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教宗方濟各

2019年世界傳教節文告

「受洗者和被派遣者：基督的教會在世界傳教」

親愛的兄弟姐妹們：

2019年10月，我要求全體教會善度一段體現傳教精神的特殊時期，以紀念本篤十五世教宗頒布《夫至大》通諭一百周年（1919年11月30日）。先教宗使徒建議的先知性遠見卓識讓我確認了今天更新教會傳教任務、本著福音精神重振宣講的使命、把死而復活的耶穌基督的救恩帶給全世界仍然是很重要的。

文告的標題與10月傳教月的主題是一樣的：「受洗者和被派遣者：基督的教會在世界傳教」。舉行傳教月，首先有助於我們重新找到我們堅持耶穌基督信仰的傳教意義，這信仰是無償領受的聖洗的恩典。我們作為兒女屬於天主從來都不是個人行為，永遠都是教會的：從與天主、聖父、聖子和聖神的共融，一個嶄新的生活和許多其他兄弟姐妹一起誕生了。這神聖的生命不是待售的產品——我們不強迫他人改教，而是要奉獻、傳播、宣講的財富：這就是傳教的意義。我們白白領受了這一恩典、我們也要白白地分施（參見：瑪10·8），不能將任何人排除在外。天主要所有人都得救，得以認識真理、得益於救恩的普世聖事，即教會感受祂的慈悲。（參見：弟前2·4、3·15；梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議《教會憲章》48）

教會在世界傳教：在耶穌基督內的信德賜予了我們一切事物的正確尺度，使我們用天主的眼睛和心靈去審視世界；望德給我們開啟了我們真正參與的永生的永恆前景；我們在聖事、在手足之愛中預先感受的愛德激勵著我們直到極地去（參見：米5·3；瑪28·19；宗1·8；羅10·18）。一個走出去直到天涯海角的教會，要求持續性的和永久的傳教皈依。多少聖人、多少信德的男女老少給我們作出了見證；向我們展示出這種無限的開放、這慈悲的走出去是可能的、可行的。而慈悲的走出去是愛及其奉獻、犧牲和無償內在邏輯的緊迫推動力（參見格後5·14-21）！宣講天主的人要做天主的人。（參見：《夫至大》通諭）

這是與我們密切相關的派遣：我永遠是一個傳教使命；你永遠是一個傳教使命；每一名受洗者都是一個傳教使命。愛的人便行動起來、被推動著走出自我、被吸引和吸引、為他人奉獻並編織孕育生命的關係。因著天主的愛，沒有任何人是毫無價值和微不足道的。我們每個人都是在世界的一個傳教使命，因為是天主之愛的成果。儘管我的父親和我的母親用謊言、仇恨和不忠背叛了愛，天主永遠也不會減少賜予生命的恩典，永遠將祂神聖和永恆的生命賜予祂的兒女們。（參見：弗1·3-6）

這生命在聖洗聖事中傳播給了我們，聖洗賜予了我們在戰勝了罪惡和死亡的勝利者耶穌基督內的信仰、使我們在天主的形象和肖像內再生、將我們納入了基督的奧體，也就是教會。就此而言，聖洗也就是救恩真正必要的，因為確保我們是兒女，永遠都是、無論身在何處，在天父的家裏，我們永遠都不是孤兒、陌生人或者奴隸。身為基督徒是聖事現實——其滿全是聖體，是等待皈依和救恩的每個人男女老少的聖召和命運。事實上，聖體聖事是成為現實的天主恩典的承諾，使人在聖子內成為天主的兒女。我們是我們親生父母的孩子，但在聖洗內給了

我們原始的父性和真正的母性：如果一個人沒有教會這位母親就不能有天主這位父親。（參見：聖齊普裏亞諾的《教會的合一》4）

由此，在天主的父性中和教會的母性中奠定了我們傳教的根基，因為在聖洗聖事內，是耶穌在逾越節的委任中表達的與生俱來的派遣：正如父派遣了我，為了世界的修和我也派遣充滿了聖神的你們（參見：若20·19-23；瑪28·16-20）。基督徒肩負著這一派遣，以便任何一個人都不會錯過身為義子的聖召的宣講；對人性尊嚴、每一個人類生命從受孕到自然死亡的內在價值的確定性。肆虐的世俗主義，當積極地、文化性地拒絕天主在我們歷史中的父性活動時，就會阻礙在相互尊重每個人的生命中體現的各種真正的普世性友愛。沒有耶穌基督的天主，每一種差異都會淪為地獄般的威脅、使人類不可能有任何友愛的接納和富有成效的團結。

天主在耶穌基督內賜予的救恩的普世性目標，讓本篤十五世要求克服各種民族主義和種族中心的封閉；克服宣講福音和殖民國家及其經濟、軍事利益的各種混淆。《夫至大》通諭中，教宗指出了教會傳教事業神聖的普世性，要求擺脫各自祖國和各自種族的獨家專屬。文化和團體向著耶穌基督救恩新意的開放，要求克服不當的種族性和教會性封閉內傾。今天，教會也繼續需要（那些）因著他們的聖洗聖事慷慨回應走出去召叫的男男女女，離開自己的家、自己的家庭、自己的祖國、自己的語言、自己的地方教會。他們被派到人們中、到尚未被耶穌基督的聖事及其聖教會改變的世界裏。在宣講天主聖言、見證福音、慶祝聖神生命的同時，他們呼喚皈依；在尊重每個人的個人自由、與被派遣地人民的文化和宗教對話中為他人傳洗、奉獻基督的救恩。由此，教會始終需要的向外邦人傳教，為全體基督徒的持久性皈依進程做出了根本的貢獻。在耶穌復活內的

信仰、聖洗性的教會派遣、走出各自的地理和文化以及自己的家；需要從罪中得救、擺脫個人和社會邪惡，都需要到天涯海角去傳教。

天主聖意讓世界傳教節欣逢亞馬遜地區教會特別主教會議的舉行，使我強調耶穌用祂的聖神恩典交給我們的傳教事業對那片土地及其居民們仍然具有現實意義、仍然是必要的。一個更新的五旬節打開了教會的大門，不讓任何一種文化封閉於自我、不讓任何民族被孤立，而是向著信仰的普世性共融敞開。任何人都不要封閉在自我內，禁錮於自身的種族和宗教歸屬內。耶穌的復活打破了世界、宗教和文化的狹隘界限，同時召叫他們在尊重男人和女人的尊嚴中成長，邁向越來越圓滿的向著復活上主的真理的皈依，祂賜予所有人真正的生命。

本篤十六世教宗2007年在巴西阿帕雷西達我們拉丁美洲主教會議開幕式上的講話使我想到了這一建議，在此，我想重申並借用這些話：「對拉丁美洲和加勒比海地區國家而言，接受基督信仰意味著什麼？對他們來說，意味著認識和接受了基督，那是他們的祖先在不知情的情況下在自身豐富宗教傳統中探索的未知的天主。基督是他們默默渴望的救世主。還意味著因著聖洗聖事的水領受了永生，使他們成為天主的兒女；此外還領受了聖神，祂使他們的文化豐富、淨化他們的文化並讓降生成人的聖言放在他們中的無數胚芽和種子茁壯起來，由此指引他們邁向福音的道路。（……）天主的聖言，在耶穌基督內降生成人的同時，也造就了歷史和文化。重新回到前哥倫布時代宗教；把他們和基督、和普世教會分裂開來的烏托邦式幻想不是一個進步，而是退步。事實上，這是固定在過去的歷史時刻的退化。」（2007年5月13日開幕式上的講話）

讓我們把教會的傳教事業託付給我們的慈母瑪利亞。和她的聖

子一起，從降生成人起，童貞便行動起來，她讓自己完全參與到了耶穌的使命中，這使命，在十字架下也變成了她自己的使命：作為教會的母親配合在聖神內、在信仰內孕育天主的新兒女。

最後，我想簡要談談宗座傳教善會，在《夫至大》通諭中它就已經被提為傳教工具。宗座傳教善會以一個全球性網路來展示他們為教會普世性的服務，這一全球性網路用遍布全世界的基督徒的祈禱、傳教宣傳和愛德來支持教宗的傳教任務。他們的奉獻幫助教宗在地方教會的福傳（宗座信仰傳播善會）、地方司鐸的培育（聖伯多祿宗徒善會）、教育全世界孩子們的傳教意識（宗座聖嬰善會）和基督徒信仰的傳教培育（宗座傳教聯盟）。再次重申我對上述善會支持的同時，我祝願2019年10月的特別傳教月能為更新他們為我的職責的傳教服務做出貢獻。

我由衷地降福男女傳教士們、降福所有因著各自聖洗聖事的力量以各種方式參與傳教的人、降福教會的傳教事業。

方濟各

梵蒂岡

2019年6月9日，聖神降臨瞻禮

（中文翻譯：信仰通訊社）

慶祝教宗方濟各 在任六週年

2019年7月5日·18:30於台北

教廷駐華大使館代辦 高德隆蒙席

陳副總統建仁先生，
台灣地區主教團主席洪山川總主教
政務徐次長斯儉先生，
監察院張院長博雅女士，
敬愛的部長們，
各位立法委員，
中央研究院廖院長俊智先生，
各國使節閣下，
親愛的台灣總主教及主教們，
各宗教團體領袖及代表們，
可敬的神父、修女們，
親愛的朋友們，

晚安！

今晚，我們共襄盛舉慶祝教宗方濟各就任六週年，對我來說是一個充滿喜悅和感激的時刻，因為它讓我再一次，在同一時間和地點見到並歡迎許多心懷善意的人士，通常稱之為朋友！既然我們是這麼好的朋友，我相信您們不會介意我說幾句話，有關我們眾都認同的一位朋友——教宗方濟各，希望能藉此鼓舞人心！畢竟，我們慶祝的是他當選的週年紀念日。

事實上，有很多理由慶祝教宗方濟各任期的週年紀念日。今晚，我想提出三個理由，分別對世界、教會和社會都同樣適用。

1. 為世界

我們生活在一個國際社會正面臨著許多挑戰的時代裡，危及多個國家和整個地區的和平與穩定。在基督信仰的願景中，和平是復活的耶穌所帶來的第一個禮物（參閱：若望福音20:19），耶穌初期門徒的使命主要是帶來平安：「不論進了那一家，先說：『願這一家平安！』」（路10:5）。教導及促進和平也是現任的教宗方濟各的核心價值。在一個尋求和平的世界中，教宗向我們啟發了和平的原始本質：「和平既是天主的禮物，也是自由和合理的人類行為的結果，旨在追求真理和愛的共同利益。」（2014年11月25日歐洲委員會致辭）

2. 為社會

我們的社會也受到一些疾病的影響，給許多個人和群體的日常生活帶來了巨大的負擔。教宗方濟各公開譴責這些疾病，拒絕不公義，藉此創造解決方案來促進社會正面的轉變，以建立「包容和公平的社會，能夠恢復那些生活在極度不安，無法實現更美好世界的人的尊嚴。」（第八屆世界移民社會論壇的訊息，2018年10月26日致辭）

