

# RECONCILIATION CZ APRIL 2015

## Talk 2

### HEALING THE WOUNDS OF THE PAST

# RECONCILIATION BETWEEN DIVIDED CHURCHES

- Reconciliation between Christians is the most important reconciliation, above all healing the division between separated churches.
- The Church is called to be the sign of restored and healed relationships through the cross.

- Christian division contradicts the Gospel we are all called to preach. The Gospel is the message of reconciliation.
- Accepting our divisions as normal proclaims: we do not fully believe what we preach.
- Our divisions undermine the credibility of the Gospel and of the Church (EG, 244).

# THE JEWISH PEOPLE

- Confessing the sins of the churches against the Jewish people belongs to this foundational reconciliation.
- Ephesians 2: 14 – 16
- \* “When she delves into her own mystery, the Church ... discovers her link with the Jewish people” (Catechism, para. 839)

- Negativity to the Jews is opposition to God's chosen way to save the human race
- It refuses the true identity of Jesus
- It refuses the "two who become one" but who remain two
- First split among God's People is between Jesus-accepting Jews and Jesus-refusing Jews

# THE SINS OF THE PAST

Are we responsible for what our ancestors did?  
**NO.**

Are we responsible for what we receive from  
our ancestors? YES.

We are responsible for:

- Our Memories
- Our Histories
- The Attitudes and Patterns of Behaviour we learn and adopt

# The PURIFICATION OF MEMORIES

## (St John Paul II)

The Purification of Histories:

Eliminating all errors of fact

Recognition & confession of evils – massacres, atrocities, betrayals, broken promises

Confessing sinful attitudes: arrogance, superiority, greed and corruption, demonizing of others

Cleansing from spirit of triumphalism

Recognizing weaknesses & deviations

# Moving Towards A Shared History

The need for a Christian history that tells the story of all Christians in a way that all can recognize as fair and truthful.

Catholics

Orthodox

Lutherans and Reformed

Free Churches, old and new

Without the shared history, reconciliation is not complete



# IDENTITY & IDENTIFICATION

- Identification is acceptance of your God-given identity (there is God-given identity and humanly-shaped identity).
- Identity includes parents, tribe and people, their history, their dealings with God
- We are saved by the total identification of Jesus with his own people Israel, and through that with all peoples on the earth

# The Identification of Jesus

- Jesus is “the son of David, the son of Abraham”
- Jesus who is sinless receives the baptism of John which is a baptism of repentance.
- He accepts his call: “it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness” (Matt. 3: 15)
- His identification with his people is total: he identifies with their calling, their glories, their heroes, and with their sins, their

- “But he was pierced for our transgressions,
- He was crushed for our iniquities. ...
- He was cut off from the land of the living,
- for the transgression of my people he was stricken.” (Isaiah 53: 5, 8).

# THE EXAMPLE OF ISRAEL

A remarkable feature in the life of Israel (very evident in the Old Testament):

Not a triumphalist history

Sins of people, of leaders, of heroes not hidden

Confessions of sin of whole people by righteous leaders (Neh. 9; Ezra 9; Dan. 9)

“we and our fathers have sinned” (Jer. 3:25; 14:20)

# WE AND OUR FATHERS HAVE SINNED

- “We have sinned against the LORD our God, both we and our fathers.” (Jer. 3: 25)
- “O LORD, we acknowledge our wickedness and the guilt of our fathers.” (Jer. 14: 20)
- See Nehemiah 9, esp. vv. 32 – 35
- “O LORD, we and our kings, our princes and our fathers are covered with shame

# SOLIDARITY IN SIN

- “Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors.” (Matt. 23: 32)
- “Truly, I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.” (Matt. 23: 36). See Gen. 15: 16 and 1 Thess. 2: 16.
- “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it.” (Matt. 23: 37).

# Identification with our Nations and with our Churches

- In following Jesus, we are called to identify ourselves totally with our church families, and with our peoples:
- with the glory, and with the shame.
- Only this is a true witness.
- Identifying only with the glory = ideology