



## **Message from the FABC General Conference to the Peoples of Asia**

Baan Phu Waan, Bangkok, 12-30 October 2022

We, the Pastors of the Catholic Church in Asia, share this message of joy, hope, and solidarity with you, Peoples of Asia. We are grateful for the blessings that God has showered on Asia through our Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) comprising 17 Episcopal Conferences and two Synods of Oriental Churches. "Journeying together as Peoples of Asia" was the theme of our conference in which we sought to reaffirm our journey of the past 50 years, revitalize the Church, and envision new pathways of service.

We are deeply thankful to the Royal Thai Government for the warm welcome and for honoring our general conference with the presence of the Minister of Culture during the opening ceremony. We express our deep appreciation to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Thailand, especially the Archdiocese of Bangkok, for hosting the FABC 50 General Conference. We were happy to have with us representatives of the Holy See and other Continental Conferences. It was a fruitful time of praying, listening, discerning, and encouraging each other. It was also a moment of healing from the pain caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Through our discussions and deliberations at the conference, we touched the soul of Asia. At the same time, we were inspired by the hope, courage, and determination shown by the Churches in Asia to journey together and work with more dedication for a better Asia.

We were challenged by the different voices of our multifaceted continent that we hear crying out for help and justice:

- the sufferings of the poor, deprived, and marginalized longing for a dignified life,
- the anguish of refugees, migrants, displaced, and indigenous peoples seeking genuine human dignity and safe places,



- the groaning of nature with wounds of exploitation, climate change, and global warming, pleading for being more adequately cared for,
- the dream of youth seeking for more significant roles in the Church and society,
- the voices of women asking for a more inclusive Church that respects their dignity and recognizes their rightful place,
- the desire of families looking for better stability and more support from all.

We are also deeply concerned about:

- the pain and suffering of some churches that need to receive relief through our empathy and solidarity;
- the rising voices of extremism that needs to be responded to wisely;
- the urgent need for a greater respect for life to be inculcated in society;
- the escalating violence and conflicts in our continent that call for dialogue and reconciliation;
- a society that is challenged by the digital revolution, which has impacted all both positively and negatively.

In prayer and in a spirit of collaboration, we desire to respond to these challenges by relying on the power of love, compassion, justice, and forgiveness. We believe that peace and reconciliation is the only way forward. We have envisaged new pathways for our ministry based on mutual listening and genuine discernment.

Inspired by the Gospel and by the recent teachings of Pope Francis:

- We commit ourselves to reach out to the peripheries. We are called to serve the most needy joyfully.
- We are called to a pastoral and ecological conversion to positively respond to “both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”
- We wish to live out the spirit of complementarity and harmony by listening to others in genuine dialogue.



- We seek to promote a culture of peace and harmony in collaboration with our brothers and sisters of neighboring religions and traditions.
- We commit ourselves to bridge-building not just among religions and traditions but also by principled engagement with government, NGOs, and civic organizations on issues of human rights, eradication of poverty, human trafficking, care of the earth, and other common concerns.
- We need to transform ourselves by fostering a culture of “reciprocal listening” where we listen to each other and all of us listen to the voice of God.
- We thus intend to improve the way we form ourselves in faith and accompany our families and communities, especially those in difficulty.

By journeying together along these pathways, we will serve the world with greater commitment. We assure our people of this continent that the Catholic Church in Asia will always work for a better Asia and the good of all our people. As we assure you of our prayers, we humbly ask you to remember us in your prayers. Together we journey at the service of the human family and all creation.

Given in Bangkok, Thailand, on 30 October 2022

✠ CHARLES CARDINAL BO S.D.B.  
*President of FABC*

✠ OSWALD CARDINAL GRACIAS  
*Convener of FABC 50 General Conference*

✠ FRANCIS XAVIER CARDINAL KRIENGSAK KOVITHAVANIJ  
*Archbishop of Bangkok (Thailand)*

✠ TARCISIO ISAO KIKUCHI S.V.D.  
*Secretary General of FABC*