3. 為教會

教宗方濟各特別關注天主教會的需要。其中之一就是教會需要外展。這個呼籲有兩個原因。第一個原因是一個

與教宗方濟各的信念有關的實際問題，即「歷史的翻轉，是當事件並非從它裡面去解讀，而是從它的周邊去審視」（摘自：斯帕達羅，《教宗方濟各於宗教生活的對話——喚醒世界！》的內容）。第二個原因是牧靈性質：教會需要接觸那些生活在人生邊緣的人，「好使他們在耶穌身上找到他們生活的中心和希望之源。」（2015年3月21日講道內容）

親愛的朋友們，我告訴你們這一切只是要簡單地指出，無論如何，世界、社會、教會和我們每個人，都有希望的跡象。如果不是這樣，我們也連一天也無法前進。人們普遍認為教宗方濟各的牧職是一個有說服力的希望標誌。

在教宗明智的領導下，羅馬教廷不斷促進世界和平，並高度讚賞像台灣一樣的國家——致力維護在國內、亞洲地區和國際上的和平與穩定。這是一種方式，用來表明清楚，我們深妙的身分和崇高的使命是友愛：彼此成為弟兄和作我們弟兄的守護者。（參閱：方濟各，2014年世界和平日致辭）

在這方面，請允許我提及中國佛教會理事長暨中華民國宗教與和平協進會主席——釋淨耀法師。他蒙教宗方濟各致力於促進宗教間和平與對話的啟發，最近率領一個代表團前往羅馬教廷。他與聖父的相遇雖然很短，但我真的希望這會予以鼓勵，進行宗教間更多的合作，處處保護和促進和平。

為那些被視為社會的弱勢人士或無地位的人，如移民、難民、遷移者、人口販運的受害者，以及所有社會所忽視、剝削、強暴和虐待的人，教宗方濟各的牧職是一個希望的偉大跡象。

在這方面，我感謝中華民國（台灣）贊助去年4月在羅馬舉行的「從牧靈取向面對人口販運」國際會議。本月底，在羅馬教廷代表和國際明愛會的參與下，將於台北舉辦一個打擊人口販運的國際研討會。所有這些都表明了該領域和許多其他領域的現有合作，台灣仍然是在區域和國際層面非常忠誠和值得信賴的伙伴。這是世界應該感激的事情！這是您們都應該感到自豪的事情！

教宗方濟各的牧職也是台灣教會希望的標誌。我一直讚賞這個當地教會所做的努力，旨在通過有利於那些有需要者的具體而有價值的舉措，見證了真正的天主教信仰。在主教團的「宗徒述職」期間，教宗方濟各鼓勵大家走出去，以更深的熱情和信念宣揚福音，始終要尊重他人，並保護您們的價值觀、原則，但同樣要保護您們的財產！

親愛的朋友們，我確實相信現任教宗方濟各的牧職是所有善志者希望的象徵。如果不是這樣，那麼這個慶祝活動沒有多大意義。

在與教宗方濟各見面後，一位外交部長說：「聖父正如人們所說的一樣。從他與聖伯多祿廣場的大群眾的互動中，顯然看到他對人民的誠意和熱愛。」在這個宴會廳的中間，我們都欣賞到聖伯多祿廣場和大教堂的冰雕。我邀請大家想像教宗方濟各在那裡告訴您們：「和平是

我們必須說的語言」，「不要讓任何人剝奪您們的希望」。請以您自己的方式為他祈禱，祈求天主保護、引導和支持教宗為世界、社會、教會和我們每個人的裨益服務。

現在，請允許我感謝所有與我一起準備慶祝活動的人。他們是：薛維義神父、陳科神父，我們大使館的修女、秘書和員工。特別感謝我們的讚助商，即華南銀行副董事長林知延先生、亞太文化創意產業協會理事長陳立恆先生、台灣地區主教團，和全國宗座傳信善會。您們的慷慨支持表明了您們的深厚友誼和您們對聖父的感情。願天主賞賜您們，祝福您們！

親愛的朋友們，很抱歉，我的講話比您們所想的要長一點。但這是最後一次舉辦這個慶祝活動。事實上，經過我長上的同意，我已經決定於本月底離開台灣，返回家鄉開始我人生的新篇章。我仍然是神父，也是蒙席，很可能會在我的總教區當副主教。

有人說：「一位外交官於再三思考後，什麼也不說！」我甚至可以不用思考就說，台灣與台灣人，和你們每個人將於我心裡占有特別的位置！您們是我的朋友，由於好朋友很難找到，更捨不得離開，就是不可能忘記的。與其難過，讓我們期待在這裡和在任何天主願意我們相聚的地方再次見面。節目必須繼續，所以另一位同事很快就會來台灣，接替我的位置。我毫不懷疑您們會以極大的感情和支持歡迎他。

我衷心對大家說：謝謝您們所有的一切！願天主保佑您們！



教宗方濟各

第三屆世界窮人日文告

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窮人的依靠永不會喪亡

1. 聖詠「窮人的依靠永不會喪亡」（詠九十九）這句話，到今天依舊合宜；這句話表達出一份深刻的真理，即信德特別銘刻在窮人的心中，在遭遇不公義、痛苦和生活的不確定時，它重新恢復失去的希望。

聖詠作者描述了窮人的情況和那些壓迫者所展現出的傲慢（參閱：詠十一~十）。他呼求上主審斷，為要伸張正義和戰勝邪惡（參閱：詠十四~十五）。在他的話語中，一

些由來已久的問題，至今仍迴響著。天主如何能容忍這偌大的差異？祂怎能讓窮人飽受侮辱而不前來相助？尤其眼看窮人飽受苦楚，為什麼祂反而允許壓迫的人繁榮興盛，卻不譴責他們的行為？

聖詠創作的時代，經濟蓬勃發展，卻經常導致嚴重社會失衡。財富不公平的分配，形成為數可觀的窮人，他們所處的情況，比起那極少數的特權階級所贏得的財富，更加引人側目。聖詠作者觀察實際的情形，描繪出一幅寫實而真切的圖像。

當時，那些目無天主的人們，心高氣傲，壓迫窮人，搜刮他們僅有的少量財物，將之占為己有，並貶抑他們，使他們淪為奴隸。時至今日，情況依舊大同小異：儘管發生經濟危機，許多人仍能累積財富，這比起我們每天在城市的大街小巷都能遇到為數眾多的窮人，更令人感到詫異。這些窮人缺乏生活基本必需，有時還會被侵擾，受剝削。我心中憶起默示錄中所記載的：「你說：我是富有的，我發了財，什麼也不缺少；殊不知你是不幸的、可憐的、貧窮的、瞎眼的、赤身露體的」（默三十七）。經過數個世紀後，富人和窮人的情況一如以往，彷彿我們不曾從歷史記取教訓。因此，聖詠內容所述，非關過去，實指現時，有待天主審斷。

2. 即使到了今天，我們還是必須承認，有諸多新的奴役形式，正箝制著成千上萬的男男女女、青年人和孩童。

我們每天都會接觸到被迫離鄉背井，為要在別處謀生的家庭；那些失去雙親的孤兒，或是那些被粗暴地與父母拆散，遭受殘忍剝削的兒童；那些力圖實現職業理想，卻因短視近利的經濟政策而找不到工作的青年；那些深受鄙視、身為眾多暴力形式，例如賣淫和販毒的受害者；我們又怎能忽視那些成千上萬為諸多暗藏利益所害，往往因政治利益受到剝削而無法享有團結與公平的移民？還有那些無家可歸者和被排斥而徘徊城市街頭的人？

有多少次，我們目睹窮人在垃圾桶裡翻找別人丟棄的剩餘物品，希望能在其中找到賴以維生的物資和可以蔽體的衣物！他們本身就被當作廢棄物看待，而那些導致此一慘狀的人卻絲毫沒有一點愧疚感；窮人的貧困甚至不被人原諒，他們經常被視為社會的寄生蟲，隨時受人判斷，但卻沒有權利感到害羞或沮喪；只因為他們貧困，所以被看成是一種威脅，或者根本毫無用處。

更糟的是，他們在赤貧的困境中走頭無路。我們甚至設計出對他們懷有敵意的建築物，企圖使街道上——他們最後的容身之處——不再見到他們的蹤影。他們從城市的這一頭遊蕩到另一頭，只希望能到找到一份工作、一個家園、一點溫暖……。即使是最少的供應，都能成為一道希望的曙光；然而，即便在公義有可能贏得勝利的地方，他們仍然遭遇暴力和虐待。他們被迫在炙人的陽

光下不停地工作，採收當季的水果，所領的薪資卻出奇的低廉。他們在不安全且不具人性的條件下工作，使他們無法與人平起平坐。他們缺乏失業補助、相關福利和疾病救助。

聖詠作者描述富人掠奪窮人的態度，殘酷而寫實：「他在暗處伺伏……要把貧困的人，伺機刮搜，將貧困者拖入網中劫走」（參閱：詠十9）。窮人在這場狩獵中被圍困、遭捕獲並被奴役。因此，他們許多人變得失魂落魄、心硬和焦慮，只為逃避人的眼光。簡而言之，我們眼前成千上萬的窮人經常受到惡意中傷，幾乎不被包容。他們想盡辦法隱藏自己，他們的聲音在社會裡不再被人聽見。在我們的屋宇房舍中，男男女女彼此越來越陌生；在我們的鄰里社區內，也有越來越多人遭受排擠。

3. 聖詠所描述的场景，帶著哀傷的色彩，因為窮人忍受著不公義、痛苦和失望；然而，它卻賦予窮人一個觸動人心的定義：他們是那些「信賴上主」（參閱：詠十11）的人，堅定地相信他們永遠不會被拋棄。在聖經中，所謂的窮人，是那些有所信賴的人！聖詠作者對於這份信賴，提出一個理由：因為他們「認識」天主（參閱：同上）。在聖經的語言中，能有這樣的「認識」，表示他們和天主之間，有一份個人的關係，其中充滿了感情與愛。

這樣的描述令人驚嘆，完全超出人的期待；它單純地表達出天主的偉大，並從天主與窮人建立關係的方式，即可看出。祂創造性的力量超越一切人類的期待，從祂對每個人「念念不忘、銘記在心」得以呈現（參閱：詠十13）。正是這一份對天主的信賴，堅定相信自己不會被遺棄，給人灌注了希望。窮人知道天主不會遺棄他們，所以他們永遠活在天主的臨在之下，那是一位對他們無微不至的天主。天主的援助使他們超越當下受苦的景況，給他們指出一條通往自由的途徑，能深入強化他們的內心，使之得到徹底的轉變。

