



## Dear Praying Friends in Europe,

### *Is it you Lord? Matthew 14:28*

The disciples are caught in a storm and are in trouble. In the midst of struggling to simply survive, a ghostly figure comes towards them. Grown men cry out in fear. Panic rises in the boat. Maybe we are still far away from panic, but isn't the situation spooky? First the Corona pandemic, then the Ukraine war, the resulting energy crisis, not to mention the summer droughts, and now suddenly the fear of nuclear conflict is growing louder.

Is it you Lord, who meets us in this storm of shakings, including the shaking of the church? In the midst of the fear we hear the voice of Jesus, *"Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid!"*

Jesus and the shakings are not identical, there is no question about that. But obviously God allows the shaking.

### God shakes so that the unshakable may come forth

We read in Hebrews 12:26, *"Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens."* The shaking wants to bring forth the unshakable, so that the eternal will increase in our lives and in our churches and movements, and that we will not rely on false securities. **Let us pray that the shaking will also change our focus in society and that we will re-align ourselves with the living God.**

### The drought

Once again we have experienced a period of drought this summer. In biblical thinking, it was almost self-evident that periods of drought are a call from God to his people to return to him. Already at the dedication of the temple, we hear from the mouth of God a direct connection between drought and our behaviour:



*"When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, ... if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."* (2 Chronicles 7:13 f). The news is full of the fact that this is an expression of the ecological crisis that we ourselves have caused by our treatment of creation. It is not a matter of denying the ecological connection, but of seeing deeper and seeking God's view about it and asking the Lord of all the Earth for his mercy - which of course includes turning from our "evil ways". The frightening thing, however, is that we as God's people hardly think any more of prayer as an answer to drought. **That's why it is so important that we go into prayer ourselves and take others along with us.**

### European Court of Human Rights

The international abortion lobby has suffered a significant defeat at the ECHR in a case attacking the restrictions on access to abortion in Poland and the right to conscientious objection, after a doctor refused to perform an abortion after 24 weeks on a disabled unborn child.

Several important issues were brought to light during this case, such as the eugenic beliefs held by activists in the pro-abortion lobby, and questions over the impartiality of lawyers on the ECHR Registry. Poland continues to be attacked at the ECHR over its stance on abortion.

More details can be found on the website of the European Centre for Law and Justice (in English and French) <https://ecj.org>

### Turning Point

In light of the Russian attack on Ukraine, many politicians have spoken of a turning point in time. "Rarely does evil show its face so openly," I read in our daily newspaper. The reality of evil is one of the realisations that our society has ceased to reckon with. But how do we confront evil? Do we allow ourselves to be infected with negative thoughts and feelings, even hatred? In one of the Canopy prayer letters, a brother from Ukraine offered a prayer that touched many deeply and can guide us to real prayer. He prayed that, despite the brutal war, hearts would not harden but remain soft. *May the Holy Spirit transform all stony hearts* (Ezekiel 36:26).

### Future paper of the EU

On 9th May 2022, the Conference on the Future of Europe presented its final report to the three EU institutions. This paper contains 49 proposals about the future of Europe. Shockingly, in the entire text of the 336-page final report, the words 'religion', 'faith', and 'church' are not mentioned. The idea that faith could have a significance in the future of Europe is no longer considered.

The Interparliamentary Assembly for Orthodoxy (I.A.O.) decided to intervene and make several clear and detailed proposals. **Let us pray that the churches will raise their voice and Europe will once again be built on the foundation of the Christian faith.**



### Is it you Lord?

- Who shakes us so that the unshakeable comes forth?
- Who shakes us awake, so that we rebuild the dimension of God in our society.

### Additional Prayer Points:-

1. Pray for Christians attending the World Cup in Qatar, that they may witness to migrant workers in that country and give Scripture booklets to these often lonely, depressed and troubled people.
2. Pray for the citizens of Ukraine as winter draws in and energy and water supplies are impacted by the continual missile attacks on critical infrastructure.

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