



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER FOR THE 102nd GERMAN CATHOLIC CONVENTION (KATHOLIKENTAG)

[Stuttgart, 25-29 May 2022]

Dear brothers and sisters,

I warmly greet all of you who have gathered in Stuttgart on the occasion of the 102nd *Katholikentag* to honour God and to bear witness together to the joy of the Gospel.

"Sharing life". That is the motto of these days. God is the Creator and Maker of all life. He has breathed his breath of life into humanity. Often, and in many ways, he shares his divine life with humanity, and in his Son Jesus Christ this "sharing of life" of God reaches its unsurpassable apex: he shares our earthly life to enable us to participate in his divine life.

That is why he descends into the depths of our humanity. He addresses his special love to the poor and suffering; he even identifies himself with them (cf. Mt 25). Thus, in these days, we are close to the people in Ukraine in our thoughts, and we pray for all people whose lives are threatened and affected, for all those who yearn for the fullness of life that only the Lord can give. We implore his peace!

Jesus not only shares *something* with us humans, he gives us everything: himself. He gives his life for us. "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end" (*John* 13: 1). In a similar way, his mandate is addressed to us not to live only for ourselves, but to dedicate our lives to God and neighbour. This gift of one's life can take many forms. I am thinking for example of mothers or fathers who dedicate themselves fully to their children, of the many people who in church service or in social or charitable professions put their lives after all else in order to serve and assist others. Even in the current crises, thank God, we can see how great is the willingness of so many to make sacrifices for others. No one is saved alone. We are all sitting in the same boat. That is why it is imperative that we develop the awareness that we are all children of the one

Father, brothers and sisters; that we all inhabit the same house, which is entrusted to all of us together; that one lives from the other and that we cannot help but share our lives. Only together do we move forward. If everyone gives what they have to offer, everyone's life will become richer and more beautiful! What God gives us, he also and always gives us so that we will share it with others and make it fruitful for others.

Saint Martin, patron of the diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart, is a shining example for us in this respect. By sharing his cloak, he did not only give the cold beggar life-saving warmth, but also human recognition and appreciation. All who bear the name of Jesus Christ are called to follow the saint's example and to share our means and possibilities with those in need. Let us be watchful as we go through life, and we will very soon see where we are needed.

Finally, I would like to mention another aspect of sharing with others: in fact, not only does everyone - even the poorest - have something they can give to others. The opposite is also true, namely that everyone - even the richest - lacks something and therefore needs other people's gifts. Accepting something from others is sometimes more difficult than giving something, since this implies admitting one's own imperfection. Peter had to learn the hard way to accept his Master's service during the washing of the feet. Let us also implore the humility of being able to accept something from others.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is an example of this humble attitude towards God, hoping for everything from him, an attitude which is the prerequisite for him to offer us his gifts. She implored and awaited the Holy Spirit in the midst of the apostles, and still today, with us and by our side, she implores this gift among gifts.

In this sense, I include you in a special way in my prayer these days. Please do not forget to pray for me too! With all my heart I wish you all a good *Katholikentag*!

From the Vatican, 20 May 2022

FRANCIS

Bulletin of the Holy See Press Office, 25 May 2022