在聖經中不斷地講論天主對窮人的行動。祂「聆聽」他們的「呼聲」並「前來救助他們」；祂「保護」並「捍衛」他們，祂「拯救」並「援助」他們……。的確，窮人總向天主懇求，他們從不覺得祂無動於衷或靜默不語。天主施予正義，從不遺忘（參閱：詠四十18；七十6）；祂是他們的避難所，永遠扶助他們。（參閱：詠十14）

我們以為建築無數的高牆，並緊閉門戶，罔顧那些被排除在外的人們的利益，守住我們的財富，就可以心安理得，實在是白費力氣。這絕不是長久之計。先知口中所說的「上主的日子」（參閱：亞五18；依二~五；岳一~三）將要來到，屆時國與國之間所形成的藩籬將被拆除，眾人的團結合一將取代原來極少數人的驕傲自大。數以百萬計的人所痛苦地經歷的社會邊緣化過程，不能

再繼續下去。他們的喊叫聲越來越大，充斥著全球。普利默·馬佐拉利神父說：「窮人的存在，對我們所造成的不公義，是一種持續不斷的抗議；窮人是火藥桶，一旦點燃，世界就會爆炸。」

5. 我們絕不能迴避聖經為窮人所做出的急切呼籲。不論我們著眼何處，天主總是針對窮人發言；他們總是依賴別人，缺乏生活所需。他們飽受壓迫，低賤卑下，且悲傷失望。面對數之不盡的窮人，耶穌卻不害怕對他們中的每一位產生認同：「凡你們對我這些最小兄弟中的一個所做的，就是對我做的」（瑪二五40）。如果我們拒絕對窮人作此認同，就是竄改福音，削弱天主的啟示。耶穌來到世上，向我們顯示天主；這天主是一位寬仁慈悲的父，永遠溫良慈善。為那些歷經幻滅、對未來缺乏希望的人們，祂特別給予希望。

我們怎能不去注意耶穌所說的真福八端呢？祂以此開始宣講天國，第一句就是「神貧的人是有福的」（路六20）。這自相矛盾的訊息，意指：天主的國屬於窮人，因為他們已經準備好予以領受。我們每天會遇到多少窮人！看來，隨著時間的推演和文明的躍進，窮人的數目不減反增。經過了若干世紀，真福八端顯得更加令人費解了：窮人總是越來越窮，而且現在他們比以往更為貧窮。然而耶穌建立他的王國時，將窮人置於中心；祂正想告訴我們：祂已建立祂的王國，但祂將拓展天國的任

務，託付給祂的門徒們，也就是我們，並要我們擔負起給予窮人希望的重責大任。特別在我們這個時代，亟需重燃希望、重建信心。基督信仰團體萬萬不可低估這份責任的重要性：我們的福音宣報是否可信？基督徒是否做出見證？都取決於此。

6. 教會因經常親近窮人而明白到自己是天主的子民，散居於許多不同的國家，而且受召使得沒有人覺得自己是陌生人或是被人排擠的，因為教會邀集所有人一起邁向救恩的旅程。窮人的情況迫使我們不再和主的奧體保持距離——祂在他們內承受著痛苦。相反的，我們受召觸摸祂的血肉之軀，並受邀投身於親自提供服務，作為一種真實的福傳形式。致力於提高窮人的地位，包括他們的社會地位，並非與傳揚福音無關。相反，這樣的行動正展現出基督信仰的現實性，以及在過去歷史中其正當性。這份愛使得對耶穌的信德具有生命，使得祂的門徒們不再一直保持封閉，處在令人窒息的個人主義當中，或者退隱到靈性親密的小圈子裡，而不對社會生活發揮任何影響力。（參閱：宗座勸諭《福音的喜樂》，183）

最近，我們為偉大的窮人宗徒——文立光的逝世感到哀傷；他的委身奉獻，開啟了嶄新的途徑，始能對社會邊緣人展現精誠關懷，並為他們地位的提升貢獻心力。天主給予文立光恩賜，使他畢生致力於我們那些重度失能的弟兄姊妹們——往往被社會排斥的人。他是那些「鄰

家」聖人中的一位；由於他如飢似渴般的投入，吸引許多青年人和男男女女來到他身邊，日日勞作，付出愛，使許多原本脆弱易受傷害的人們重新展露微笑，並給予他們一座真正的「方舟」，拯救他們，使他們不再被邊緣化，援助他們擺脫孤寂。他的見證改變無數人的生命，並幫助這個世界對於那些不如我們幸運的人們，能另眼相看。窮人的呼喊已被聽見，並激發出一股堅定不移的希望，進而由一份具體的愛，形成許多出可見可觸的標記，使我們直到今天，還可以用雙手予以觸摸。

7. 追隨基督的人受召致力於「優先關愛最弱小者、遭受社會摒棄的人」（《福音的喜樂》，195），使其能不再質疑教會的可信度，而卻把真正的希望帶給我們那許多弱小的弟兄姊妹們。基督信仰的愛德在他們的身上具體展現，因為藉由他們的憐憫，以及他們樂於與有急需者分享基督的愛的意願，不僅他們自身得著力量，也使福音的教導受到肯定。

欣逢本屆世界窮人日，基督徒超越所有的援助行動，特別在日常生活的大小事件中投身參與，予以實踐。即便那些行動，也許令人稱道，有其必要，但務須設定目標，鼓勵每個人更加關懷那些失望頹喪的人們。「這愛的殷勤是開始對他們每一位完完整整的人的真正關心」（《福音的喜樂》，199），特別是對窮人，並積極促

進他們真正的福利。消費文化和丟棄文化，所散布的是粗略膚淺和轉眼即逝的滿足感；在這樣的背景下，要為基督信仰的希望做見證，實屬不易。必須在心態上做出改變，好能重新發現真正重要的是什麼，並為天國的宣揚，賦予豐富的意義，給予活潑的生氣。

陪伴窮人，不僅只是出於一時的熱忱，必須透過長時間持續不斷的投入；這其中所帶來的成就感，使得希望能夠被散播出去。窮人獲得真正的希望，並非由於看見我們因為為他們付出些許時間而感到喜樂，而是因為從我們的犧牲看見愛的行動——無償且不求回報。

8. 許多志工值得受人肯定，因為他們最先體認到如此關懷窮人的重要；我在此請求他們能持之以恆地繼續投身這項服務。親愛的弟兄姊妹們，我鼓勵你們在每一位你們所遇見的窮人身上，尋求他（她）的真正需要，切莫只停留在他們最明顯的物質需求，更要去發現他們內在的良善，注意他們的出身背景和表達自我的方式，因此得以展開一場真正具有兄弟情誼的交談。讓我們放下不同的意識形態和政治立場所造成的分歧，將我們的目光聚集在最根本和最重要的部分——不要求太多的言語，而要求給予愛的注視和伸出援助的手。不要忘記「窮人經歷到最嚴重的歧視是缺乏靈性上的關懷。」（《福音的喜

樂》，200）

窮人最需要的，是天主和祂的愛，這在「鄰家聖人」的身上清晰可見，因為他們生活簡樸，明顯展露出基督信仰愛的力量。天主運用數之不盡的各種方式進入人心。當然，窮人來接近我們，也是因為我們給他們食物，但他們真正需要的，絕不僅止於我們所提供的一份熟食或一個三明治而已。窮人需要我們的雙手將他們扶起；他們需要我們的心，去重新感受人情的溫暖；他們需要我們的臨在，以克服寂寞。簡單的說，他們所需要的，是愛。

9. 有時候，重建希望所需要的其實很少。只要停留一下，給予微笑，並留心聆聽。這一次，我們就暫且不管數字的統計：窮人不是我們誇口自己的工作和計畫時所提出的數字。我們要與窮人相遇：他們孤單寂寞，有老有少，我們可以邀請他們來我們家裡和他們分享一頓餐飯；他們中有男、有女、有孩童，只希望別人對他們發出友善的言語。

在世人的眼裡，要相信貧困和匱乏能具有拯救的力量，似乎不符合邏輯。然而這卻是保祿宗徒的教導，他告訴我們：「弟兄們！你們看看你們是怎樣蒙召的：按肉眼來

看，你們中有智慧的人並不多，有權勢的人也不多，顯貴的人也不多；天主偏召選了世上愚妄的，為羞辱那有智慧的；召選了世上懦弱的，為羞辱那堅強的；甚而天主召選了世上卑賤的和受人輕視的，以及那些一無所有的，為消滅那些有的，為使一切有血肉的人，在天主前無所誇耀」（格前一26-29）。若以人的標準來看事物，我們就無法看見這份拯救的力量，但以信德的眼光，我們在行動中望見它，並親身經歷它。這份拯救的力量在天主子民的心中脈動，不排除任何人，使每一個人都成為朝聖者，進入這趟使人真正得到轉變的朝聖之旅，從中認出窮人，並去關愛他們。

10. 上主沒有拋棄那些尋求祂和呼喚祂聖名的人：「上主絕不會忘掉他們慘痛的呼聲」（詠九12）。因為祂側耳聆聽他們的聲音。這希望叫窮人出死入生，因為窮人知道他們特別蒙天主所愛，而這信念超越任何的痛苦或排拒。貧窮並不能剝奪天主所賜予他們的尊嚴；他們堅信天主會親自完全將之恢復，因為天主對那些最卑微的子女的命運絕不會漠然不顧。看見他們的掙扎和失落，祂反而手攜著他們，並給予他們力量和勇氣（參閱：詠十14）。窮人所懷抱的希望，在他們確信他們的聲音必會蒙主垂聽的信念中得以肯定，因為在祂內他們會找到真

正的公義，他們的心中將充滿力量，並繼續去愛。（參閱：詠十17）

如果主耶穌的門徒們想要成為真正傳播福音的人，他們必須撒播帶來希望具體可見的種子。我請求所有基督信仰團體和所有感覺受到催迫要給予窮人希望和安慰的人們，能齊心協力，使世界窮人日能鼓勵越來越多人有成效地合作，好使不再有人感到被疏離和被遺忘。願你們眾人時常珍視先知的話語，他所宣告的是一個不一樣的未來：「但為你們這些敬畏我名號的人，正義的太陽將要升起，以自己好似箭羽的光芒普施救恩。」（拉三20）

教宗方濟各

發自梵蒂岡

2019年6月13日，聖安道紀念日

（臺灣地區主教團祕書處 恭譯）



Message of His Holiness Francis for World Mission Day 2019

Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

For the month of October 2019, I have asked that the whole Church revive her missionary awareness and commitment as we commemorate the centenary of the Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud* of Pope Benedict XV (30 November 1919). Its farsighted and prophetic vision of the apostolate has made me realize once again the importance of renewing the Church's missionary commitment and giving fresh evangelical impulse to her work of preaching and bringing to the world the salvation of Jesus Christ, who died and rose again.

