

Day of Prayer in honor of the Mother of All Nations 2019

On September 14, 2019, the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, as in past years, a Day of Prayer in honor of the Mother of All Nations took place in Dusseldorf, Germany. Around 4,500 pilgrims from over 35 countries accepted the invitation to the Mitsubishi Hall. They came in 37 busses from Austria, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands as well as by other means. As such, the Marian day of prayer before the beautifully decorated image of the Mother of All Nations, was truly an international Marian encounter.

Many of those who could not come to Dusseldorf took advantage of the possibility of following the Day of Prayer at home on **K-TV**. In addition, many friends of the Lady of All Nations followed the day via **livestream**. **Over 8,000 people watched the livestream in German and another 650 in English.** A good start! Many of the viewers were so enthusiastic that they have already decided to come to **the next Day of Prayer in Dusseldorf, on May 30, 2020**, to be there in person.

The morning began with **Eucharistic Adoration and the Rosary in various languages**. Two bishops then gave very beautiful Marian testimonies.

Bishop Stanislav Stolárik, from the Diocese of Rožňava, Slovakia, who consciously came to Amsterdam in 2017 to form his own opinion about the apparitions and get to know the messages better, spoke about the theme: *“The Mother of All Nations in My Life and in My Diocese.”* Bishop Stolarik prays the prayer of Amsterdam daily, and with conviction personally passes out the prayer cards in various languages. Just previously, in August, he gave out hundreds of prayer cards in the atheistic Czech Republic! He realized that, *“The people there are not very open, but they did accept the prayer cards.”* His visit was appreciated all the more since, on that day in his homeland, Slovakia, the traditional pilgrimage of all Slovak bishops and the Slovak people took place in Šaštín, to Our Lady of Sorrows.

His testimony was followed by **a video recorded in July of 2019 about the 85-year-old Dutch Monfortian, Fr. Peter de Waard**. He has been a missionary in Brazil for 52 years. A Dutch noble, as a priest he has worked for many years spreading the prayer, image and messages of the Lady of All Nations, even into the jungle region of the Amazon. His ideas for the spreading of the prayer card knows no bounds. In many ways Fr. De Waard is a true example of a Marian missionary and *devotee of the Lady of All Nations*. For example, he sent the prayer card to all the bishops of Brazil, which is the largest bishops' conference in the world with over 300 bishops.

Next, was a 10-minute **video about Kibeho**. In the heart of Africa there is the small country, Rwanda. Marian apparitions began there in 1981, the authenticity of which was even approved by the Vatican in 2001. For eight years Our Lady in Kibeho called for both national tribes, the Hutu and the Tutsi, to convert and reconcile to avoid a civil war which no one could imagine at that time. Unfortunately, the words of Our Lady were in vain and people did not believe. So, in 1994, an unimaginably gruesome genocide took place claiming the lives of over a million people. Even though this drama took place 25 years ago, the call for conversion and reconciliation remains of the highest importance for **everyone** even today.

At the end of the video, **Bishop Célestin Hakizimana of Rwanda** spoke. Since 2014, he is the bishop of the Diocese of Gikongoro and thereby also responsible for **the Marian shrine in**

Kibeho. He made the long trip from Africa to guide us into the depths of the spiritual **message of Kibeho.** It is particularly beautiful that Bishop Hakizimana is himself a Hutu and during the drama of genocide in 1994, at the risk of death, personally saved 1,500 Tutsi from murder in the capital, Kigali. It required great trust in God and extraordinary courage! For more than two months, he protected the refugees and opening the doors of his parish for them, distributing supplies and water with determination. Again and again he encountered the unpredictable militias. Looking back, he says today, *“We only had the power of prayer on our side.”* Yes, above all one person, the “Mother of the Word”, spoke about the power of prayer in Kibeho. Bishop Célestin went on to speak about this.

After that followed **the first talk by Fr. Paul Maria Sigl** entitled: *“Mary, the Mother of All Nations, Shows Us the Way to the Triumph of Her Immaculate Heart”*. In his remarks he spoke about the seriousness of our times and about what concrete means are available to the faithful to **achieve triumphs of love in their personal lives**, when they live hand-in-hand with Mary: such as the Rosary, confession, or repentance out of love and mutual reconciliation. Above all, however, he spoke of living from the power of the Holy Eucharist and being spiritual mothers for priests. In addition, he encouraged all to take part in the worldwide action as requested by the Mother of All Nations by spreading her prayer and image. He explained that the image from Amsterdam is the image of the Resurrection, victory and triumph. On May 31, 1957, the Lady of All Nations said very emphatically, *“If they do what I have said, I will assist the peoples, all of them, even the most primitive, and I will be allowed to bring true peace.”*

