

## Roman Catholic Leadership and/in *Religions for Peace*

Synopsis Prepared in 2020

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### I. Current Roman Catholic Leadership in *Religions for Peace* International

#### **WORLD COUNCIL**

**H.E. Cardinal Charles Bo**, Archbishop of Yangon, *Myanmar*; President, Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference

**H.E. Cardinal Blasé J. Cupich**, Archbishop of Chicago, *United States*

**H.E. Cardinal Dieudonné Nzapalainga**, Archbishop of Bangui, *Central African Republic*

**H.E. Philippe Cardinal Ouédraogo**, Archbishop of Ouagadougou, *Burkina Faso*; President, Symposium of African and Madagascar Bishops' Conference (SECAM)

**H.E. Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle**, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples

**Ms. Maria Lia Zervino**, President General, World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations, *Argentina*

#### **HONORARY PRESIDENTS**

**H.E. Cardinal John Onaiyekan**, Archbishop Emeritus of Abuja, *Nigeria*; Co-Chair, African Council of Religious Leaders-RfP

**H.E. Cardinal Vinko Puljić**, Archbishop of Vrhbosna, Bosnia-Herzegovina

**Emmaus Maria Voce**, President, Movimento Dei Focolari, *Italy*

## **LEADERSHIP**

**H.E. Cardinal Raymundo Damasceno Assis**, Archbishop Emeritus of Aparecida, Sao Paulo, Brazil; Moderator, *Religions for Peace*-Latin America and Caribbean Council of Religious Leaders

**Rev. Sr. Agatha Ogochukwu Chikelue**, Nun of the Daughters of Mary Mother of Mercy; Co-Chair Nigerian & African Women of Faith Network; Executive Director Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP)

## **II. History of Roman Catholic Leadership in *Religions for Peace* Global Movement**

The late Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago (then the Archbishop of Cincinnati); the late Archbishop Angelo Fernandez (Delhi) and the late Cardinal John Wright (Boston) contributed to the preparatory process for the First *R/P* World Assembly in 1970.

Eminent Roman Catholic leaders from all regions of the world have held leadership positions in the *R/P* global movement since its establishment in 1970, including:

### **AFRICA**

**Cardinal Fox Napier** (*Leadership on a National Level*) **Archbishop John Odama** (*Leadership on a National Level*) **Archbishop Polycarp Pengo** (*Leadership on a National Level*)

**Sr. Carmen Sammut**, President, International Union of Superiors General (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

### **ASIA**

**Cardinal Peter Shrayanagi** (*Leadership on a Global Level*) **Archbishop Fernando Capalla** (*Leadership on a Global Level*) **Archbishop Antonio Ledesma** (*Leadership on a National Level*)

### **EUROPE**

**H.G. Luigi Bressan**, (*Leadership on a Global Level*) **Cardinal Godfried Daneels** (*Leadership on a Global Level*) **Cardinal Angelo Scola** (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

**Dr. Chiara Lubich** (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

**Bishop Leonard Kenney** (*Leadership on a Regional Level*)

### **LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

**Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga** (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

**H.E. Cardinal Robles Ortega**, Archbishop of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

**Cardinal Julio Terrazas** (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

### **MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA)**

**H.B. Fouad Twal** (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

**Patriarch Michel Sabbah** (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

**Patriarch Louis Raphaël Sako**, Archbishop of Baghdad, Iraq (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

## **NORTH AMERICA**

**H.E. Cardinal Timothy Dolan**, Archbishop of New York, United States (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

**Cardinal William Keeler** (*Leadership on a Global Level*)

*Large numbers of additional Roman Catholics also serve in RfP's 90 affiliated regional and national councils.*

### **III. Milestones in the RfP - Vatican/Holy See Joint Journeys**

*Religions for Peace (RfP)* has worked with the Pontifical Council of Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) since the presidency of His Eminence Cardinal Francis Arinze. Given its multi-religious constituency and mission, *Religions for Peace* gratefully recognizes the PCID as a natural counterpart in the Vatican.

The opening of the *Religions for Peace* Sixth World Assembly took place in the Vatican Synod Aula on 3 November 1994 with an audience and welcome address by the late Pope Saint John Paul II.



H.H. Pope John Paul II hosting *Religions for Peace* 6<sup>th</sup> World Assembly opening ceremony, 1994

In 2016, *Religions for Peace (RfP)* entered a close and spirited partnership with the Pontifical Academies of Sciences and Social Sciences to co-launch a new three-year initiative called **Ethics in Action for Sustainable and Integral Development**, organised in partnership with the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and the University of Notre Dame, with aid from the Fetzer Institution. The inaugural meeting was held at the Vatican on 30 October 2016 through the support of Archbishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, President of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. Religious leaders, theologians, academics, business and labour leaders, development practitioners and activists convened to develop a moral consensus around eight sustainable and integral development

challenges to convert consensus into concrete action. These challenges were:

1. The dramatic shortfall of educational opportunities, with half of the world's children not receiving an adequate education or remaining outside of school entirely due to poverty, conflicts, environmental disasters, forced migration, modern slavery, or other abuses.
2. Restraining corruption, impunity, and organized crime in the public and private sectors. We experience today a global epidemic of corruption, abuse and arrogance of power in all social strata that weaken the sovereign power of the people and participatory democracy, and the repeated failure of political leaders to relinquish power on constitutional timetables.
3. Global climate change and the destruction of the intricate web of life, caused by heedless economic activity;
4. Poverty and deprivation of “work, shelter, land and energy,” in the midst of great plenty;
5. Modern forms of slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, inhumane work conditions, the sale of organs, commercial sex work, and diverse forms of organized crime;
6. Corporate power and structures of corporate abuse unmoored from public purpose and free from public oversight;
7. Mass migration caused by regional violence and environmental degradation;
8. Inter-communal violence exacerbated by failing states and rapidly widening economic inequalities

On 18-19 October 2017, *R/P* held its annual meeting of senior religious leaders from all continents, joined by *R/P* International Trustees, select government representatives, and foundations committed to collaborating for the common good. His Holiness Pope Francis graced the gathering by offering a special audience and [greeting](#).