The title of the present Message is the same as that of October's Missionary Month: *Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World*. Celebrating this month will help us first to rediscover the missionary dimension of our faith in Jesus Christ, a faith graciously bestowed on us in baptism. Our filial relationship with God is not something simply private, but always in relation to the Church. Through our communion with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we, together with so many of our other brothers and sisters, are born to new life. This divine life is not a product for sale – we do not practise proselytism – but a treasure to be given, communicated and proclaimed: that is the meaning of mission. We received this gift freely and we share it freely (cf. Mt

10:8), without excluding anyone. God wills that all people be saved by coming to know the truth and experiencing his mercy through the ministry of the Church, the universal sacrament of salvation (cf. 1 Tim 2:4; *Lumen Gentium*, 48).

The Church is on mission in the world. Faith in Jesus Christ enables us to see all things in their proper perspective, as we view the world with God's own eyes and heart. Hope opens us up to the eternal horizons of the divine life that we share. Charity, of which we have a foretaste in the sacraments and in fraternal love, impels us to go forth to the ends of the earth (cf. Mic 5:4; Mt 28:19; Acts 1:8; Rom 10:18). A Church that presses forward to the farthest frontiers requires a constant and ongoing missionary conversion. How many saints, how many men and women of faith, witness to the fact that this unlimited openness, this going forth in mercy, is indeed possible and realistic, for it is driven by love and its deepest meaning as gift, sacrifice and gratuitousness (cf. 2 Cor 5:14-21)! The man who preaches God must be a man of God (cf. *Maximum Illud*).

This missionary mandate touches us personally: I am a mission, always; you are a mission, always; every baptized man and woman is a mission. People in love never stand still: they are drawn out of themselves; they are attracted and attract others in turn; they give themselves to others and build relationships that are life-giving. As far as God's love is concerned, no one is useless or insignificant. Each of us is a mission to the world, for each of us is the fruit of God's love. Even if parents can betray their love by lies, hatred and infidelity, God never takes back his gift of life. From eternity he has destined each of his children to share in his divine and eternal life (cf. Eph 1:3-6).

This life is bestowed on us in baptism, which grants us the gift of faith in Jesus Christ, the conqueror of sin and death. Baptism gives us rebirth in God's own image and likeness, and makes us members of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. In this sense, baptism is truly necessary

for salvation for it ensures that we are always and everywhere sons and daughters in the house of the Father, and never orphans, strangers or slaves. What in the Christian is a sacramental reality – whose fulfillment is found in the Eucharist – remains the vocation and destiny of every man and woman in search of conversion and salvation. For baptism fulfills the promise of the gift of God that makes everyone a son or daughter in the Son. We are children of our natural parents, but in baptism we receive the origin of all fatherhood and true motherhood: no one can have God for a Father who does not have the Church for a mother (cf. Saint Cyprian, *De Cath. Eccl.*, 6).

Our mission, then, is rooted in the fatherhood of God and the motherhood of the Church. The mandate given by the Risen Jesus at Easter is inherent in Baptism: as the Father has sent me, so I send you, filled with the Holy Spirit, for the reconciliation of the world (cf. *Jn* 20:19-23; *Mt* 28:16-20). This mission is part of our identity as Christians; it makes us responsible for enabling all men and women to realize their vocation to be adoptive children of the Father, to recognize their personal dignity and to appreciate the intrinsic worth of every human life, from conception until natural death. Today's rampant secularism, when it becomes an aggressive cultural rejection of God's active fatherhood in our history, is an obstacle to authentic human fraternity, which finds expression in reciprocal respect for the life of each person. Without the God of Jesus Christ, every difference is reduced to a baneful threat, making impossible any real fraternal acceptance and fruitful unity within the human race.

The universality of the salvation offered by God in Jesus Christ led Benedict XV to call for an end to all forms of nationalism and ethnocentrism, or the merging of the preaching of the Gospel with the economic and military interests of the colonial powers. In his Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*, the Pope noted that the Church's universal mission requires setting aside exclusivist ideas of membership in one's own

country and ethnic group. The opening of the culture and the community to the salvific newness of Jesus Christ requires leaving behind every kind of undue ethnic and ecclesial introversion. Today too, the Church needs men and women who, by virtue of their baptism, respond generously to the call to leave behind home, family, country, language and local Church, and to be sent forth to the nations, to a world not yet transformed by the sacraments of Jesus Christ and his holy Church. By proclaiming God's word, bearing witness to the Gospel and celebrating the life of the Spirit, they summon to conversion, baptize and offer Christian salvation, with respect for the freedom of each person and in dialogue with the cultures and religions of the peoples to whom they are sent. The *missio ad gentes*, which is always necessary for the Church, thus contributes in a fundamental way to the process of ongoing conversion in all Christians. Faith in the Easter event of Jesus; the ecclesial mission received in baptism; the geographic and cultural detachment from oneself and one's own home; the need for salvation from sin and liberation from personal and social evil: all these demand the mission that reaches to the very ends of the earth.

The providential coincidence of this centenary year with the celebration of the Special Synod on the Churches in the Amazon allows me to emphasize how the mission entrusted to us by Jesus with the gift of his Spirit is also timely and necessary for those lands and their peoples. A renewed Pentecost opens wide the doors of the Church, in order that no culture remain closed in on itself and no people cut off from the universal communion of the faith. No one ought to remain closed in self-absorption, in the self-referentiality of his or her own ethnic and religious affiliation. The Easter event of Jesus breaks through the narrow limits of worlds, religions and cultures, calling them to grow in respect for the dignity of men and women, and towards a deeper conversion to the truth of the Risen Lord who gives authentic life to all.

Here I am reminded of the words of Pope Benedict XVI at the beginning of the meeting of Latin American Bishops at Aparecida, Brazil, in 2007. I would like to repeat these words and make them my own: “Yet what did the acceptance of the Christian faith mean for the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean? For them, it meant knowing and welcoming Christ, the unknown God whom their ancestors were seeking, without realizing it, in their rich religious traditions. Christ is the Saviour for whom they were silently longing. It also meant that they received, in the waters of Baptism, the divine life that made them children of God by adoption; moreover, they received the Holy Spirit who came to make their cultures fruitful, purifying them and developing the numerous seeds that the incarnate Word had planted in them, thereby guiding them along the paths of the Gospel... The Word of God, in becoming flesh in Jesus Christ, also became history and culture. The utopia of going back to breathe life into the pre-Columbian religions, separating them from Christ and from the universal Church, would not be a step forward: indeed, it would be a step back. In reality, it would be a retreat towards a stage in history anchored in the past” (Address at the Inaugural Session, 13 May 2007: *Insegnamenti* III, 1 [2007], 855-856).

We entrust the Church’s mission to Mary our Mother. In union with her Son, from the moment of the Incarnation the Blessed Virgin set out on her pilgrim way. She was fully involved in the mission of Jesus, a mission that became her own at the foot of the Cross: the mission of cooperating, as Mother of the Church, in bringing new sons and daughters of God to birth in the Spirit and in faith.

I would like to conclude with a brief word about the Pontifical Mission Societies, already proposed in *Maximum Illud* as a missionary resource. The Pontifical Mission Societies serve the Church’s universality as a global network of support for the Pope in his missionary commitment by prayer, the soul of mission, and charitable offerings from Christians

throughout the world. Their donations assist the Pope in the evangelization efforts of particular Churches (the Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith), in the formation of local clergy (the Pontifical Society of Saint Peter the Apostle), in raising missionary awareness in children (Pontifical Society of Missionary Childhood) and in encouraging the missionary dimension of Christian faith (Pontifical Missionary Union). In renewing my support for these Societies, I trust that the extraordinary Missionary Month of October 2019 will contribute to the renewal of their missionary service to my ministry.

To men and women missionaries, and to all those who, by virtue of their baptism, share in any way in the mission of the Church, I send my heartfelt blessing.

From the Vatican, 9 June 2019, Solemnity of Pentecost

FRANCIS



CHINESE REGIONAL BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

Minutes of The 2019 Spring Plenary Assembly

Date: April 23-25, 2019 (Tuesday-Thursday)

Venue: CRBC Administrative Building,
(39 An-Ju St., Taan District, Taipei 10672)

President: Most Rev. John Hung Shan-Chuan, SVD

Attendees: Most Rev. Peter Liu, Most Rev. Bosco Lin,
Most Rev. Philip Huang, Most Rev. John Baptist Lee,
Most Rev. Thomas Chung, Most Rev. Martin Su

Secretary: Fr. Otfried Chan

Guest: Msgr. Slađan Ćosić

Table of Reports:

I. Secretariat

1. The Secretary of State of the Holy See, Cardinal Parolin, agreed that the CRBC could sign a memo with the Ministry of Culture to protect the Church's properties; the diplomatic support would be given to the local Church.
2. A letter from Cardinal Charles Maung Bo.
3. A letter from Congregation of Consecrated Life and Societies of

Apostolic Life

4. International meetings (the Holy See and the FABC)

5. Report of General Services:

The amendment of the Statutes of the CRBC, renewal of the certificate of registration and the submission to the Ministry of Interior for examination were all accomplished on February 22 2019.

There are for the moment no other new changes concerning the land exchange with Fu-jen University.

6. Report of Accountant (Cf. Proposals)

II. Commission for Interreligious Dialogue and Ecumenical Cooperation and Commission for Promoting Christian Unity

III. Commission for the Clergy, Taiwan Catholic Regional Seminary (Cf. Proposals)

IV. Commission for Aborigine Apostolate

V. Commission for Doctrine of the Faith and Catechetical Instruction, Bible Apostolate

VI. Commission for Evangelization, Investigation Team of Fu-jen University (oral report at the meeting)

VII. Commission for Social Development and Caritas – Taiwan R.O.C.

VIII. Commission for Social Development, Radio Veritas

IX. Commission for Evangelization, Pont. Societies for Propagation of the Faith (oral report at the meeting)

X. Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

XI. Commission for Evangelization, Section for Youth

XII. Commission for Sacred Liturgy (Sacred Music Section, Promotion Section of Eucharistic Worship)

XIII. Commission for Doctrine of the Faith and Catechetical Instruction, Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service Team

XIV. Commission for Evangelization, Section for Family

XV. Commission of Pastoral-Health Care (Proposals)

XVI. Family Guidance, Ms Clare Yeh Jian-yan (oral report at the meeting)

XVII. Commission for Education and Culture (oral report at the meeting)

XVIII. Diocese of Chiayi – Evaluation Report of the Eucharistic Congress

Table of Proposals:

I. Secretariat

- A. Final accounting of revenue and expenditure of 2018 and work report.
- B. Accounting systems of both Taiwan Catholic Regional Seminary and Radio Veritas
- C. According to the letter of the Ministry of Interior (No. 1070041313), an explanation of a concrete plan for remedy for deficit of the Episcopal Conference must be submitted.
- D. Invitation to Pope

II. Diocese of Kaohsiung: Taiwan Eucharistic Procession to be held

III. Commission for the Doctrine of the Faith and Catechetical Instruction, Bible Apostolate: Promotion of “Bible Month” in each diocese

IV. Taiwan Catholic Canon Law Society

A. Handbook for Taiwanese Regional Priests, E-book version

B. Seminar for Canon Law Studies: A formation session of 3 days, from November 19 to 21 2019

V. Commission for Pastoral Health Care

- A. A “Code of conduct for Catholic Hospitals” corresponding to the ethnic rules of the Church is suggested to be formulated
- B. Formation of Spiritual Caregivers

VI. Taiwan Catholic Regional Seminary: arrangement of formation phases for the second semester of 2019

VII. Diocese of Chiayi

- A. The disposal of the surplus budget of Taiwan Eucharistic Congress.
- B. It is suggested that during the period of preparation for the Taiwan Eucharistic Congress, the Section for the Promotion of Eucharistic Worship of the Episcopal Commission for Sacred Liturgy would subscribe 100 copies of Catholic Weekly of a whole year in order to publicize and promote relevant activities held by the host diocese.

