

CET 118TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT

On June 6 and 7, 2024, the 118th General Assembly of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Turkey took place in Izmir. It was attended by H.E. Msgr. Marek Solczyński, Apostolic Nuncio to Turkey, H.E. Msgr. Martin Kmetec OFM Conv, Metropolitan Archbishop of Izmir, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Turkey, H.E. Msgr. Paolo Bizzeti SJ, Apostolic Vicar of Anatolia, Vice President of the same Bishops' Conference, H. E. Msgr. Sabri Anar, Archbishop of Diyarbakır of the Chaldeans, H.E. Msgr. Maximilian Palinuro, Apostolic Vicar of Istanbul, H.E. Msgr. Antuan Ilgıt, Auxiliary Bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of Anatolia. Rev. Fr. Vartan Kirakos, representing H.E. Archbishop Lévon Boghos Zékiyan, Archbishop of the Istanbul Archdiocese of the Armenians, also took part in the proceedings.

Before the work of the Assembly began, the Latin Bishops met with some of the heads of Caritas Internationalis, Caritas Italia and Caritas Türkiye. The reason for this meeting was the desire to reflect communally on the current set-up and work of these institutions, planning future steps in view of an increasingly fruitful activity and collaboration.

At the opening of the Assembly H.E. Msgr. Martin Kmetec OFM Conv., Metropolitan Archbishop of Izmir, was elected for a second term as President of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Turkey and H.E. Msgr. Sabri Anar, Archbishop of Diyarbakır of the Chaldeans, was elected as Vice President. Those present also confirmed Rev. Fr. Lucian Abalintoaiei OFM Conv. for a third term as Secretary General.

In the course of the work, carried out in a cordial and constructive atmosphere, the current situation of the Catholic Church in Turkey was examined, sharing the joy for the many good fruits that the Holy Spirit is stirring up in the different communities and trying to identify the best ways forward to cope with the concrete problems and needs of the current period.

The Assembly considered the new Statutes of the National Commission for Catechesis and the updates made to the training proposed by the "Alpha and Omega" course. It also discussed the activities of the Istanbul Inter-Ritual Ecclesiastical Court, which will once again become the only Catholic ecclesiastical forum in Turkey. Some upcoming significant moments in the life of the universal Church such as the Jubilee Year 2025 and the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea (325-2025) were considered. The bishops noted with satisfaction that the work of the Commission for the new translation of the Missal into Turkish is proceeding fruitfully. In the spirit of authentic synodal listening, some leaders of the Neocatechumenal Way communities present in our nation were invited for a moment of discussion: recognizing some good fruits brought by their activity over the years, they were encouraged to grow in ecclesial communion and docile cooperation with the diocesan bishops.

The Assembly concluded in the evening of June 7, 2024 with a solemn Holy Mass presided over by H.E. Archbishop Marek Solczyński, Apostolic Nuncio to Turkey, in the Cathedral of St. John the Apostle in Izmir. During the celebration, the Consecration of the Church of Turkey to the Sacred Heart of Jesus took place, an initiative proposed on the occasion of the National Eucharistic Year.

H.E.R. Msgr. Antuan Ilgıt

Spokesman of CET