

August 18, 2020

To the faithful of the Archdiocese of Osaka:

**CANCELLED:
INTERNATIONAL DAY 2020 (Oct 18)**

+ May the Peace of the Lord be with you all!

Today, foreigners comprise more than half of the Catholic population in Japan. For the past 25 years, the Archdiocese of Osaka has been celebrating every year INTERNATIONAL DAY (what used to be called “*Kokusai kyōryoku no hi*”) at St. Mary's Cathedral, with a special Mass and a cultural exchange program to mark the occasion. The event is intended as an effort to build a “church of openness and friendship (*Majiwari no Kyōkai*)”—one of the priorities the Archdiocese upholds in its “Plan for Renewal (*Shinsei Keikaku*).”

This year however, I am sad to announce that the event has to be cancelled due to the ongoing outbreak of Covid-19. Instead of the usual event we hold every year, I would like to ask you to think of organizing a similar event locally at your own parish, pastoral zone or bloc, as much as you could. It may be a multilingual Mass celebrated with foreigners and migrants, or an online international prayer gathering.

I hope that our INTERNATIONAL DAY this year become an occasion for broadening the circle of your community, an occasion to deepen the brotherhood in Christ. For, the true image of the Church, the Family of God is a community that prays, shares, and celebrate together while overcoming the differences in language, nationality, race, and culture.

With gratitude and in prayers,

Thomas Aquinas Manyo Cardinal Maeda
Archbishop of Osaka