

Joint Pastoral Letter for the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence

"I have come so that they have life, and that they have it in abundance"

John 10:10

As companion Synods we understand that our mission as collaborators in God's mission in the world is to proclaim and live the good news of the Kingdom of God and justice in our contexts. In fidelity to the gospel, we adhere to the campaign for 16 days of activism against gender violence. Gender violence is a sin, a scourge that causes pain, suffering, injustice, that takes the lives of women and girls, and constitutes a violation of human rights.

The proposal of the Gospel is a proposal of life in abundance for all people. An abundant and full life for women and girls will only be possible when we are able to eradicate the gender violence that they experience. It is with concern and sadness that we write this joint letter, because in this time of pandemic, the confinement measures necessary in our countries to protect life and health have meant a danger to their lives for women victims of gender violence.

According to the UN, gender violence has increased considerably with the pandemic. As in all crises, women and girls are among the most vulnerable. Again, in this time of pandemic, women were the most affected in their jobs, they were the first to be laid off due to the socioeconomic crisis. The numbers of femicides, rapes and physical assaults grew, and to this is added the overload of teleworking, caring for children and domestic responsibilities that women have been experiencing since the arrival of Covid-19.

Beyond the advances in rights and awareness of gender violence that we have achieved in recent years as a society and as churches, we still have a long way to go to eradicate violence and social inequalities that women and girls experience. As churches we hold that each person is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:27). Therefore, all people are created equal in worth, dignity and right.

In these 16 days of activism against gender violence we unite our voices to say NO more violence against women and girls. We bind our prayers, efforts and commitments to work and claim the right to a dignified life, a life in abundance, free from all types of violence.

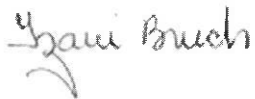
In the hope that it is possible to build a new humanity free from the evil of gender violence, we consider it urgent to embody in our life and testimony of faith the proposal of Jesus for a dignified and abundant life.

We call on the membership of our churches to break the silence, to make visible and transform the different cultural and ecclesial practices that continue to be barriers so that we can achieve gender justice and women and girls can live a life free of violence. Together and in our contexts,

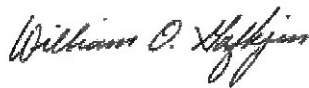
let us become sensitized and aware of all the structures and forms of injustice that reproduce violence in our society and churches.

May our good God breathe his spirit over our lives, so that we can recreate and restore our human relationships and open paths that promote a life of dignity free from all types of violence.

In Christ,



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