
International Eucharistic Congress: "Aspiration for peace is not a utopian dream but an active process"

By no means abstract. Attending the 52nd International Eucharistic Congress in the HungExpo Auditorium in Pest are delegates from Churches and peoples sorely tried by conflicts, economic crises and natural disasters, and where the mystery of the Eucharist, and hence the Christian faith, is a source of true reconciliation and peace. Cardinal **Charles Maung Bo**, Archbishop of Yangon, said that travelling to Budapest was no easy task. On February 1st his country collapsed dramatically under the rule of a military regime that seized power in a coup d'état. The organising staff of the Eucharistic Congress entrusted him with a catechesis on "patience."



Immagine non disponibile

"The prolonged lockdown caused by the pandemic," said the archbishop, "has stripped people of human contacts"; "it took the smiles from human relations, replacing them with masks"; "it caused widespread human losses, fear, wounds and challenges, including in spiritual terms." "Patience is the only way for this world to live in peace," said the cardinal. "History has shown that impetuous, impulsive and impatient leaders have brought disaster to the world. Patience has the power of peace. Pope Francis said that true power lies in service." "The humble, gentle, patient service of Jesus is the beacon that guides humanity through time."



Immagine non disponibile

"Overwhelming pressure is causing continued emigration to countries including Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. Sadly, Western societies are unaware of the difficulties and fears that Christians are facing in various countries." Alarming news from the Middle East resonate in the heart of Budapest. "Radicalism is spreading as a political and religious ideology, and Christians are the innocent victims", said Card. Sako. "Extremists want to exploit the current situation to bring an end to the Christian presence in the Middle East." But in this world region, Christians "represent the very roots of Christianity", and thus their presence is "crucial." "They count on your support." "They share the same dream with all Iraqis": the dream "to live in peace, stability, equality and dignity." For the Chaldean Patriarch, "the only way" to achieve this goal "is a strong, secular, civil State, and a real democracy - like the ones implemented in most world countries", capable of "embracing and protecting all religions, cultures, groups and languages, of fairly administering public life and not interfering with the religious choices of its citizens."



Immagine non disponibile

. Archbishop of Quebec and Primate of the Catholic Church in Canada, resonates on the day when the Budapest Congress discusses "The Eucharist: An Inexhaustible Source of Peace and Reconciliation". The cardinal gives no answer. However, in his catechesis he recalls all those men and women who, in the past and in our present days, "strive to achieve peace and reconciliation, pursuing a goal that is enshrined in the human heart and mind." People who gave their lives for their ideals like Pastor Martin Luther King Jr., whose celebrated speech, 'I have a dream', called for "the establishment of universal justice and equality among all citizens in a society outrageously divided by apartheid." And like Pope Paul VI, who at the UN Assembly famously declared: "Humanity must end war or war will end humanity." Returning then to the theme of the Congress, the Canadian archbishop remarked: *"The kind of peace offered by the Eucharist isn't simply an absence of conflict, but rather an active process, one that works towards the reconciliation and healing of persons, families and communities. It enables us to believe that the aspiration for peace is not as absurd as it may seem."*

M. Chiara Biagioni