



Pastoral Assembly in the UAE

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Peace be with you!

As a fruit of last year's Pastoral Visit and after consultation with my Council I announced the convocation of an assembly of lay people for early January in order to listen to their concerns and to get their input for better pastoral planning, both in our parishes and at the level of the Vicariate. The many proposals received from your midst in view of the assembly showed your keen interest in the proposal.

Once the visit of the Holy Father to the UAE was announced, I knew that we had to put all our resources of time and personnel into the preparation of the visit of Pope Francis, and I fixed 1st March 2019 as the new date of the Lay Assembly. In the meantime, we enjoyed the presence of our Holy Father who celebrated with us the Solemn Mass at Zayed Sports City Stadium in Abu Dhabi. At the same time, the UAE has launched the Year of Tolerance and is counting on our active participation.

After careful reflection and in the interest of a fruitful first Lay Assembly, I wish to reschedule the Assembly for the UAE for Friday, 13th September, in Jebel Ali. Do not think I am trying to avoid this meeting - I really want it, but I also want it to be done well. The reasons for the postponement are: I want my staff to have time to filter and collate the material which was sent by many faithful and to prepare the necessary groundwork for the meeting, and I myself have many additional obligations and absences from the Vicariate during the coming months which prevent me from finding a free date earlier.

I promise you, that with my collaborators I shall carefully prepare this first meeting. You will also have the possibility to bring forward further inputs either by writing to info@avosa.org or in the course of my pastoral visit in the parish.

I ask the members of the Assembly, i.e. the vice-presidents and secretaries of the parish councils and those faithful who will be additionally invited, to keep the day of Friday, 13th September free (in Jebel Ali St. Francis, beginning with the Holy Mass at 9am, followed by the meeting until 1 pm).

Thank you for keeping all of us in your prayers.

With my blessings,

+ Paul Hinder

Bishop Paul Hinder
Apostolic Vicar for Southern Arabia



Abu Dhabi, Bishop's House, 17 February 2019