

*An explanation and a pastoral word to the clarification
about the Lady of All Nations*

Devotion to Mary as the Lady and Mother of All Nations is good and valuable; it must, however, remain separate from the messages and the apparitions. These are not approved by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. That is the core of the clarification which has come about in accordance with the Congregation following the recent appearance of various national and international reports concerning the veneration.

The present clarification is the result of conversations I have had with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith following reports and inquiries which recently appeared in the press.

It is permitted to use the image and the prayer—always in the way the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith approved in 2005. Days of Prayer in honor of the Lady of All Nations are also allowed; however, reference may not be made to the apparitions and messages which are not approved.

Anything that might be understood as (implicit) recognition of the messages and apparitions has to be avoided because the Congregation passed a negative judgement about these which was confirmed by Pope Paul VI. This fact will be new for many people. In 2002, namely, when Bishop Punt took a position on the authenticity of the apparitions, only a notification from the year 1974 was known. In the 1980's my predecessor believed that it might be possible to authorize this devotion, and Bishop Bomers finally decided for that in 1996.

For everyone who feels united in devotion to the Lady of All Nations is the good news in this clarification approved by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith that devotion to Mary under this title is permitted and words of appreciation are dedicated to it.

For many faithful, however, it will be especially painful that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Pope Paul VI expressed a negative judgement about the apparitions. I want to say to all of them that I can understand their disappointment. The apparitions and the messages have inspired many people. I hope that it is a consolation to them that devotion to Mary under the title "Lady of All Nations" remains in place, whether in the chapel in Amsterdam or at the Days of Prayer, at which in the past I myself was present several times.

This is the judgement of the Church which we have to obey trusting that the Lord guides His Church and does not abandon it; however, that should in no way impair our ardent love for Mary, the Lady and Mother of All Nations.

I sincerely hope that all of us, in good times and in bad, will only grow stronger in love of our heavenly Mother to whom the Lord on the Cross entrusted us: "Woman, behold, your son!" (Jn 19:26), behold your children, under your protection we take our refuge ...

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Translation from the Dutch original