INTERNATIONALE ALTKATHOLISCHE BISCHOFSKONFERENZ DER UTRECHTER UNION

Communiqué of the International Old Catholic Bishops' Conference | Bonn (Germany) | 2022

1. Comment on Joint Declaration about Doctrine of Justification

At our meeting in Bonn (from June 20th to 24th 2022) we discussed the *'Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church'* from 1999, extended to include the *'Declaration of the Notre Dame Conference of 2019'.*

We welcome these ecumenical milestones which have overcome the mutual condemnations in the Western churches of teachings and persons of the 16th century. We acknowledge that the real issue in the question of the doctrine of justification can be regarded soteriologically in various ways and therefore may not divide the churches.

We will endeavour to support this procedure in other areas of ecumenical work too, and above all to make it fruitful in our own dialogues.

We thank Professor Dr. Michael Seewald and Professor Dr. Andreas Krebs for their valuable input to our deliberations.

2. Christian Marriage

In order to reflect on Christian marriage and the varying social situations of our member churches, we listened to presentations and had a lively discussion. As guest speakers Dr. Malcolm Brown from the Anglican Church and Dr. Konstantinos Vliagkoftis from the Orthodox church took part. On the basis of this reflection, we defined elements for a pastoral letter.

3. Concern about the ongoing violation of human rights in the Philippines

We express our concern about the ongoing violation of human rights in the Philippines. The first female bishop in the Philippine Independent Church (IFI), *Bishop Emelyn Gasco-Dacuycuy* and three members of her clergy are among the latest victims of 'RED TAGGING' in the Philippines, likewise the unjustly imprisoned lay member, Aldeem Yanez. We will remember them in our prayers and we support our sisters and brothers in their work towards justice and peace.

4. Joy about meeting in person and new participants

For the first time since 2019 (due to Corona restrictions) the International Old Catholic Bishops' Conference was able to meet in person. We welcomed Bishop Martin Lind from the Church of Sweden, Bishop Mark Edington from the American Episcopal Church in Europe (TEC) and Bishop Antonio Ablon from the Philippine Independent Church (IFI) as new representatives from our full communion partner churches.

As usual, the first part of the conference took place together with the Anglican Bishops in Europe. Central issues were discussions on the effects of Corona and of the war in Ukraine. We support the declaration of the *WCC central committee's statement concerning the war in Ukraine* (https://www.oikoumene.org/de/news/wcc-central-committee-statement-

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1

on-war-in-ukraine-war-with-the-killing-and-all-the-other-miserable-consequences-it-entails-is-incompatible-with-gods-very-nature).

5. Looking forward

5.1 From 1st to 4th September 2022 the *next International Old Catholic Congress* will take place in Bonn. Everyone is invited (www.iak2022.de).

5.2 Archbishop Bernd Wallet as President of the IBC and Bishop Harald Rein as their secretary will take part in the *Lambeth Conference* in July 2022 in Canterbury.

5.3 Under the motto 'Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity', delegates from 349 member churches from all over the world will come together in August/September 2022 in Karlsruhe for the *Assembly of the World Council of Churches*. The Old Catholic confessional family will be represented there by five delegates with the right to vote and 2 delegates without the right to vote.

6. Next Session

The next ordinary session of the International Old Catholic Bishops' Conference will take place on 23rd to 28th June 2023 in Vienna.

Utrecht and Bern,
June 24, 2022

From left to right: Bishop Robert Innes, Bishop Antonio Ablon, Bishop Dirk Jan Schoon, Bishop Mark Eddington, Archbishop Bernd Wallet, Bishop Harald Rein, Bishop Heinz Lederleitner, Bishop Martin Lind, Bishop Mike Klusmeyer.

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2