

06 December 2019

## To our brother Jesuits and Companions in mission in Hong Kong:

We, the Major Superiors of the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific, are concerned for you and the people of Hong Kong. We affirm our solidarity with you in prayer for healing and for a just and peaceful resolution to the ongoing crisis. When we met in Hong Kong last July, we witnessed the mounting conflict. It had touched everyone. We are painfully saddened at the injuries, loss of life, increasing destruction, and the tearing of the social fabric of your attractive city with its extraordinary history. This crisis for Hong Kong is also a time of challenge for Asia Pacific and for our world.


The anxiety, frustration and pain of the people of Hong Kong move us deeply. The complexities, uncertainties and unpredictability of this shocking series of events create, understandably, apprehension and fear. We pray for courage, creativity, and compassion for you all, and above all for those who accompany the youth today in Hong Kong. No one is unaffected by the current crisis, but perhaps the youth are the ones who are the hardest hit. Many of them cannot see a hope-filled future for themselves and for Hong Kong. Your lives, dreams and culture are at stake. This crisis affects all, no single socio-economic class, ethnic group, common people or the elite are left untouched. The people as a whole are called to respond.

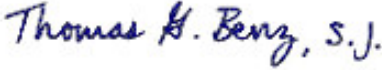
We abhor violence. While we do recognize the vital importance of getting behind the causes of violence, we also believe that violence breeds more violence, not justice. Once the path of violence has been opened, it becomes more and more difficult, regardless of political persuasions or duties, to move to harmony. Harmony can only come after reconciliation is won. Reconciliation can happen only once justice is honored. Justice cannot be achieved until the facts and truth are recognized and accepted. Only through dialogue with empathy can we find and accept the truth among and between us.


Do we have the courage to embark on such an arduous journey? To do so requires the desire to listen, to dialogue with empathy, seeking to understand and accept one another, seeking to unearth the causes of the frustrations and anxieties that now find such ferocious expressions. For this, sobriety and the rule of law must prevail. For this all must agree to live together, a fresh social and cultural pact must be envisaged together. For Christian people, “responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation” (*Evangelii Gaudium* #220). We join you in solidarity of prayer that this immense task will be grasped and enabled.


As members and companions of our Society, we are called to be ministers of reconciliation. For this we support you, brother Jesuits and mission companions, as you create spaces for dialogue and pursue the path of non-violence and peace. In this present environment of


distress and anger, we entrust you and your intentions to the Lord, who knows the deepest longings of our hearts. May Mary, the Queen of Peace, Mary, the Untier of Knots accompany you now, and in the days and weeks ahead.

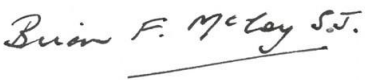
  
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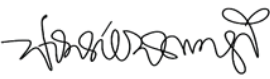
  
**Renzo de Luca SJ**  
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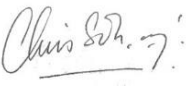
  
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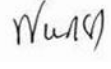
  
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