

## Final Message

The Church loves Europe and believes in its future: Europe is not just a land, but a spiritual task.

At the plenary meeting taking place in Minsk, Belarus, we have renewed our commitment to participate with enthusiasm to the progress of this Continent, which has great things to offer all of us in the logic of reciprocity.

The task of our Council is to promote communion between the Pastors of various Nations and to find the paths for the voice of the Lord Jesus to return to the ears of European men and women in culture and society. Where can we anchor human dignity if not in Jesus the Son of God who was made man? This is the specific contribution of Christianity to the European identity and two millennia of charity, art and culture are our living witness.

With affection we wish our Holy Father Francis "New and brave momentum for this beloved Continent".

We cannot fall short of this effort as messengers of good news. The message which we owe to the world is loud and clear, but endowed with poor means: the Gospel of Jesus is the perennial source of European history, of its humanist civilisation, democracy, human rights and responsibilities. And therefore the most secure guarantee!

Despite the thrust toward isolation, we believe in that unity of spiritual and ethical ideals which have always been the soul and destiny of Europe.

In the same way we believe in a continued path of reconciliation which is part not only of history but also of life and which respects the value of the various traditions and religions beyond all extremism.

The openness of religion to transcendence, to relationships of solidarity and to communion have taken on a face in the Gospel and have revealed the unique dignity of every person.

They have inspired the path of Europe, which has not always been easy and has seen hindrances and mistakes. The very phenomenon of migration is enlightened by this soul under the auspices of welcome, integration and legality despite difficulties and fears. We are aware of the effort needed and the shared responsibility.

We express our encouragement to Peoples and Nations so as to react to the strong lure of secularism which tempts us to live without God and to confine Him to the private sphere, feeding the seed of individualism and generating loneliness. It is furthermore evident that openness to life in any stage of progress is an index of hope, and the birth rate is the best index of the state of health of society.

It is exactly youth, the dominating theme of the upcoming Synod of the Church, which

represented at the theme of our collegial attention.

Great sympathy emerged on the part of the European Episcopacies. This sympathy translates into prayer and greater closeness as well as a desire to listen and to accompany youth with patience and love.

The Church strongly believes in youth and holds it in high esteem, as a mother with her children.

Other concerns emerged during the proceedings such as the liquid culture we all breathe and the widespread individualist exasperation generating uncertainty and loneliness as well as some conflicts and injustices which wound the great gift of peace.

All this confirms our commitment to walk alongside young people and to encourage them to feel that the Gospel is the proclamation of the great "Yes" to love, to freedom and joy. It is saying yes to Christ.

Our communities are on this path with us and with our priests to be a sign of hope, of communion and of active benevolence. The deep and living root is Christ who speaks to the hearts and minds of everyone on this continent so they may be able to find their calling, beyond politics and economics.

We would like the word of Jesus to reach the heart of Europe. "Do not fear, I am with you". Do not be afraid, ancient Europe, of being yourself. Undertake the path of your fm Fathers again, as they have dreamed you a home for Peoples and Nations, fruitful mother of children and civilisations, the land of open and integral humanism.

Do not fear, be trustful! The Church, an expert in humanity, is your friend. With your gaze towards Christ and the Gospel in your hand, walk towards the future of conciliation, justice and peace.