



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS
TO CARDINAL KURT KOCH
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 10th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
(BUSAN, KOREA, 30 OCTOBER - 8 NOVEMBER 2013)**

*To My Venerable Brother
Cardinal Kurt Koch
President
Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity*

On the occasion of the Tenth General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, I ask you to convey my cordial greetings and good wishes to all gathered in Busan, and in a particular way to the General Secretary, Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, and the representatives of the Christian communities present. I assure you of my close pastoral interest in the deliberations of the Assembly and I willingly reaffirm the commitment of the Catholic Church to continuing its long-standing cooperation with the World Council of Churches.

The theme of the Assembly, *God of Life, Lead us to Justice and Peace*, is above all a prayerful invocation of the Triune God who draws all creation to its fulfillment through the redemptive power of the Cross of Jesus Christ and the outpouring of the manifold gifts of the Holy Spirit. Truly, wherever the gift of life is cherished, and justice and peace prevail, God's Kingdom is present and his sovereign power is already at work.

For this reason, I trust that the present Assembly will help to consolidate the commitment of all Christ's followers to intensified prayer and cooperation in the service of the Gospel and the integral good of our human family. The globalized world in which we live demands of us a common witness to the God-given dignity of every human being and the effective promotion of the cultural, social and legal conditions which enable individuals and communities to grow in freedom, and which support the mission of the family as the fundamental building-block of society, ensure a

sound and integral education for the young, and guarantee for all the untrammelled exercise of religious liberty. In fidelity to the Gospel, and in response to the urgent needs of the present time, we are called to reach out to those who find themselves in the existential peripheries of our societies and to show particular solidarity with the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters: the poor, the disabled, the unborn and the sick, migrants and refugees, the elderly and the young who lack employment.

Conscious that the soul of ecumenism remains authentic conversion, holiness and prayer (cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 8), I pray that the General Assembly will contribute to a new impulse of vitality and vision on the part of all committed to the sacred cause of Christian unity, in fidelity to the Lord's will for his Church (cf. *Jn* 17:21) and in openness to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Upon all gathered in Busan I invoke the abundant blessings of Almighty God, source of all life and of every spiritual gift.

From the Vatican, 4 October 2013, Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi

FRANCIS