Address of Msgr. Sladan Ćosić:

- Cardinal Fernando Filoni gave thanks again to the Episcopal Conference and the local Church for the kind service and the successful Taiwan Eucharistic Congress .
- The nomination of the Archbishop of Taipei and related matters.
- The Bishops’ Conference should make efforts to publicize the Church’s teaching in bioethics against studies or practices on abortion, artificial insemination and fertilization in vitro, it should help to articulate a complete set of supporting measures in accordance to the Church’s teaching.

- The important reasons to be considered for the merging of dioceses, especially pastoral reasons.
- Some parishes in a same deanery should be assigned to diocesan priests. The situation that all the parishes of a deanery are entrusted to only one religious congregation should be avoided.
- Varia.

Proposals:

I. Secretariat

A. Final accounting of revenue and expenditure of 2019 and work report.

Explanation:

1. Final accounting of revenue and expenditure of 2018 and work report of 2018 (cf. attached documents).
2. After being approval, it will be submitted to the competent authorities for examination.

Resolution: Approved

B. The accounting system of both Taiwan Catholic Regional Seminary and *Radio Veritas* are different from the one of the Bishops' Conference, so the accountant of the Bishops' Conference has to re-do their accounts every month in order to combine their accountancy into one and send it to the Ministry of Finance. It is suggested that the above-mentioned units can change their accounting systems into the one of the Bishops' Conference to avoid the repeated work.

Explanation:

1. In view of the increasing activities and units of the Bishops' Conference, and the amendments of some bills (concerning Supplementary Insurance

Premium of the Health Insurance and Anti-Money Laundering Control Act), the workload continues to increase. The Bishops' Conference has only one staff member for the accountancy of the all the commissions and other units of the Conference. The workload cannot be exceeded anymore, and according to its financial situation, it is inappropriate to create additional posts. In order to share the work of accounting, to improve work efficiency and to economize personnel costs, it is suggested that the Taiwan Catholic Regional Seminary and the Radio Veritas can do their accounts independently and combine them into the final accounting of the Conference at the end of each month.

2. The accounting system of the Conference adopts the free software provided by Shan-Ho Accounting Firm. Shan-Ho has been asked that the Bishops' Conference could share it with internal units for free, handling itself the internal sharing of the software.

Resolution: Approved.

C. According to the letter the Ministry of Interior (No. 1070041313) a concrete plan to solve the problem of the deficit of the Bishops' Conference must be submitted.

Explanation: (Cf. attached document: the financial plan of the Conference)

Resolution: The accountant of the Conference will provide the estimated deficit of this year (until December 2019). The deficit will be filled conjointly by seven dioceses.

D. Pope Francis announced on January 23, 2019 that he planned to visit Japan. The Conference can invite the Pope to pass by Taiwan and to celebrate a Mass. If it is not possible to arrange it in the schedule, the Conference can request the Holy Father to deliver a message to the local Church or the Government expressing his pastoral care.

Explanation: If the bishops approve, the President of the Conference will

write an official letter to the Pope. The Secretary General will draft the letter.

Resolution: Approved.

II. Diocese of Kaohsiung

In order to celebrate the 160th anniversary of Evangelization in Taiwan, and to prolong the spiritual fruit of the Taiwan Eucharistic Congress, it is suggested to hold a National Eucharistic Procession for celebration.

Explanation:

1. The 160th anniversary of Catholic Evangelization in Taiwan will should only be a celebration inside the Church, the people of God must also take this opportunity to profess again their faith and to revive evangelization outside the Church.
2. The local Church of Taiwan had just held the Taiwan Eucharistic Congress whose final aim is to let all the peoples know Jesus Christ, turn back to Him and encounter Christ in the Eucharist.
3. To hold the Taiwan Eucharistic Procession is a way to profess in public the faith of the Church. It also means that the Body of Christ, the Church, must enter again into our society to continue her mission entrusted by the Christ to the whole Church.
4. It is suggested that the Church celebrates the 160th anniversary of the Catholic Evangelization in Taiwan by holding a National Eucharistic Procession.

Means:

1. After approval, the National Council of the Lay Apostolate will work out the dates for the opening and closing ceremony, the liturgical celebration and the organization of relevant details.
2. The Episcopal Commission for Sacred Liturgy and the Promotion Section of Eucharistic Devotion are requested to provide help whenever

necessary.

Resolution: The closing ceremony will be celebrated in the afternoon on Sunday, October 27, at the Cathedral of Kaohsiung Diocese. Each Diocese will send representatives to attend it.

III. Episcopal Commission for Doctrine of the Faith and Catechetical Instruction, Bible Apostolate:Promotion of “Bible Month” in each diocese helps the faithful to value generally the reading of the Bible and the applying of it to everyday life.

1. “Not in bread doth man live, but in every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” (Mt 4:4) And “The Word was with God, and the Word was God.”(Jn 1:1)
2. “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.” (Saint Jerome)

Explanation:

1. The aim of the “Bible Month” is to help the faithful to appreciate the reading of the Bible and the putting it to practice in everyday life; it is important to set it up a special time, just like the Month of Holy Souls in Purgatory, the Marian Month, the Lenten season and the Advent season, so that the faithful take the Word of God as the “rock” and see “enjoying Bible reading” as a normal practice, as a movement.
2. Through the diverse biblical activities of the “Bible Month”, the animator of the Bible Section in a parish council is to encourage the faithful to get in contact with the Bible and to get closer to the Word of God, so that they may love it more and live out the spirit of Gospel.

Means: 1.Bible reading cycle

Item	Options	Explanation
Month	The same month for all dioceses or each diocese decides it respectively	

Cycle	A month p.a.	4-5 weeks
Activities	Each parish decides respectively to have its own activities. They can be different from one year to another	
Responsible units	Diocese: Federation of the Bible Apostolate Parish: Bible Section	- Supported by Diocesan Council of Lay Apostolate - Supported by Parish Council

2.Activities:

- 1) Bible hand-copying by individuals, families or parishioners together: to offer it during the Mass and to share related experiences.
- 2) Bible oral reading:
 - (1) Reading orally a book of the Bible within a month by all parishioners after Mass. (Mandarin/Taiwanese/other mother tongues)
 - (2) At Sunday school and Parish Youth Group.
- 3) Testimony for the Word of Life.
- 4) Parish communion by biblical games.
- 5) Bible story-telling: group for adults, youth and children.
- 6) Lay people sharing the joy of Bible reading.
- 7) Specific talks on putting into practice the Word of God in everyday life.
- 8) Competition for Bible hard-pen calligraphy.

Resolution: Each diocese promotes according to its possibilities its own activities.

IV. The Episcopal Canon Law Society

A. Handbook of the CRBC for Priests in E-Book (Cf. attached document)

Explanation:

1. The Bishops' Conference published its Handbook for Priests on September 1 1995 and it provided basic guidelines on the pastoral work of a priest. However, 23 years have passed; it is necessary to publish a new version, to add other appropriate items especially regarding pastoral work, preserving its theological basis and putting therein some references from the Apostolic Exhortations over the years etc.
2. The bishops and priests are invited to collect proper new information on the doctrine of the Faith, family and liturgy. The Handbook still holds the position and the teaching of the Church as foundation; they will be quoted, concentrated and put in the new version. The content will be edited again.

Means: In recent years, the trend of our times of information, alongside with modern technologies, makes computer and Internet one of the paths for evangelization. In order to facilitate users reading, it is suggested that the amended version of Handbook for Priests can be presented as E-book and to be put on the website of the Bishops' Conference.

Resolution: Because the checking of the articles of the Handbook for Priests is not yet finished, the bishops will continue their discussion it at the Plenary Assembly of the Bishops' Conference in November, 2019.

B. The Canonical Seminar of 3 days, from Tuesday 19 to Thursday 21 November, 2019

Subject: Canonical Studies: about the *motu proprio* "MITIS IUDEX DOMINUS IESUS", unconsummated marriages and marriages in which the petrine privilege is exercised.

Explanation:

1. The proposal had been approved at the 2018 Episcopal Autumn Plenary Assembly. Regarding the number of attendees, in principle, each diocese invites its bishop to send 1 or 2 suitable priests undertaking canonical matters, and serving for the Taiwan Regional Tribunal of First and Second Instance. The bishops are also welcome to attend. The quota is in total 40 persons, including 25 Taiwanese bishops and priests and 15 priests from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau, engaged in canonical matters. They will gather together to discuss relevant issues.
2. It is planned that the budget of this Seminar is up to NTD 400,000, about NTD 10,000 per person.
3. Venue: Taipei-Missionary Sisters of Providence, Wen Cui Hall.
Address: 19 Sanmin Rd. Hsintien District, New Taipei City.

Means: The attendees will not be charged individually, and the registration and accommodation of the 15 priests from abroad is free of charge.

1. The cost for the Seminar will be shared equally according to the number of Taiwanese attendees (like the Ongoing Formation of Priests). The Bishops' Conference will send a document to each diocese, explaining that the cost of the Seminar will be paid by the diocese at the rate of the number of its attendees.
2. The cost will be shared equally by 6 dioceses (Taipei, Taichung, Chiayi, Tainan, Kaohsiung and Haulien, each diocese shares NTD 50,000), and the Hsinchu diocese will share individually NTD 100,000 and will fill the deficit.
3. The cost will be shared equally by 7 dioceses, each diocese shares NTD 57,000, and the deficit will be filled by the fund-raising of the Episcopal Canon Law Society.

Resolution: The costs will be shared equally by 6 dioceses (Taipei, Taichung, Chiayi, Tainan, Kaohsiung and Haulien, each diocese shares NTD 50,000), and the Hsinchu diocese will share individually NTD 100,000 and will fill the deficit.

V. Commission for Pastoral-Health Care**A. A “Code of Conduct for Catholic Hospitals” corresponding to the ethical rules of the Church is suggested to be formulated.****Explanation:**

1. Regulations such as Genetic Health Act and Patient Right to Autonomy Act do not correspond totally to the ethical rules of the Church; in the Catholic Hospitals, it happens sometimes that the medical staff, in the exercise of their profession, follows Taiwanese Law but violates the ethical rules of the Church.
2. In order that Catholic Hospitals follow the ethical rules of the Church in the exercise of their profession, it is urgent to set up a standard operating procedure as to help those who work in the Catholic Hospitals.

