
COVID-19 Coronavirus: Austria, document from Bishops' Conference. Social rights and call to restart “in a spirit of solidarity”

In a document released by the Austrian Bishops' Conference (ÖBK) today, entitled “For a spiritually-renewed normality”, the bishops speak of a restart - after the coronavirus crisis - in a “spirit of solidarity”, and call for the social security of all people. The detailed document focuses on work, minimum income, and family support. In any case, “there is a need for regulations and structures to prevent more and more people in need from struggling to survive on the margins of a well-off society”. The Bishops call for comprehensive aid and assistance and for a fundamental debate on a poverty-proof social state. At the same time, they invite everyone to listen to those who have been psychologically affected and to be aware that many people have reached the limits of their resilience. The consequences of this are, for instance, an increase in domestic tensions, depression or other mental disorders. “Now offering more pastoral care, counselling and therapeutic opportunities is a Pentecostal task”, the ÖBK said. The Bishops’ idea to call for a “spiritually-renewed normality” comes in the run-up to Pentecost, a feast so dear to the German churches, and is an allusion to the “new normality” announced by the Federal Government. In their document, the Bishops thank “all those who have worked for the good of others in this crisis”.

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