



Catholic Bishops and the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Hunga | 08.11.1994

Joint Statement on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Holocaust

**Hungarian Bishops and
Ecumenical Council of Churches in Hungary
November 1994**

The bishops of the Hungarian Catholic Church as well as the bishops and leading pastors of the member churches of the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Hungary and the communities they are here representing commemorate in piety the tragic events of fifty years ago, when Jews living in Hungary were dragged off to concentration camps and slaughtered in cold blood. We consider it as the greatest shame of our twentieth century that hundreds of thousands of lives were extinguished merely because of their origin.

On the anniversary of these painful events we pay the tribute of respect to the memory of the victims. Conforming to the message of the Scripture we all consider the Holocaust as an unpardonable sin. This crime burdens our history as well as our communities and reminds us of the obligation of propitiation, apart from pious commemoration.

On the occasion of the anniversary we have to state that not only the perpetrators of this insane crime are responsible for it but all those who, although they declared themselves members of our churches, through fear, cowardice, or opportunism, failed to raise their voices against the mass humiliation, deportation, and murder of their Jewish neighbors. Before God we now ask forgiveness for this failure committed in the time of disaster fifty years ago.

We look at those, who in that dehumanized age, rescued lives at the cost of their own, or endangering it, and surmounting denominational considerations, protested with universal and general effect against the diabolical plots.

It is a task of conscience for us all to strengthen the service of reconciliation in our communities, for this is the only way for all persons to be equally respected and live in mutual understanding and love.

We have to aim at developing true humaneness, so that there will be no more antisemitism or any kind of discrimination, and so that the crimes of the past will never happen again.