Means: The Commission for Pastoral-Health Care is entrusted to convene the Meeting of Presidents of All Catholic Hospitals in Taiwan, in order to study, discuss and amend the “Code of Conduct for Catholic Hospitals.” It will be sent to the Bishops' Conference the Plenary Assembly in Autumn, 2019, for examination.

Resolution: Approved.

B. The spiritual care program in hospice and palliative care has been speedily promoted in Taiwan in consecutive steps from hospice inpatient units to long-term care service. In the future, it will focus on the holistic care of a person, which means that the hospice and palliative care worker must take into consideration the physical, mental, social and especially spiritual needs of a person. In order that the public and the

faithful understand the Catholic approach to spiritual care of hospice and palliative care and the importance and the contribution the Catholic Church pays to it, it is necessary for us to sing the same tune: to explain to the public and to start the training of spiritual caregivers alongside with the supporting measures.

Explanation:

1. The spiritual care program in hospice and palliative care has been promoted in Taiwan for 30 years from hospice inpatient units to long-term care service. In recent years, it is promoted also in the community, which means that the hospice and palliative care worker must take into consideration the physical, mental, social and especially spiritual needs of a person. In the foreign countries, spiritual caregivers are 90 percent Christians; according to the present condition of Taiwan, the large majority of the certified spiritual caregivers will be Buddhist and Taoist Masters. Several years ago, Fo Guang Shan has accepted the suggestion of Cardinal Shan to open schools and let the Buddhist Masters go into the campus for teaching, and form proactively Masters and Doctors in religious studies.
2. The spiritual caregivers of hospice and palliative care will be widely needed in the future. According to the law, they are the most needed professional personnel in all long-term care services and retirement centers, about 10,000 job vacancies.
3. In Taiwan, many priests and religious sisters are engaged in long-term care service and hospice and palliative care work for many years, but the government does not have a relevant official certification system for it. In the future, at A-Class long-term care facility, a certain proportion of personnel must be set for spiritual caregivers; however, there are no specific regulations for a facility of B-Class and C-Class. In order to get certified, the spiritual caregiver joining the formation must practice their internship at a B-Class and above facility.(At C-Class facility, the

turnover rate is high; at A-Class A or B-Class facility, issues of death and dying can be more easily addressed.)

Means:

1. The Catholic Church has made industrious and diligent efforts in the field of social works and social welfare in the society of Taiwan. With this dynamism, the local Church will gather the core personnel of all Catholic hospitals, clinics, social welfare services, long-term care services and retirement centers and will convene a promotional seminar on hospice and palliative care in the community. This internal seminar will be held in Taipei, in the Central building, from 10:00 to 12:00 in the morning on May 8, 2019.
2. It is hoped that before the 30th Anniversary of Hospice and Palliative Care in Taiwan and the International Spiritual Care Seminar (at Tri-Service General Hospital, on June 30, 2019 in the morning), the local Church, together with the Health Promotion Administration, will convene a press conference to announce that all the Catholic hospitals, clinics, and social welfare services will make intensive efforts to promote the Formation of Spiritual Caregivers and the Non-governmental Program of Propaganda on Hospice and Palliative Care, in order to accomplish the mission to serve Taiwan and to give care to the local cities.
3. The supporting measures for promoting the Policy of Spiritual Caregiver on hospice and palliative care (the ongoing formation for professionals and supervisors):
 - A. After professional training, a certificate will be delivered to the trainee who will work under the supervision of his supervisor.
 - B. Once a spiritual caregiver serves for more than 300 hours, he/she can apply for becoming a supervisor in internship; after serving as this for more than 200 hours, he/she will become a formal

supervisor.

C. Spiritual Care Related Courses will be added to the Master in-Service Program of the Graduate Schools of Religious Studies in Fu-jen University and of Fu Jen Faculty of Theology of St. Robert Bellarmine.

Resolution: Approved.

VI. Taiwan Catholic Regional Seminary: Arrangement of formation phases for the second semester of 2019

Subject: To make the program of priestly formation corresponding to a progressive procedure

Explanation: Through the specially arranged topics of the Spiritual Year and the Philosophical Years, the seminarians are assisted to prepare the formation of their own healthy personality. When they complete the Philosophical Years, they will join the CPE courses and at the same time prepare themselves for parish pastoral services. After the CPE courses, they begin the *Probatio*; after the end of *Probatio*, they can have a one-month long retreat. According to the explanation of No. 67 in “*The Gift of the Priestly Vocation*” (or “*Ratio Fundamentalis*”), the Rite of Acceptance will be celebrated in the beginning of Theological Years.

“At the end of the stage of philosophical studies, or discipleship, having reached an adequate inner freedom and maturity, the seminarian should be possessed of the means necessary to begin the journey, with serenity and joy. This will lead him to a greater configuration to Christ in the vocation to ordained ministry. Indeed, after this stage, it will be possible to admit the seminarian among the candidates for Orders (petition or candidacy, etc), when it is deemed that his intention, marked by the required qualities, has reached sufficient maturity. For her part, in accepting the seminarian who offers himself, the Church chooses him and calls him so that he may prepare to receive Holy Orders in the future. Since it presupposes a responsible

decision on the part of the seminarian, admission among the candidates for Orders is an invitation for him to continue with his formation, in configuring himself to Christ the Shepherd, through a formal recognition on the part of the Church.” (“*Ratio Fundamentalis*” no.67)

Resolution: Approved. List out the amended articles of the Formation Handbook of Taiwan Catholic Regional Seminary and make a report for the next Plenary Assembly of the Bishops’ Conference.

VII. Diocese of Chiayi

A. The disposal of the surplus budget of Taiwan Eucharistic Congress

Explanation:

1. See the balance sheet of the 4th Taiwan Eucharistic Congress in 2019 (cf. attached document)
2. It is suggested to divide the surplus into 3 equal parts for:
 - 1) The organizer, the Bishops’ Conference, in order to cover the various expenditures of its operation.
 - 2) The Promotion Section of Eucharistic Worship of the Episcopal Commission for Sacred Liturgy: the funds for the preparation and operation of the Taiwan Eucharistic Congress.
 - 3) The host diocese of each Taiwan Eucharistic Congress: the continuation and development of the work of evangelization.
3. It is hoped to set up a positive and proactive attitude and institution.
4. In order to encourage the host diocese to promote diligently the catechism and worship on the Eucharist, to do its best to collect resources and to economize on expenditures for holding the event. It is hoped that through the zeal enkindled by Taiwan Eucharistic Congress and the resources it has made, the work of evangelization of the host diocese can be

supported.

5. According to the analysis, the donation of the recent Taiwan Eucharistic Congress comes mostly from the faithful of the host diocese.
6. The surplus budget of this Taiwan Eucharistic Congress is NTD 4,229,157; one third of it is NTD 1,409,719.

Resolution: Approved.

B. It is suggested that during the period of preparation for the Taiwan Eucharistic Congress, the Promotion Section of Eucharistic Worship of the Episcopal Commission for Sacred Liturgy will subscribe 100 copies of Catholic Weekly for a whole year in order to publicize and promote the relevant activities of the host diocese.

Explanation:

1. The promotion of Taiwan Eucharistic Congress has been very smooth thanks to its propaganda. Besides the electronic media and the Internet, the print media are also very important. For example, the Catholic Weekly plays an important role of it in each diocese and in the Chinese speaking areas.
2. The Catholic Weekly, with all its effort, cooperates with the organizer and the host diocese, providing adequate space to publicize information on Taiwan Eucharistic Congress and its related activities, including sharing and testimony of the faithful on Eucharistic Spirituality.
3. Teaching Group of the Catechism on the Holy Eucharist went to different places to give thematic talks. The content were all published at the Catholic Weekly.

VIII. Taiwan Catholic Scout Committee

Cause: In order to be operational and to organize activities each diocese will be invited to support the expenditures of Taiwan Catholic Scout.

Explanation:

1. The Committee follows the resolution of the Bishops' Conference; it expands proactively the organization of the Taiwan Catholic Scout and by means of its operation.
2. The Committee went to Thailand in 2018 to apply for joining in Asia-Pacific Regional Catholic Scout Conference; it went also to Rome to apply for joining in the International Catholic Conference of Scouting. Both organizations have approved its application. All necessary expenses will be paid by the Hsinchu diocese.
3. The Committee is a mission-oriented organization and needs urgently financial supports for its development and expenditures for operation. It has applied from the Association of Development of Catholic School Matters for financial support in 2018 and has got the approval of its standing committee; however, when the proposal was submitted to the Plenary Assembly, some schools were against it and the final result was negative, so that the Committee must look for help elsewhere.
4. Please see the attached document: the program and the budget of the Committee in 2019.

Means:

1. In the beginning of the operation of Taiwan Catholic Scout Committee, it is suggested to approve that each diocese draws yearly NTD 50,000 to set up an particular account, that the Episcopal Conference helps to handle its income and expenditure accounting, facilitating its operation afterwards.
2. Once the operation of the Committee goes well on the trail, some expenditure can be coped with the scout registration and the event registration fee.

Resolution: The Diocese of Hsinchu will see to the finances of Taiwan

Catholic Scout Committee, and the financial support of other Dioceses is welcome.

Extraordinary motion:

Episcopal Commission for Evangelization

Preparatory work for Taiwan National Evangelization Congress

Explanation: In order to prepare the Taiwan National Evangelization Congress, the Bishops' Conference has to set up an ad-hoc committee for the contact with all the dioceses for the preparatory work and to coordinate the different practical tasks of the Congress. The Bishops' Conference will consult the results shown in the statistics, the schedule and the methodology proposed by the Fu-Jen Team. (Please see attached document)

Resolution: To set up a Central Committee for the National Evangelization Congress of which the members are as follows (according to the following picture):

- Archbishop John Hung (President of the Episcopal Conference and Director of the Episcopal Commission for Evangelization) as convener;
- Fr. Otfried Chan (Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference);
- Preparatory teams/committee of the dioceses;
- Representatives of AMRSMW (1 male and 1 female);
- Lei-Shih Chen, President of National Council of the Lay Apostolate;
- Representative of Fu-jeu Faculty of Theology of St. Bellarmine;
- Professor Wen-Ban Kuo;
- Director Magdalena Lu;
- Fr. Attilio Rossi, SVD (CEO);

- Ms. Shimin Yuan (Executive Secretary of the Episcopal Commission for Evangelization and Vice CEO).

