



## 5<sup>th</sup> EUROPEAN-MEDITERRANEAN CONTINENTAL MEETING

### BREAD, LIFE, PEACE, FREEDOM

POLAND, Krakow - Czestochowa

6-9 May 2010



#### Final Document

Krakow, 9 May 2010

On the 9th May, Europe Day and 60th Anniversary of the Schuman Declaration and feast of Saint Stanislaus, patron saint of Poland, the 5th IFCA European-Mediterranean Meeting was concluded. The meeting had started on the 6<sup>th</sup> May with a Eucharistic Celebration presided over by Card. Stanislaw Dziwisz.

The participants included national and diocesan representatives of Polish CA Associations as well as representatives from Spain, France, Malta, Italy, Bosnia Herzegovina, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Czech Republic and Israel together with Argentina and Burundi which are members of the IFCA Secretariat.

The meeting in Poland, held in Krakow-Łagiewniki, at the Pastoral Centre of the Divine Mercy Sanctuary, gave participants the opportunity to get to know the Church and CA Associations in the respective countries better. It was a continuation of the journey together in Europe started in Cirkewwa - Malta in 1996, then in Iasi – Romania in 1998, followed by one in Sarajevo – Bosnia Herzegovina in 2003 and Madrid – Spain in 2007. It was an expression of our wish to collaborate as one Europe, breathing with two lungs, from the Atlantic to the Ural, in line with the spiritual vocation for our continent, passed on to us by John Paul II.

The theme was based on four words which were adopted for all the continental meetings, *life bread peace freedom*, strongly interlinked. The words are taken from the last speech by John Paul II to the Diplomatic Corps in January 2005. He presented these challenges in the light of the theme for the 2005 World Day of Peace: "Overcome evil with good". IFCA presented these as a grid on which to interpret the realities in each respective continent with faith, humility and trust and without prejudices and fear.

The speeches developed and highlighted different aspects: Europe's responsibility in the world, the undeniable dimension – political as well as legislative – the defence of life, the priority of evangelization in a context which makes Europe, even today, a workshop for the encounter among Christianity and cultures, the continent's pluralistic reality, the duty to live as European and world citizens and CA's contribution.

Some fundamental areas which deserve special attention and which help in the building of

a fraternal, open, welcoming, supportive and peaceful continent were identified:

- cultivate the commitment towards education, which focuses on the person and on persons, with special reference to the family and which characterizes CA's DNA;
- assume an attitude of dialogue both in human and spiritual spheres: ecumenical and interreligious dialogue as well as dialogue with cultures in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council and of Ecclesiam Suam;
- show solidarity in , be informed about and try to find out the causes and solutions related to the different forms of poverty which are more or less evident;
- keep in mind the importance of the modern means of communication – make the media aware of the situations and make full use of the media's potential;
- propose the associative choice as a possibility which could help in the present situation, where the building of relations demands energy and time other than virtual solutions.

These situations call for the full adoption of the Social Teachings of the Church in the search of and in the establishment of the common good, at all levels and with men and women of good will.

This indicates a transversal priority: the transmission of faith to younger generations and the importance of their being involved in the life of the Association and of the Church and in society.

A deeper and more motivated awareness of the principle of reciprocity is also recommended. This aspect should characterize the European continent and should be our attitude as Catholics. We are lay people who live in local Churches in Europe and in the Universal Church. We commit ourselves to share our gifts and experiences especially in Europe and the Mediterranean, in the Middle East and in Africa and to establish stronger links with the Holy Land.

Some concrete proposals were decided upon:

- send a message of solidarity to the Greek Episcopal Conference
- give more attention and strengthen collaboration with CCEE e COMECE
- accompany the Church in the Middle East as it prepares for the October Synod.

*Europe is more than a continent. It is a home! And freedom finds its deepest meaning in a spiritual homeland. With full respect for the distinction between the political realm and that of religion – which indeed preserves the freedom of citizens to express religious belief and live accordingly – I wish to underline the irreplaceable role of Christianity for the formation of the conscience of each generation and the promotion of a basic ethical consensus that serves every person who calls this continent, "home"!*

Benedict XVI Prague, 26 September 2009

Foto:

1. <http://www.ak.org.pl/ak.php?id=518>
2. <http://akcjakatolicka.kalisz.pl/dane.php?s=galeria>