

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT – ICCM-UNUM OMNES
THEME; “LIVE IN PEACE” (2 COR 13:11)

Dear Friends,

I bring you greetings from Ghana, also struggling to cope with rising numbers of Covid-19 infections. Our numbers are still relatively better than most countries in the world, but nevertheless rising at a rate that is causing worries in many people. While the world is groaning under the Covid-19 pandemic which is threatening to change many aspects of our lives, the world has been rudely awakened to another grave situation, almost a crisis, which if not handled properly and wisely has the potential to threaten not only the peace of the world but increase the dangers of Covid-19 to mankind.

This letter is being composed on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. The theme is derived from the second reading of the day, from 2 Corinthians 13:11. The verse reads as follows: “Brethren mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, **live in peace** and the God of love and peace will be with you”

In writing this letter, I have in mind the current almost worldwide condemnation of the recent brutal killing of George Floyd a black American by a white policeman kneeling on his neck and virtually snuffing out oxygen from his lungs in the streets of Minneapolis USA. My motivation for writing this letter are based first on the interconnectedness of the issues to aspects of the Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and one of the aims enshrined in the statutes of The International Council of Catholic Men-Unum Omnes:

1. The foundational principle of CST is the sanctity of human life based on the Catholic belief in the inherent dignity of the human person starting from conception through to natural death. This teaching highlights respect for human life and the rights and responsibilities to social, political and economic justice as fundamental need for all peoples.

Dear Friends, this is a teaching that we subscribe to not only because we are Catholics but because we are fundamentally human. Sometimes when things appear quiet around us, we tend to be a little naive thinking all is well. But it is clear from what we have witnessed in the media in recent times that all is not well. How can we adhere to the Biblical injunction quoted in the theme to live in peace when it is so difficult for some to treat others with respect and dignity and demean them on account of their skin color, gender or race? God certainly had a reason for creating us, though in His own image, yet in the diversity in which he created us. That reason could not be division, else Jesus would not have prayed in John 17:21 that “all may be one – Unum Omnes” and Paul would not have pleaded with us in 2 Cor 13: 11 that we “live in peace”. Having created us all in His own image God expects each human person to have the right, as taught by the CST, to be treated as anybody and family would wish to be treated. J. F Kennedy a former American President is quoted as saying that “All men are created equal and the rights of every man is diminished when the rights of one man are threatened” Is this perhaps the reason for the protests on almost all the continents of the world today?

2. My second motivation is from the statutes of Unum Omnes. Aim No. 5 states: “To inform public opinion in official and private international organizations **to the attitude of Catholic men, their hopes and expectations on all questions of general interest**”

Dear friends, we are confronted with a moral issue that is clearly threatening the peace of some countries in many parts of the world, which may include those of our member organizations. The

statutes encourage us to speak out on questions of general concern reflecting our Catholic attitude, hopes and expectations. The issues of discrimination as seen recently and many times in times past in many parts of the world, for whatever reason is condemned by the Church. They are a behavior that should have no place in the minds of right thinking people.

So what should we do as members of the International Council of Catholic Men-Unum Omnes? We should as Catholic men, with the CST which we no doubt subscribe to, as our tool, have the moral courage first to discuss these issues in our organizations in order to heighten awareness and create deeper understanding, talk about them in our communities and local churches, write petitions where appropriate to relevant authorities and above all make conscious efforts to live the CST ourselves. This is the time that our Catholic values derived from the Church's Social Teaching should be manifested in practical ways so that we can contribute to working to build a world in which we can all live in peace. Our action in this regard will demonstrate our belief that we side with the right even in the face of the difficult reality. Failure to act on the other hand may result in regrets and shame each time violence erupts anywhere as a result of such injustice. Let us ensure though, that our own actions in these matters do not result in new problems of their own.

May the peace of the Most Holy Trinity reign in our hearts now and forever. Amen!

EDDIE PRAH KSG
PRESIDENT – ICCM-UNUM OMNES