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How does the Roman Catholic Church understand the Global Christian Forum ?

The Roman Catholic Church has been involved with the Global Christian Forum since its beginning, and we are grateful to be celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary here in Ghana. The Global Christian Forum has helped us to learn to love one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. As history demonstrates, the ecumenical movement is first and above all a movement of love. As Jesus teaches, “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn 13:35)

What would you like the world to know ?

I would like the world to know God’s everlasting love for the world.

In particular, I would like those who have been marginalized, those who are vulnerable, those who are suffering - the women victims of wartime rape in Tigray; the grandmothers and mothers searching for their disappeared children in Mexico; the migrant children and young people who are victims of human trafficking in Europe ; those who have been harmed and sexually abused by Church leaders – to know that we the disciples of Jesus gathered here in Ghana see you and hear your cries. We stand in solidarity with you, we walk by your side, we commit once again to struggle for justice for you.

I would also like the world to know, by our prayer and our deeds, that the Church of Jesus Christ recognizes its own many failures. As we prayed together in Cape Coast, “We lament the times, past and present, when the Church has been the cause of suffering.”

Let us ask God that we the Church be humble, that we the Church lament, that we the Church serve and commit to relationships that will make reconciliation possible, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

How do you know Christ ?

From the Gospel of John 20:19-20

“Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.” Jesus has conquered death, but he still bears scars. The disciples recognized the Risen Lord in his woundedness. I have been blessed in my ecumenical journey by the strength and resilience of victims and survivors of sexual violence in the Catholic Church and other Churches who have entrusted me with their stories. As Jesus, they have shown us their wounds, with great courage, and they have opened the way for truth in the Churches. I would like to acknowledge these survivors and give thanks for their voices.

As we have experienced here in Accra, Jesus also makes himself known to us through the love of our brothers and sisters in Christ. I would like to express gratitude and appreciation to those who have gone before us, who have worked so tirelessly for Christian unity, for those whose names we know and those whose names we do not know. As we celebrate twenty-five years of the Global Christian Forum today, we remember those who have given so much to this

movement. We remember H.E. Mor Gregoreous Youhanna Ibrahim, member of the international committee of the Global Christian Forum, who was abducted with his brother bishop of Aleppo, Archbishop Boulos Yazigi, on April 22, 2013, while traveling to negotiate the release of two kidnapped priests. May we continue to pray for them and for all those who have been disappeared.

As a Catholic, it is important for me to meet Jesus in prayer and in the celebration of the Eucharist, the Lord's supper. May we continue to make Jesus' prayer to the Father our own, through the Holy Spirit, that we may be one so that the world may know the eternal love of God. May we continue to learn to love one another so that we may one day all be gathered around the same table and share the Bread of Life together for the world.

How do you make Christ known ?

In the days of his Passion, Jesus asks his disciples to stay awake with him. May we be vigilant sentinels, may we have the courage to denounce injustice and knock over tables in the temple.

Jesus asks his disciples to pray with him. May we be faithful to this call in the invisible monastery of all who pray for Christian unity.

Jesus asks his disciples to walk with him. May we continue to walk together, may we walk in the world as Simon of Cyrene, who bears the cross for Jesus.

Jesus asks his disciples to hope with him.

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart.”
(Jeremiah 29, 11-13)

May we be of one heart as we continue to seek Jesus so that the world may know God's love.