

July, 24th 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are writing you in reaction to your letter (Opening Appeal) dated May 15th 2019. Firstly, we want to write you that we are very grateful for you. We appreciate that you raised your voice to protect marriage and biblical values. We want to write you that you are not alone in this struggle. We stand behind you and pray for you. Our province has been engaged in the battle against homosexual impurity for a longer time. In 2002, the Synod of our province has submitted a proposal to the Unity Synod, prompting the worldwide Unity to begin to deal with the issue. In 2015, after the unfortunate decision of the Northern Province in America, our bishops have published an appeal to the other bishops not to ordain anyone practicing homosexuality, until the Unity Synod 2016 would deal with the issue. In 2016, the Committee on Theology of our province has submitted a proposal to the Unity Synod, which eventually became the basis for the Synod Resolution US2016.44. We are concerned for the Unity not to turn away from the values that our fathers have laid their lives down for, and to come back to these values where it departed from them.

The Synod of our province held between May 26-29, 2019 in Harrachov, Czech Republic, has dealt with the situation in the worldwide Unity. We are sorry that some provinces are turning away from following the Lamb and do not respect the COUF (especially in the matter of the so-called same-sex marriage). Our Synod has adopted two statements concerning the issue – the Statement on Homosexuality and the Nashville Statement. We send you both in the attachment.

We also realise that the teachings of Luke of Prague on discerning things Essential, Ministerial and Incidental has been often misused to justify liberalism and departing from the Gospel truth. We are very sorry about that even more because we are Czechs and we may read Luke's treatises in the original. We also enclose our short statement on the issue.

We are aware of the difficulty of your situation. We are grateful for your humility. Only in humility and surrender to our Lord you may stand. It is well that you adhere to the Scripture and to the COUF. The Scripture as well as the COUF vindicate your position. As for the COUF, every Province must respect it (see e.g. #404a and #412-413). The provisions of the COUF in respect of marriage (see #657 a #819) are authoritative for all Provinces, Congregations, pastors and Boards of Elders. We are convinced that the COUF also enables you to get justice. We want to encourage you not to be disheartened in your righteous struggle and not to resign. Please, be aware that you stand in a spiritual fight – our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual forces (Eph 6:12). Therefore, you are in need of perseverance, your journey is not short. God sometimes holds His actions – only to manifest His righteousness in the end.

May our Lord reinforce you, strengthen you and let you stand the test. He will not leave you. As for us, we affirm that you have our support and that we will pray for you further.

Our Lamb has conquered, let us follow Him!

In Love,

Provincial Board and Bishops of the Czech Province