
COMECE: European Bishops on Next Generation EU, “may this crisis be the beginning of a European recovery through justice”.

“Today, amidst a new tragedy - the COVID-19 pandemic - we call on the EU to renew the spirit of solidarity and to agree on a recovery plan that puts the question of justice at its centre”. The Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the EU (COMECE) has today issued this appeal following the presentation of Next Generation EU (formerly called Recovery Fund) by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. “The COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences have hit the European Union unexpectedly and brutally” exposing “our vulnerability to public health crises as well as the fragility and weaknesses of the EU to act in times of crisis”. The EU Bishops are particularly concerned by “the failure to show solidarity, the unilateral border closures and the self-centric actions by members states in March. Such actions “have caused disappointment amongst many citizens about the European project”. While, on the one hand, what happened at the beginning of the pandemic has revealed the “deficiency of the EU to live up to its values in times of crisis”, on the other hand, the recovery plan proposed by the European Commission yesterday sets out a “clear perspective for a Europe that aims to grow united”. Hence the appeal from the EU Bishops to member states: “A swift agreement on an ambitious recovery plan would be a visible sign that the EU and its member states have returned to the track of solidarity”. The statement ends with an appeal: “Let us find new hope for Europe in a joint recovery that expresses our renewed spirit of solidarity as well as our ambition to work for a just future. Let us act together, hope and pray that this crisis will be the beginning of a European recovery through justice”.

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