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Philippine bishops join Pope Francis in consecrating Russia and Ukraine to Mary

Full text of CBCP Circular 22-06
on joining Pope Francis in
consecrating Russia and
Ukraine to the Blessed Mother

03/18/2022

Circular No. 22-06

17 March 2022

RE: Joining Pope Francis in Consecrating Russia and Ukraine to the Blessed Mother

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It has been more than four weeks now since Russia declared a war of occupation against Ukraine. We have seen in the daily news reports how the Russian military forces have bombarded one Ukrainian city after another, destroying private residences, business establishments and public infrastructures, killing hundreds of civilians and forcing millions of people to flee as refugees to other European countries.

Each day that this war lingers on increases its potentials of escalating into a bigger and more serious conflict between Russia and its allies on the one hand, and the United States and its NATO allies in Europe and other nations of the world, on the other hand. It can lead to the

fearful scenario of a Third World War.

Because it has been 77 years since our last experience of a World War, we have tended to take global peace for granted. The past three quarters of a century of peace have brought prosperity to the world precisely because the military defense budgets of nations have radically decreased. The average in Europe has gone down to only 3% of the national budgets and made it possible for governments to appropriate more substantial funds to the more fundamental necessities of their citizens.

Suddenly, this war in Ukraine is making nations worried again for their security. Germany has already doubled its military budget and most other European countries are following the trend. We therefore need to pray very hard for peace.

In our own context in the Asia Pacific region, we can only hope that Russia's sudden shift to an expansionistic geopolitical policy does not motivate any of its allies from doing the same thing on their neighboring countries.

Even if Europe is relatively far from the Philippines, we have every reason to be apprehensive about these global developments. We are conscious of the fact that, in just the past few years, the peace and security of some of our own national territories have been among our major domestic concerns, especially in the West Philippine Sea, where an ally of Russia has already set up its own military installations, despite all our protestations. This is now turning out to be the more important global context that should determine the way we will choose a new set of leaders for our country in the coming

elections. This too we must pray very hard for.

In view of this, we your bishops have decided to join the Holy Father, Pope Francis, in consecrating Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on March 25, 2022, Friday, Solemnity of the Annunciation.

The Holy Father has made this decision in response to a letter earlier sent to him by the Ukrainian Catholic Bishops on March 2, 2022. In that letter, they said, "In these hours of immeasurable pain and terrible ordeal for our people, we, the bishops of the Episcopal Conference of Ukraine, are spokesmen for the unceasing and heartfelt prayer, supported by our priests and consecrated persons, which comes to us from all Christian people to dedicate, Your Holiness, our Motherland and Russia."

"Responding to this prayer," they wrote, "we humbly ask Your Holiness to publicly perform the act of consecration of Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as requested by the Blessed Virgin in Fatima. May the Mother of God, Queen of Peace, accept our prayer: Regina Pacis, ora pro nobis!"

We will send you a copy of the Act of Consecration in the coming days. We also leave it to the discretion of individual bishops to include Acts of Reparation and prayers for peace in Asia, especially in our country, the Philippines.

Lastly, as an act of solidarity with the suffering people of Ukraine, the Permanent Council of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines decided that a special second collection be held in all churches this coming Sunday, March 20. Kindly remit the collections to the

CBCP Secretariat on or before March 25.

Let us fervently offer our prayers and sacrifices "for the violence to stop and for the voice of peace to be heard."

Mary, Queen of Peace, pray for us and for the whole world.

For the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines:

Signed

+MOST REV. PABLO VIRGILIO S. DAVID, D.D.

Bishop of Kalookan

CBCP President

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