

DECLARATIONS OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES IN ARGENTINA, 2000 AND 2003

MESSAGE AGAINST NEOLIBERALISM, 2000

We, members of the Reformed Churches in Argentina, gathered under the calling: “United in defense of Life, having the same love, sharing in the same Spirit and being of the same mind” (Philippians 2:2), and after a time of reflection and communion,

We affirm:

1. Jesus Christ is our only Lord
2. We condemn the neoliberal model which presents itself as the only way of life, creating much anxiety, discrimination (between social groups, ethnical groups and nations), exclusion, lack of job opportunities, deterioration of the health and educational systems, an uneven distribution of wealth, and unemployment.
3. We believe in one Lord who calls us to unity, to fullness of life for all people (John 10:10), to solidarity which is possible and to continue to dream of a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1-4).

We summon:

Churches to prayer and all people of good will to create space without exclusion, affirming that each person in important, has dignity and can contribute to the common good; we appeal to all people to denounce all threats against Life.

Synod of the Reformed Churches in Argentina

Buenos Aires, 10-11 June 2000

FAITH DECLARATION OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES IN ARGENTINA, 2003

Against Economic Injustice and the Destruction of the Earth¹

We, as members of the Reformed Churches in Argentina, believe we should affirm the spirit that moves us when we meet to “Celebrate Service” as the theme of this our XXXV Synod, which is enriched by the dedication and work that each of our communities carries out in these difficult times.

Certainly this social work implies concrete challenges which we cannot avoid if we want to appraise the service carried out over the years. Questions arise: How to integrate celebration and service? Which is our particular protestant contribution?; How can we be an alternative community of inclusion and resistance?

We must go even further in our reflection on how we transform our life to become “communities of sharing and redistribution of resources”, so that we reaffirm God’s justice amongst the suffering people within our society.

This is why:

We Confess the absolute sovereignty of God –Father, Son and Holy Spirit, over all creation, as well as over our life, our time, our talents and our possessions.

“The world is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world and those who dwell within” (Psalm 24:1).²

We Recognize God’s joy for the totality of creation, and the blessing over all that was created:

- the universe – sun, moon, stars;
- our habitat and what emerges from it – land, nature, animals;
- humanity – created in God’s image and likeness, in diversity of capacities, talents and cultural expressions.

“And God saw all that he had made, and it was very good” (Genesis 1:31).

“May the Lord rejoice in his works” (Psalm 104:31).

We Accept that the wholeness of God’s work is destined for a complete interrelation and interdependency for mutual benefit and growth. The whole of Creation is called to glorify God.

¹ Approved by XXXV Synod of the Reformed Churches in Argentina, Tandil, Buenos Aires, 14-16 June, 2003

² All Biblical quotes are taken from The New English Bible, Oxford University Press, 1970.

“Let all praise the name of the Lord, for his name is high above all others; and his majesty above earth and heaven...” (Psalm 148:13).

We Affirm that the only way God’s creation will not lose its original sense is to live the justice of God’s Kingdom, adopting as our own the values Jesus lived.

“Set your mind on God’s Kingdom and his justice before everything else, and all the rest will come to you as well” (Matthew 6:33).

“Let justice roll on like a river, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” (Amos 5:24).

We Confess our personal and social sin by which in the midst of all God’s greatness, the human ambition of wanting “to be like God” leads to the disobedience of his will, displacing him from the centre of life. This way the fulfilling relationship desired by God is broken and so women and men turn against women and men, against nature and against God. All this results in alienation, destruction, war, invasion, violence as the method to resolve conflict, degradation and death.

“For sin pays a wage, and the wage is death” (Romans 6:23).

We continue to experience the presence of sin destroying God’s plan; today this takes the form of a globalized economic-cultural-political-educational-ecological and social project, present in the neo-liberal model and supported by the world-wide mass media and communication system, by which few people accumulate enormous wealth while the majority of the world population is condemned to miserization, hunger, illness, ignorance, exploitation and marginalization. In other words, instead of access to life in fullness for all, they merely survive. This same economic project abuses nature in the indiscriminate exploitation of the air, the earth and the waters. Jesus came to this world to affirm life as a gift from God for creation in its totality, reminding us of the covenant of life.

(John 10:11).

“God spoke... ‘I now make my covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, all birds and cattle, all the wild animals with you on earth, all that have come out of the ark. I will make a covenant with you: never again shall there be a flood to lay waste the earth’ (Genesis 9:8-11).

Because of all this:³

We Affirm our irrevocable hope in God’s will for this world and for this time;

We Reject all economic, political, social and cultural projects that try to displace God as sovereign;

We Denounce every intent to hinder the development of life in all its fullness, such as God has again and again expressed as his will;

We Denounce every act that ridicules God’s joy for what was created in richness and diversity;

We Reject every attempt to destroy the interrelation desired by God which emerges from selfishness and individuality in every form;

We Recognize that sin can not contribute to the construction of the world as desired by God, on the contrary it only affirms what separates, kills, harms;

We Express our solidarity with all women, men, elderly, youth and children who subsist in a reality of death.

We commit ourselves to

faithfully live God’s will in our personal, social, religious, cultural and political life;

firmly raise our voices against injustice in all its forms;

live in solidarity with victims of every system that opposes the fullness of life for all;

live in permanent hope of the Kingdom.

THE REFORMED CHURCHES IN ARGENTINA AFFIRM OUR FAITH IN JESUS WHO HAS CONQUERED THE PROJECT THAT UNDERMINES GOD’S PLAN AND COMMIT OURSELVES TO EXPRESS THE CELEBRATION OF LIFE AND OUR BEING COMMUNITY ALWAYS TO SERVE JOYFULLY.

“Jesus said: ‘In the world you will have trouble. But courage! The victory is mine; I have conquered the world’ (John 16:33).

³ This section was approved for Liturgical use in Church Services as a Declaration of Faith.

Translated by Roberto Jordan, Argentina