The afternoon program began again with **Eucharistic Adoration.** That was followed by **the second part of Fr. Sigl’s talk**, in which he vividly explained the **Triumph of the Immaculate Heart in everyday life** and how it can be achieved by all of us **through accepting and offering up of our sufferings.** As **St. Padre Pio** said, *“The tragedy of this world is pain that is not offered up!”* Or as **Blessed Conchita of Mexico** said, *“There is so much wasted suffering. If these sufferings were offered up, then the world would already be saved and another 1000 worlds with it!”*

Two touching video testimonies impressively confirmed the value of sufferings borne in love and offered up together with Christ. One, **a video about the life-giving sacrifice of the 28-year-old mother, Chiara Corbella**, whose beatification process was initiated in 2018. The other, **a video excerpt about the “Gospel of suffering” of St. John Paul II**, on the occasion of an Angelus. To the consolation of many pilgrims who also took advantage of the ample opportunity for **the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the day**, Fr. Paul Maria summarized, *“The future lies in our praying hands, in our loving hearts. We don’t have to be afraid, but, rather, trust much more!”*

The high point of the day was the **Holy Mass of the Exaltation of the Cross.**

Before the beginning of the Holy Mass, to everyone’s delight and surprise, **a telegram from the Secretariat of State in Rome** containing **the blessing of Pope Francis** was read out loud. It had been sent to Rainer Maria Cardinal Woelki by the Apostolic Nuncio of Germany, Archbishop Nicola Eterović. It reads in full:

“It was with joy that Pope Francis learned that the ‘Day of Prayer in honor of Mary, the Mother of All Nations’ will take place on September 14, 2019, in Düsseldorf. For this beautiful occasion, the Holy Father is pleased to unite himself in prayer with the participants from many countries. Before the events of Pentecost, the Apostles were gathered with one accord in prayer with Mary, the mother of Jesus. Wherever we gather around Mary, God fills His Church anew

with life. The Holy Spirit grants all peoples the knowledge of the living God and unites them in the confession of one faith and in according praise to our Lord, Who having wonderfully created us has even more wonderfully renewed us. Pope Francis encourages all of you to this joyful witness of faith and grants all the participants of the Day of Prayer his heartfelt apostolic blessing, as requested.”

The main celebrant, from the Archdiocese of Cologne, was Auxiliary Bishop Ansgar Puff, who held a touching and consoling homily about the power of the Cross. Concelebrating with him, were Bishop Jozef Punt of Amsterdam, his Coadjutor, Bishop Jan Hendriks, Bishop Hakisimana, Bishop Stolárik and 63 priests from various nations.

This year too, at the end of Mass, the pilgrims joyfully awaited a few words from **Bishop Jozef Punt from Amsterdam**. He spoke with conviction and from his heart. Here is the complete text.

“Thank you, Bishop Puff, for your presence here and your truly beautiful homily. Thank you that you all came. Dear brothers and sisters, it is a great pleasure each year to be here. I know I say that every year, but it is also true each year! It could be that this is the last time that I am here as the diocesan bishop, even though I would like to continue to come in future years. Next year, I will celebrate my 25th year as a bishop shortly before my 75th birthday. That is the retirement age for a bishop, and so, the moment has arrived to pass responsibility to my successor. That is why I brought Bishop Hendriks with me! He is the coadjutor in Amsterdam; that means he is an auxiliary bishop with the right of succession. And this leaves me at peace because with him, the diocese and also *the matter of Our Lady* are in good hands.

We have known each other already since our seminary days, where we were in the same class. Mind you, Jan is nine years younger than I. Forty years ago, we were ordained together, though neither of us could have ever imagined that we would stand here together as the Bishop of Amsterdam and the future Bishop of Amsterdam. I think that the *Lady*, Mary, the Mother of All Nations also helped out a bit in that. I could have imagined it for Jan in the seminary, but less so for myself. In that time, at age 27, I had just returned to the Catholic faith after years of living in New Age and all those currents. I was a trained economist, and in the seminary, I wore a leather jacket and drove an Audi 100. I can well remember as the rector once said, ‘*There are students who drive in cars that are too big.*’ Since I was the only student with a big car, I clearly felt he was talking to me, so I immediately traded in my Audi for a small Fiat. Yes, Jan and I have known each other for a long time, and my successor is also a bishop with a *Marian* heart. He wrote a book about Our Lady and completely understands her special role as the Coredemptrix, Mediatrix, and Advocate for our times.

