



SS
LEONARDUS
MISERATIONE DIVINA GRATIA
PATRIARCHA
CONCILII NATIONARUM MUNDI ECCLESiarUM CATHOLICORUM

Rab, Croatia, Easter 2026.

To Our Venerable Brothers in Episcopate - Local Ordinaries, and Abbots,
To Our Reverend Priests, Fathers Monks and Sisters Nuns,
To Our Esteemed students-candidates for Holy Ordination and Holy Vows,
To Our Beloved brothers and sisters,
To all in Ecclesial communion with the World Council of National Catholic Churches!

Jesus was all heart. Full of kindness, understanding, love, mercy and forgiveness towards everyone. He forgave and comforted, healed and saved. He was patient and loved man immensely. The most seriously ill and the greatest sinners were his greatest friends. He showed them his greatest love and attention. He asked only one thing from them: "Sin no more!"

Even his fiercest opponents noticed this, and that is why they hated him and looked at him with a wrong eye, and even accused him, saying: "He welcomes sinners and eats with them!" Only for one type of people, who at that time performed a very important and responsible service both before God and before the people, did Jesus never have a good word. These were the scribes and Pharisees of that time.

Jesus spoke harsh and harsh words, threats and condemnations to them: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees... blind guides... whitewashed tombs... vipers and brood of vipers..."

About them, Jesus says to his listeners and his disciples: "... Therefore, do and observe all that they tell you, but do not do according to their deeds, for they say and do not do... They do all their works to be seen by men... They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called rabbis by men..." (Matthew 23:6-10).

Jesus does not deny them one thing: since they are the teachers of the Jewish people, interpreters of God's law; even if they do not practice it, they should be listened to. Jesus never had a good word for the scribes and Pharisees of that time because he could not approve of their deeds, their rule, because they were arrogant.

Pride is a disorderly striving for one's own and imagined greatness, which manifests itself in various ways. On the Christian scale of sins, it is the first of all the cardinal sins and the source of many sins. It is the sin above all other sins and whoever does not know how to guard against it will lead him to all ruin.

Jesus rebuked the scribes and Pharisees for their pride. From this we learn to be humble both before God and before men. And he himself was humility incarnate: "Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls!"

Only if we are humble will we obey God, keep his commandments, love God and our neighbor as ourselves, and be ready to endure everything for God and our neighbor, as Jesus did "when

he humbled himself even to the point of death, even death on a cross" to glorify God and save men.

The apostles learned humility well and accepted it from Jesus. We read about them in the Acts of the Apostles, written by St. Luke: "And they went away from the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus." (Acts 5:41).

The world is manifesting the deeds of a world in which it is evident that human life is worth nothing today. Entire buildings with masses of innocent people are being destroyed for a "legitimate purpose". Buildings are literally falling like houses of cards hit by bombs or missiles. We are witnessing world madness, exactly the same way previous civilizations collapsed and disappeared. Planet Earth is tired of human horrors and atrocities. The level of insensitivity is taking on colossal dimensions. Quick profit, fraud and theft, betrayal and thievery, murder and blackmail, arrogance and pride, self-love and egoism, abortions, queer and lesbian "pride parades", etc. That is what we are witnessing. It seems that everything is dominated by the dark spirits of destruction. However, it is only apparent. God's mighty hand controls everything and is present in all the pain and meaninglessness to which humanity is rushing.

In the absence of times of chaos and confusion on a global scale, there is a solid foundation of stability and clarity, and that is the Lord Jesus. The port of peace is found in our hearts and it remains stable as long as the dear Guest from on high is in it – the Holy Spirit the Advocate.

The Spirit is effective, active, present in all times of the Church and through Him the Church discerns the truth, meaning and content of Jesus: "The Advocate – the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you." (John 14:26)

The resurrection of Christ is God's victory over our death and a call to be part of that victory. All hopelessness is overcome in Christ. We oppose the spreaders of hopelessness with Christian hope in the joy of a life that is grateful for each new day that is given. We will be able to feel this best if we are people of prayer. Through prayer we are already there, with the Father, as we live the eschatological reality of "already yes and not yet."

It is a great ecclesiastical blessing and canonical recognition of validity in the eyes of other churches precisely that we constitute the College of bishops. As a College of bishops in the WCNCC, we represent an authentic expression of the Church of Christ. The expression of the activities of the College of bishops is expressed as a WCNCC Bishops' conference. It is an expression of the workings of the orderly structure that represents the Church of Christ. Beyond that, the unrecognizable outlines of what is called the wandering bishop remain (episcopi vagantes).

WCNCC is a gift from God. Let us be grateful to God for the service He has given us. Let us persevere through times of various trials in order to justify our positions in which the Holy Spirit has placed us:

"Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away." (1 Peter 5:2-4)

"Keep watch over yourselves and over the whole flock of which the holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, in which you tend the church of God that he acquired with his own blood." (Acts 20:28)

Happy and blessed Easter!

✝ LEONARDUS