H.H. Pope Francis receiving *Religions for Peace* World Council at the Vatican, October 2017

#### IV. Regional Spotlights - Common Purpose and Engagement between *RfP* mission and Catholic Leadership

*RfP* Myanmar is led by **H.E. Cardinal Charles Bo**, alongside leaders from Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim communities in multi-religious peace and reconciliation processes. Recently, **Cardinal Bo** voiced his [parallel appeal](#) with Pope Francis for a global ceasefire and continued his efforts to aid the peace process in Myanmar, [August 2020](#). *RfP* Myanmar has made numerous statements and has an extensive history of working with the Catholic Church on issues of peace, see [June 2018](#) and [July 2020](#). *RfP* is also directly partnered with and works alongside Caritas Internationalis, with whom *RfP* has had a [longstanding relationship](#).

Honorary President **H.E. Cardinal John Onaiyekan** has been working with Sultan of Sokoto in overcoming violent extremism. His Excellency also helped lead *RfP*'s organization of a movement-wide moment of hope and solidarity, on [1 April 2020](#).

*RfP* World Council member **H.E. Philippe Cardinal Ouédraogo** has spoken and worked at length for peace, as noted in Vatican News in [December 2019](#).

**Judge Mohamed Abdelsalam**, Religions for Peace World Council Member, is the first Muslim to ever present a papal encyclical. [Story here](#).

The *RfP* World Council joined **Pope Francis** and His Eminence the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, in the call for all to observe together a day of prayer, fasting and charity in the face of the coronavirus pandemic on [14 May](#).

Catholic members and representatives at the [10<sup>th</sup> World Assembly](#), included prominent Catholic Church personalities include **Cardinal John Onaiyekan** Archbishop of Abuja, **Cardinal José Robles Ortega** of Guadalajara, **Cardinal Louis Raphael Sako** of Baghdad, the head of the Chaldean Catholic Church, retired Italian **Archbishop Luigi Bressan of Trento** and **Maltese Sister Carmen Sammut**, the president of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG).

#### *Historical Steps - The Catholic Church and Religions for Peace (RfP) in Latin America and the Caribbean*

The Latin American and Caribbean Council of Religious Leaders (LACCRL) finds in its origins in a meeting between Rev. Kyoichi Sugino and **Fr. Mauricio Velez** (currently Auxiliary Bishop of Medellin) at the seat of the Latin American Catholic Episcopal Council (CELAM), in Bogota, in 2003.

In 2004, it held the first *RfP* Latin American and Caribbean Consultation in Sao Paulo, organized with the active collaboration and participation of **CELAM**, in order to prepare the launch of the LACCRL.

In follow up on this event and other subsequent meetings, in 2005, the RSG had a meeting with **H. E. Cardinal Francisco Javier Errazuriz** (then Archbishop of Santiago and CELAM President) about the official appointment of an official representative of CELAM in the LACCRL in formation.

As a result of this meeting, H. E. Cardinal Errazuriz was officially designated **H. E. Cardinal Julio Terrazas** (then Archbishop of Santa Cruz de la Sierra). In 2006, in Panama City, at the inaugural meeting of the LACCRL, H. E. Cardinal Terrazas was elected the first Regional Moderator.

In 2010, CELAM appointed **H. E. Cardinal Jose Francisco Robles Ortega** (then Archbishop of Monterrey and now Archbishop of Guadalajara), who was later elected LACCRL Moderator. In 2013 he was replaced by **H. E. Cardinal Raymundo Damasceno** (then Archbishop of Aparecida), who continues as Regional Moderator.

Additionally, **H. E. Cardinal Rodriguez Maradiaga** actively participated in the RfP Meso-American Inter-Religious Network during his tenure as International Co-President.

In 2006, at the 8th RfP World Assembly in Kyoto, **H. E. Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga** was reelected as International Co-President. In 2013, at the 9th RfP World Assembly in Wien, **H. E. Cardinal Robles** was elected as International Co-President. At the 10<sup>th</sup> World Assembly in Lindau, in 2019, **Most Rev. Miguel Cabrejos**, (Archbishop of Trujillo, Peru and, CELAM President) was elected as RfP International Co-President.

Also, at the World Assembly in Lindau, **María Lia Zervino**, President, World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO), was elected International Co-President. She is also a consultant to the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID).

**Pope Francis** has met with leaders of RfP in Latin America and the Caribbean on several occasions. [In November 2013](#), he received a delegation of LACCRL, including **H.E. Cardinal Raymundo Damasceno Assis**, from RfP Latin America & the Caribbean. [In January 2018](#), the RfP Interreligious Council (IRC) Peru met with **Pope Francis** in Lima.

RfP is grateful for the guidance and partnerships to date, and is committed to continuing to serve the common purpose with the Vatican and Holy See for peace, around the world.