Memorandum:

I. The Episcopal Conference and the AMRSMW Joint Meeting (The Women Religious Communities will host the meeting)

Date: 10:00 am, Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Venue: Taipei Central Building, 5/F,m 2, Chungshang North Road, Section 1,

Promotional Seminar of Hospice and Palliative Care in the Community convened by core personnel of all Catholic clinics, hospitals, social welfare services, long-term care services and retirement centers

Date: 10:00-12:00 am, Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Venue: Taipei Central Building

The 30th Anniversary of Hospice and Palliative Care in Taiwan and the International Spiritual Care Seminar, together with the Health Promotion Administration, will convene a press conference (seminar)

Date: June 30th, in the morning (the precise time slot has not yet been decided) Venue: Tri-Service General Hospital

II. Standing Committee of the Bishops' Conference in November

Date: 15:00, Wednesday, October 30, 2019

Venue: CRBC Administrative Building

III. Plenary Assembly of the Bishops' Conference in November

Dates: Tuesday – Thursday, November 26-28, 2019

Venue: CRBC Administrative Building

Sixth Anniversary of the Pontificate of His Holiness Pope Francis

Taipei, 5 July 2019, 18:30

Msgr. Slađan Ćosić

Chargé d’Affaires a.i. of the Apostolic Nunciature

Your Excellency Vice President Chen Chien-jen,
 President of the CRBC, Archbishop Hung
 Deputy Minister Hsu,
 President of the Control Yuan Dr. Po-ya,
 Honourable Ministers,
 Honourable Members of the Legislative and Control Yuan,
 President of Academia Sinica Dr. Liao,
 Excellencies Ambassadors and honourable Representatives,
 Dear Bishops,
 Religious Leaders and Representatives,
 Reverend Fathers and Sisters,
 Dear Friends,

Good evening!

The Sixth Anniversary of the Pontificate of His Holiness Pope Francis – the celebration we keep this evening – is for me an occasion of joy and gratitude, for it allows me – once more, at the same time and place – to meet and greet many people of good will, usually called friends! Since we are such

good friends, I am quite confident you will not mind if I say a few words – hopefully inspirational! – about one of our friends par excellence, namely Pope Francis. After all, it is the Anniversary of his election that we celebrate.

Indeed, there are many reasons to celebrate the Anniversary of the Pontificate of Pope Francis. This evening, I would like to recall three reasons which hold equally for the world, society and the Church.

1. For the world

We are living in a time when the community of nations is facing a number of challenges that endanger peace and stability in many countries and entire regions. In the Christian vision, peace is the first gift of the Risen Jesus [Cf. Jn 20:19], and bringing peace is central to the mission of Jesus’ first disciples: “Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house!’” [Lk 10:5]. Teaching and promoting peace is also central to the Pontificate of Pope Francis. In a world in search of peace, the Pope enlightens us about the original nature of peace: “Peace is at once a gift of God and the fruit of free and reasonable human acts aimed at pursuing the common good in truth and love” [Address to the Council of Europe, Nov 25, 2014].

2. For the society

Our society is also affected by a number of diseases, imposing an enormous burden on the daily lives of many individuals and groups of people. Pope Francis has openly denounced those diseases and encouraged a positive transformation of society by rejecting injustice and creating solutions so as to build “inclusive and fair societies, capable of restoring dignity to those living in great uncertainty who cannot dream of a better world” [Message to the VIII World Social Forum on Migrants, October 26, 2018].

3. For the Church

Pope Francis has special solicitude for the needs of the Catholic Church. One of these is the need to go out to the peripheries. There are two reasons for this

call. The first reason is a practical one having to do with the Pope Francis' conviction that "the great changes in history were realized when reality was seen not from the centre but rather from the periphery" [A. Spadaro, "Wake up the World!" Conversation of Pope Francis about Religious Life]. The second reason is of a pastoral nature: The Church needs to reach out to those who live in the peripheries of existence "so that they may find in Jesus the centre of their life and the source of hope" [Homily, March 21, 2015].

Dear Friends, I am telling you all this to simply point out that, despite everything, the signs of hope surround the world, society, Church and each one of us. If it wasn't so, we would not be able to move forward even for one single day. People generally agree that the Pontificate of Pope Francis is an eloquent sign of hope.

Under his wise guidance, the Holy See is incessantly promoting peace in the world, and highly appreciates the position of countries, such as Taiwan, committed to maintaining peace and stability within their borders, across the region and at the international level. This is a way to make it clear that our profound identity and our sublime vocation is fraternity – to be brothers and our brother's keeper [Cf. Francis, Message for World Day of Peace 2014].

In this regard, allow me to mention the name of Venerable Master Jing Yao, president of the BAROC and of the TCRP. Inspired by Pope Francis' commitment in the promotion of peace and dialogue among religions, he recently led a delegation to the Holy See. I do really hope that your encounter with the Holy Father, though it was very short, will encourage a greater inter-religious collaboration in safekeeping and promotion of peace here and everywhere.

The Pontificate of Pope Francis is a great sign of hope for the less privileged members of the society or the voiceless – as he calls them – such as migrants, refugees, displaced persons, victims of human trafficking and all those whom

society ignores, exploits, rapes and abuses.

In this regard, I thank the R.O.C. (Taiwan) for sponsoring the International Conference focusing on the Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking held in Rome last April. Later this month an International Workshop on Combating Human Trafficking will be held in Taipei, with the participation of the Holy See's representatives and Caritas Internationalis. All this shows the existing cooperation in this field and in many other areas as well. Taiwan remains a very committed and trustworthy partner at the national, regional and international level. This is something the world should be grateful for! This is something you all should be proud of!

The Pontificate of Pope Francis is also a sign of hope for the Church in Taiwan. I have always appreciated the efforts undertaken by this local Church aiming at the witnessing of an authentic Catholic faith through concrete and valued initiatives in favour of all people in need. During your visit ad Limina, Pope Francis encouraged you to go out and proclaim the Gospel with even more enthusiasm and conviction, always respecting the others and protecting your values, principles – and properties as well!

Dear Friends, I do really believe that the Pontificate of Pope Francis is a sign of hope for all people of good will. If it wasn't so, this celebration would not have much sense.

After meeting Pope Francis, a Minister of Foreign Affairs of one country said: "The Holy Father was everything that people said he was. His sincerity and great love for people clearly came through, from the way he interacted with the large crowd at St. Peter's Square." In the middle of this room, we all admire an ice-carving of St. Peter's Square and Basilica. I invite you to imagine Pope Francis being there and telling you: "Peace is the language we must speak", and "Don't let anyone rob you of hope". And please, pray for him, in your own way, so that God may protect, guide and sustain him in his service for the benefit of the world, society, the Church and each one of us.

And now, allow me to thank all those who have worked with me to prepare this celebration. They are: Fr. Giuseppe Silvestrini, Fr. Otfried Chan, our Sisters, Secretary and Staff members. A special word of thanks and gratitude goes to our sponsors, namely: Mr. T. Lin, Vice Chairman of the Board of Hua Nan Bank; Mr. Franz Chen, Founding Chairman CEO of Asia-Pacific Cultural Creative Industry Association; CRBC and PMS. Your generous support is a sign of your deep friendship and of your affection for the Holy Father. May God reward and bless you!

Dear Friends, I am so sorry for being a bit longer than you expected. But this is the last time I am hosting this celebration. In fact, I have decided, in agreement with my Superiors, to leave Taiwan by the end of this month, and to go back home to begin a new page in my life. I remain priest – and even Monsignor – and most probably will serve as Vicar General of my Archdiocese.

Someone said: “A diplomat thinks twice before saying nothing!” I can say, without even thinking, that Taiwan, the people of Taiwan, and each one of you will always have a special place in my heart! I will always consider you as my friends. And since good friends are hard to find, harder to leave and impossible to forget, instead of being sad, let us look forward to meeting again here and wherever God will bring us together. “The show must go on”, and so another colleague will come to Taiwan very soon, and take over my position. I have no doubt you will welcome him with great affection and support.

From the bottom of my heart, I say: Thank you for everything! May God bless you all!

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Third World Day of The Poor

34th Sunday in Ordinary Time
17 November 2019

The hope of the poor shall not perish for ever

1. “The hope of the poor will not perish for ever” (Ps 9:19). These words of the Psalm remain timely. They express a profound truth that faith impresses above all on the hearts of the poor, restoring lost hope in the face of injustice, sufferings and the uncertainties of life.

The Psalmist describes the condition of the poor and the arrogance of those who oppress them (cf. 10, 1-10). He invokes God’s judgment to restore justice and overcome evil (cf. 10, 14-15). In his words, we hear an echo of age-old questions. How can God tolerate this disparity? How can he let the poor be humiliated without coming to their aid? Why does he allow oppressors to prosper instead of condemning their conduct, especially in the light of the sufferings of the poor?

The Psalm was composed at a time of great economic development that, as often happens, also led to serious social imbalances. The inequitable distribution of wealth created a significant number of poor people, whose condition appeared all the more dramatic in comparison with the wealth attained by a privileged few. The Psalmist, observing the situation, paints a picture as realistic as it is true.

It was a time when arrogant and ungodly people hounded the poor, seeking to take possession even of what little they had, and to reduce them to bondage. The situation is not much different today. The economic crisis has not prevented large groups of people from accumulating fortunes

that often appear all the more incongruous when, in the streets of our cities, we daily encounter great numbers of the poor who lack the bare necessities of life and are at times harassed and exploited. The words of Book of Revelation come to mind: “You say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing. You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked” (Rev 3:17). The centuries pass, but the condition of rich and poor remains constant, as if history has taught us nothing. The words of the Psalm, then, are not about the past, but about our present, as it stands before God’s judgement.

2. Today too, we must acknowledge many new forms of bondage that enslave millions of men, women, young people and children.

Daily we encounter families forced to leave their homeland to seek a living elsewhere; orphans who have lost their parents or were violently torn from them by brutal means of exploitation; young people seeking professional fulfilment but prevented from employment by shortsighted economic policies; victims of different kinds of violence, ranging from prostitution to the narcotics trade, and profoundly demeaned. How can we overlook, too, the millions of immigrants who fall victim to any number of concealed interests, often exploited for political advantage, and are refused solidarity and equality? And all the homeless and ostracized persons who roam the streets of our cities?

How many times do we see poor people rummaging through garbage bins to retrieve what others have discarded as superfluous, in the hope of finding something to live on or to wear! They themselves become part of a human garbage bin; they are treated as refuse, without the slightest sense of guilt on the part of those who are complicit in this scandal. Frequently judged parasites on society, the poor are not even forgiven their poverty. Judgment is always around the corner. They are not allowed to be timid or discouraged; they are seen as a threat or simply useless, simply because they are poor.

To make matters worse, they can see no end to the tunnel of extreme poverty. We have come to the point of devising a hostile architecture aimed at ridding the streets of their presence, the last places left to them. They roam from one end of the city to the other in the hope of getting a job, a home, a sign of affection... The least offer becomes a ray of light; yet even where justice might be expected to prevail, they meet with violence and abuse. Forced to work endless hours under a burning sun to gather seasonal fruits, they receive ridiculously low pay. They labour in unsafe and inhuman conditions that prevent them from feeling on a par with others. They lack unemployment compensation, benefits, or even provision for sickness.

