stories that point to the future. And show us the way to live them together.

Rome, at Saint John Lateran, 24 January 2020, the Memorial of Saint Francis de Sales

Francis

[1] Cf. Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter Spe Salvi, 2: "The Christian message was not only 'informative' but 'performative'. That means: the Gospel is not merely a communication of things that can be known—it is one that makes things happen and is life-changing".



Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue

Christians and Muslims:
Protecting together the places of worship

Message for The Month of Ramadan and 'ID Al-FITR 1441 H. / 2020A.D.

Vatican City

ear Muslim brothers and sisters,

The month of Ramadan is so central in your religion and therefore dear toyouat personal, familial and social levels. It is a time for spiritual healing and growth, of sharing with the poor, of strengthening bonds with relatives and friends.

Forus, your Christian friends, it is a propitious time to further strengthe nour relationships with you, by greeting you, meeting you on this occasion and, where possible, by sharing in an ifter with you. Ramadan and 'Jd al-Fitr thus are special occasions to foster fraternity between Christians and Muslims. It is in this spirit that the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue offers its prayerful best wishes and hearty

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congratulations to youall.

The thoughts we like to share with you this year following ourcherishedtradition are about the protection of the places ofworship.

Asweallknow,theplacesofworshipoccupyanimportantplacei nChristianity and Islam, and in other religions as well. For both ChristiansandMuslims, churches and mosques are spaces reserved for prayer, personalandcommunitarian alike. They are constructed and furnished in a way that favourssilence, reflection and meditation. They are spaces where one can go deepinhimself/ herself, so favouring for God-experience in silence. A place of worship ofany religion therefore is "a house of prayer" (Isaiah, 56,7).

Placesofworshiparealsospacesforspiritualhospitality, wherebelie versofother religions also join for some special ceremonies like weddings, funerals, feastsofthecommunityetc. Whiletheypartic ipateintheevents in silence and with due respect to the religious observances of the believers of that particular religion, they also savour the hospitality accorded to them. Such practice is a privileged witness to what unites believers, without diminishing or denying what distinguishes them.

In this regard, it is worthwhile to recall what Pope Francis said when he madeavisit to the Heydar Aliyev Mosque, in Baku (Azerbaijan) on Sunday, 2 October2016:"Meeting one another in fraternal friendship in this place of prayer is a powerfulsign, onethat showstheharmonywhichreligionscanbuildtogether, based on personal relations and on the good will of those responsible".

In the context of recent attacks on churches, mosques and synagoguesbywicked persons who seem to perceive the places of worship as a privileged targetfortheir blind and senseless violence, it is worth noting what the Document on "HumanFraternityfor WorldPeaceandLivingTogether", signedbyPopeFrancisandtheG rand Imam of Al-Azhar, Dr. Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, in Abu Dhabi, on 4February2019, said: "The protection of places of worship - synagogues, churches andmosques - is a duty guaranteed by religions, human values, laws and international agreements. Every attempt to attack places of worship or threaten them by violent assaults, bombings or destruction, is a deviation from the teachings of religions as well as a clear violation of international law".

While appreciating the efforts done by the international community at different levels for the protection of the places of worship worldwide, it is our hope that our mutual esteem, respect and cooperation will help strengthen the bonds of sincere friendship, and enable our communities to safeguard the places of worship to assure for coming generations the fundamental freedom to profess one's own beliefs.

With renewed esteem and fraternal greetings, in the name of the Pontifical CouncilforInterreligiousDialogue,weconveyfriendlywish esforafruitfulmonth of Ramadan and a joyous 'Idal-Fitr.

From the Vatican, 17 April 2020

Miguel Angel Cardinal Ayuso Guixot, MCCJ

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