Many no longer understand the incredible redemptive message of the Lord, about which the Bishop preached today. But many others truly *do* understand! It amazes me again and again when reports come in from around the world telling of new days of prayer or new initiatives. Yes, the Spirit of God is at work throughout the world and can reach so many people. A lot of good is happening, but at the same time, of course, we also know and see that there are evil powers that get everything out of whack: politically, economically, ecologically, morally. As Christians, we know that there is a spiritual fight hidden behind all of this in the world and in our own hearts: a fight between good and evil, between light and darkness. *That is the real fight of our time!* It is reflected in the hatred, strife and war among peoples. It is fascinating to see how Mary, the Woman, the Mother of All Nations, predicted this 60 or 70 years ago. *She* described the time when we would especially need her as our Heavenly Mother. *She* said there will come a time when nature will change and natural disasters will occur from east to west and from north to south. It will be a time when the Middle East falls into turmoil and there will be

large problems in Korea and trade wars elsewhere. All of this was predicted by the *Lady*, and we are living in this time!

In regards to the Church, the Lady of All Nations gave warnings. For example, she warned of false doctrines regarding the Holy Eucharist. That was unthinkable at the time! Today, on the other hand, we see how many no longer reverently value the Holy Eucharist or have completely lost faith in it. The Lady of All Nations also wished that we would hold firm to celibacy 'despite everything'. No one understood this 'despite everything' at a time when celibacy was in no way in question. Today we know what this 'despite everything' means! The Lady of All Nations also spoke to women: '*You women, be a role model! Come back to your womanhood!*' Nobody understood that at the time. Now we understand it.

I think there are also some things the German church should rethink, especially now that I have heard that a synod is being planned on internal Church issues. We had all of that in Holland decades ago! It brought nothing good, only division. Today there are much more important things. We are dealing with the basic truths of our faith and a society *with* God or *without* God. There is a fight for the souls of man. The aim is to prevent a coming worldwide disaster through prayer and penance. *That is what* Mary came for - in Fatima, in Amsterdam, in Akita and in Kibeho, Africa! She warns, she asks for prayer and begs for our cooperation, for our repentance, so that she can prevent all the misery and give blessings. You heard about that today.

We need Mary and she also needs us. Yes, she needs us to recognize her in the full dignity which the Lord has given to her: Mary is the *Woman clothed with the sun*. She is the *Coredemptrix, Mediatrix, and Advocate*. She is the *New Eve next to the New Adam*. Of course, Christ is our *only* divine Redeemer and Mediator, but what He is in the divine sense, Mary is in the human sense. She is the Coredemptrix, Mediatrix, and Advocate.

Let us draw hope from this! The Lord and His mother direct everything that is happening in our world. Mary promises us in Fatima, '*In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph. A time of peace will be given to humanity.*'

Mary said this in Amsterdam too, and the visionary saw it in wonderful visions. Ida Peerdeman saw a dark, battered, black world and then a wonderful rose which grew forth from it. This rose is Mary. Then Ida saw how a golden rain fell upon this black and broken world. This rain symbolizes the Holy Spirit. All of these events are yet to come. I believe that God, in His love, will give us a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit - not because we deserve it. We don't *deserve* it at all, but because we *need* it. Where sin prevails, grace and love become limitless. With faith we can await this event of grace!

May this give us hope and strength to persevere at a time when many *good* Christians are losing courage and are driven to total despair by evil. It takes so long! There are so many negative things happening in our own lives, around us and around the world – and all of this is to take away our courage!

Do not let your courage be taken away! Shortly before the end it will be the most difficult. The night is darkest just before the dawn. Be brave! Rejoice precisely in this time, because the Lord is closer than ever. Our heavenly mother is stronger than ever. At her word, as in Cana, the Lord will work miracles in *our* time and in *your* life. Trust in it. Thank you for your presence and your loyalty in this difficult time. We'll meet again!"

At the conclusion of Mass, the bishops, priests and all the pilgrims solemnly prayed the **Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary**. They were gathered around the Mother of All Nations and prayed using the words of St. Pope John Paul II, which he prayed on March

25, 1984 in St. Peter's Square united with the bishops of the world and in the name of all peoples.

Afterwards, with a loud applause, the pilgrims expressed their joy and agreement to come again at the news that the **next Day of Prayer for the Mother of All Nations will be on May 30, 2020.**