The Psalmist describes with brutal realism the attitude of the rich who rob the poor: “They lie in wait that they may seize the poor... and drag them off in their net” (cf. Ps 10:9). As in a hunt, the poor are trapped, captured and enslaved. As a result, many of them become disheartened, hardened and anxious only to drop out of sight. In a word, we see before us a multitude of poor people often maligned and barely tolerated. They become for all effects invisible and their voice is no longer heard or heeded in society. Men and women who are increasingly strangers amid our houses and outcasts in our neighborhoods.

3. The setting of the Psalm is tinged with sadness at the injustice, the suffering and the disappointment endured by the poor. At the same time, it offers a touching definition of the poor: they are those who “put their trust in the Lord” (cf. v. 10), in the certainty that they will never be forsaken. In the Scriptures, the poor are those who trust! The Psalmist also gives the reason for this trust: they “know” the Lord (cf. *ibid.*). In the language of the Bible, such “knowledge” involves a personal relationship of affection and love.

Impressive and completely unexpected as this description is, it simply expresses the grandeur of God, as shown in the way he relates to the

poor. His creative power surpasses all human expectations and is shown in his being “mindful” of each individual (cf. v. 13). It is precisely this confidence in the Lord, this certainty of not being forsaken, that inculcates hope. The poor know that God cannot abandon them; hence, they live always in the presence of the God who is mindful of them. God’s help extends beyond their present state of suffering in order to point out a path of liberation that profoundly strengthens and transforms the heart.

4. Scripture constantly speaks of God acting on behalf of the poor. He is the one who “hears” their cry” and “comes to their aid”; he “protects” and “defends” them; he “rescues” and “saves” them... Indeed, the poor will never find God indifferent or silent in the face of their plea. God is the one who renders justice and does not forget (cf. Ps 40:18; 70:6); he is their refuge and he never fails to come to their assistance (cf. Ps 10:14).

We can build any number of walls and close our doors in the vain effort to feel secure in our wealth, at the expense of those left outside. It will not be that way for ever. The “day of the Lord”, as described by the prophets (cf. Am 5:18; Is 2-5; Jl 1-3), will destroy the barriers created between nations and replace the arrogance of the few with the solidarity of many. The marginalization painfully experienced by millions of persons cannot go on for long. Their cry is growing louder and embraces the entire earth. In the words of Father Primo Mazzolari: “the poor are a constant protest against our injustices; the poor are a powder keg. If it is set on fire, the world will explode”.

5. We can never elude the urgent appeal that Scripture makes on behalf of the poor. Wherever we look, the word of God points to the poor, those who lack the necessities of life because they depend on others. They are the oppressed, the lowly and the downcast. Yet, faced with countless throngs of the poor, Jesus was not afraid to identify with each of them: “Whatever you did to one of the least of these my brethren, you did to me” (Mt 25:40). If we refuse to make this identification, we falsify the

Gospel and water down God’s revelation. The God that Jesus came to reveal is a Father who is generous, merciful, unailing in his goodness and grace. He gives hope especially to those who are disillusioned and lacking in hope for the future.

How can we fail to note that the Beatitudes with which Jesus began his preaching of the kingdom of God open with the words: “Blessed are you who are poor” (Lk 6:20)? The meaning of this paradoxical message is that the kingdom of God belongs to the poor because they are in a position to receive it. How many poor people do we encounter each day! It seems that the passage of time and the advances of civilization increase their numbers rather than diminishing them. Centuries go by and the Beatitude appears even more paradoxical: the poor are always poorer, and today they are poorer than ever. Yet Jesus who inaugurated his kingdom by placing the poor at the centre, wanted to tell us precisely this: he inaugurated the kingdom, but he has entrusted to us, his disciples, the task of carrying it forward with responsibility for giving hope to the poor. Especially at times like our own, there is a need to revive hope and to restore confidence. This responsibility is not something that the Christian community may underestimate. The credibility of our proclamation and the witness of Christians depends on it.

6. In closeness to the poor, the Church comes to realize that she is one people, spread throughout many nations and called to ensure that no one feels a stranger or outcast, for she includes everyone in a shared journey of salvation. The situation of the poor obliges us not to keep our distance from the body of the Lord, who suffers in them. Instead, we are called to touch his flesh and to be personally committed in offering a service that is an authentic form of evangelization. Commitment to the promotion of the poor, including their social promotion, is not foreign to the proclamation of the Gospel. On the contrary, it manifests the realism of Christian faith and its historical validity. The love that gives life to faith in Jesus makes it

impossible for his disciples to remain enclosed in a stifling individualism or withdrawn into small circles of spiritual intimacy, with no influence on social life (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 183).

Recently, we were saddened by the death of a great apostle of the poor, Jean Vanier, whose dedication opened up new ways of showing solidarity with the marginalized and working for their advancement. God gave Jean Vanier the gift of devoting his entire life to our brothers and sisters with grave disabilities, people whom society often tends to exclude. He was one of those saints “next door”; thanks to his enthusiasm, he gathered around himself great numbers of young people, men and women, who worked daily to give love and restore a smile to many vulnerable persons, offering them a true “ark” of salvation from marginalization and solitude. His witness changed the life of countless persons and helped the world to look differently at those less fortunate than ourselves. The cry of the poor was heard and produced an unwavering hope, creating visible and tangible signs of a concrete love that even today we can touch with our hands.

7. “The option for those who are least, those whom society discards” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 195) is a priority that Christ’s followers are called to pursue, so as not to impugn the Church’s credibility but to give real hope to many of our vulnerable brothers and sisters. Christian charity finds concrete expression in them, for by their compassion and their willingness to share the love of Christ with those in need, they are themselves strengthened and confirm the preaching of the Gospel.

The involvement of Christians in this World Day of the Poor and especially in the events of everyday life, goes beyond initiatives of assistance. Praiseworthy and necessary as the latter may be, they should have the goal of encouraging in everyone a greater concern for individuals in any kind of distress. “Loving attentiveness is the beginning of true concern” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 199) for the poor and the promotion of their genuine welfare. It is not easy to be witnesses of Christian hope in

the context of a consumerist culture, a culture of waste concerned only for the spread of a shallow and ephemeral wellbeing. A change of mentality is needed, in order to rediscover what is essential and to give substance and verve to the preaching of the kingdom of God.

Hope is also communicated by the sense of fulfilment born of accompanying the poor not for a brief moment of enthusiasm, but through a constant commitment over time. The poor acquire genuine hope, not from seeing us gratified by giving them a few moments of our time, but from recognizing in our sacrifice an act of gratuitous love that seeks no reward.

8. I ask the many volunteers, who merit recognition for being the first to see the importance of such concern for the poor, to persevere in their dedicated service. Dear brothers and sisters, I encourage you to seek, in every poor person whom you encounter, his or her true needs, not to stop at their most obvious material needs, but to discover their inner goodness, paying heed to their background and their way of expressing themselves, and in this way to initiate a true fraternal dialogue. Let us set aside the divisions born of ideological and political positions, and instead fix our gaze on what is essential, on what does not call for a flood of words, but a gaze of love and an outstretched hand. Never forget that “the worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 200).

Before all else, the poor need God and his love, made visible by “the saints next door”, people who by the simplicity of their lives express clearly the power of Christian love. God uses any number of ways and countless means to reach people’s hearts. Certainly, the poor come to us also because we give them food, but what they really need is more than our offer of a warm meal or a sandwich. The poor need our hands, to be lifted up; our hearts, to feel anew the warmth of affection; our presence, to overcome loneliness. In a word, they need love.

9. At times, very little is needed to restore hope. It is enough to stop for a moment, smile and listen. For once, let us set statistics aside: the poor are not statistics to cite when boasting of our works and projects. The poor are persons to be encountered; they are lonely, young and old, to be invited to our homes to share a meal; men women and children who look for a friendly word. The poor save us because they enable us to encounter the face of Jesus Christ.

In the eyes of the world, it seems illogical to think that poverty and need can possess saving power. Yet that is the teaching of the Apostle, who tells us: “Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God” (1 Cor 1:26-29). Looking at things from a human standpoint, we fail to see this saving power, but with the eyes of faith, we see it at work and experience it personally. In the heart of the pilgrim People of God there beats that saving power which excludes no one and involves everyone in a real journey pilgrimage of conversion, to recognize the poor and to love them.

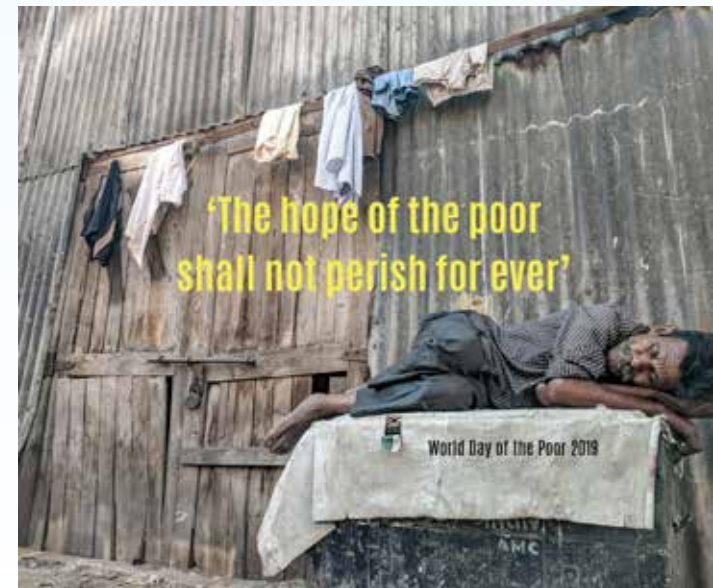
10. The Lord does not abandon those who seek him and call upon his name: “He does not forget the cry of the poor” (Ps 9:12), for his ears are attentive to their voice. The hope of the poor defies deadly situations, for the poor know that they are especially loved by God, and this is stronger than any suffering or exclusion. Poverty does not deprive them of their God-given dignity; they live in the certainty that it will be fully restored to them by God himself, who is not indifferent to the lot of his lowliest sons and daughters. On the contrary, he sees their struggles and sorrows, he takes them by the hand, and he gives them strength and courage (cf. Ps 10:14). The hope of the poor is confirmed in the certainty that their voice

is heard by the Lord, that in him they will find true justice, that their hearts will be strengthened and continue to love (cf. Ps 10:17).

If the disciples of the Lord Jesus wish to be genuine evangelizers, they must sow tangible seeds of hope. I ask all Christian communities, and all those who feel impelled to offer hope and consolation to the poor, to help ensure that this World Day of the Poor will encourage more and more people to cooperate effectively so that no one will feel deprived of closeness and solidarity. May you always treasure the words of the prophet who proclaims a different future: “For you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings” (Mal 3:20 [4:2]).

From the Vatican, 13 June 2019

Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua



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