



PRESS NOTE: 12<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2022

## **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FABC GENERAL CONFERENCE**

Thailand will host the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference (FABC) General Conference, who are gathering to celebrate their 50th Anniversary. The Baan Phu Waan Pastoral Centre in Nakhon Pathom's Sam Phran will host 200 delegates, including Cardinals, Bishops and lay representatives from 29 member countries across Asia from 12th to 30th October 2022.

The inauguration of the Conference was held at the Shrine of Blessed Nicholas Bunker Kitbamrung in Bangkok, on 22<sup>nd</sup> August; the Feast of the Queenship of Mary, seeking her intercession for the FABC. A campaign of prayer, in all parishes in Asia, was initiated to pray for the success of the General Conference.

This General Conference marks five decades since the Bishops of Asia came together for the first time in 1970, to establish the FABC, which was founded in response to the needs and challenges of the Asian Church fifty years ago. The opening ceremony on 12th October will be presided over by H.E. Charles Cardinal Bo, President of the FABC. From October 12th, up to the 30th, the members of this Assembly will undertake, with great responsibility, the monumental goals of the FABC 50; of reaffirming, renewing, and revitalizing the Church in Asia.

The first few days of the FABC General Conference will be spent in understanding and deliberating on the emerging realities in different countries as the FABC '*visits Asia*'. Each of the 29 member countries have been invited to present an exposition on the present situation in their countries: political, social, economic, religious and any other challenges for the Catholic Church.

From the 17th to 22nd of October, the General Conference will reflect on these realities, in dialogue with recent Papal documents. The FABC Guide Document and subsequent consultations have already highlighted some of them - the pandemic, globalization, socio-economic and political challenges - and the issues of gender; indigenous people, yearnings of the youth, and the transformation of the Church. The FABC will connect these realities with reflections on the documents of Pope Francis, especially *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Fratelli Tutti*, *Laudato Si'*, *Amoris Laetitia*, and *Predicate Evangelium*, and will focus on the lessons the Church in Asia needs to learn in order to respond to them.

A number of sections will have virtual voting as the FABC explores how to revitalize the life of the Church. Meetings, workshops, and sessions will be interspersed with moments of silence and recollection, and readings from Scripture, the importance of which was emphasized by His Holiness, Pope Francis. These ensure that the FABC General Conference remains guided by the Holy Spirit, our Comforter and Paraclete, who is ever present, moving through the world and sustaining all with His breath of life.

On Mission Sunday, October 23rd, the shepherds of Asia will make 'virtual visits' to parishes in different member countries, to guarantee that deliberations do not remain theoretical, and to uphold the duty of building up the Kingdom through loving service. Thus fortified, the FABC will spend the following week discerning and envisioning new pathways for the Church and working for a better Asia, with experts guiding the delegates through new methodologies.

The FABC 50 General Conference is of utmost importance. Its members will be committing to become and remain a prophetic, relevant and responsive Asian Church, at the service of the people of Asia. This can only be done by being in communion with all the peoples of Asia, with active participation and adherence to the mission of renewed and shared evangelical outreach. FABC 50 will come to a close on Oct 30th, with a new vision mapping the Church's path in Asia through a Message and final Document.

The General Conference will be concluded by H.E. Luis Cardinal Tagle, who has been appointed as delegate by the Holy Father.

The FABC is grateful for the prayers from across Asia. Through the intercession of the Holy Spirit and continued support, the members hope for a successful journey, and the wisdom and strength to carry out their mission.

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Please find below the program for the FABC 20220 General Conference:

October 12

16:30 :Opening Eucharist (St. Michael Hall [SMH])

18:00 :Opening Ceremonies (St John Paul II Hall)

Both of these will be streamed on the FABC YouTube Channel URL:  
<https://youtu.be/o7KKD1ofik>

October 13-15

Visiting Asia: This event is closed to the press to enable the Bishops to speak freely about their country and the concerns. A press statement after these three days will follow.

October 16

09:00 :Eucharist (SMH)

11:00 :Talk Show with Asia

This too will be live-streamed on the YouTube channel of the FABC 2020

October 17-22

Emerging Realities and the Church in Asia

October 19

17:00 Bishops' Meeting with the Focolare

October 22

15:00 Recollection

October 23

09:00 :World Mission Sunday Eucharist (SMH)

11:00 :Virtual Visits to Parishes in Asia

October 24-25

Discerning New Pathways for the Church in Asia. Once again this part of the program will not be open to the press.

October 26

Pilgrimage to Ayutthaya (A summary video will be provided)

October 27-29

Final Message and schema of Final Document

October 30

09:00 Closing Eucharist and Ceremonies (Cathedral)

Every day we will provide a brief summary of what has happened during the day, a link to the photographs, and short videos. Link to Press Resources Folder:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CoEEayqFsRN3rh7eimmHtYg7A8k8R0q6?usp=sharing>