

Date: 4 – July 2020

Prayer and Condolences

Dear Members of Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu and Christian faithful of Myitkyina and especially the families of victims of jade mine tragedy

Our hearts are shattered by the horrific news about the death of over two hundreds of our young men in the jade mine tragedy. On behalf of RFP (Religions for Peace) Myanmar we express our heartfelt condolences to the families, to the diocese and to all affected by this heart wrenching disaster.

Those who died were not only buried under a landslide of the mountain but by the landslide of injustice. Pope Francis has raised his voice against the never ending tsunami of economic and environmental injustice against the poor all over the world. Those who perished were sacrificed on the altar of greed, by utter negligence and arrogance of companies that continue to dehumanize the poor of this land.

Our prayers go out to the families of victims. In these tragic times of COVID lockdown there cannot be a lockdown of the fire of hunger. That forced those poor to seek the crumbs of jade that fall from mega companies' bulldozers. Millions of our countrymen have lost livelihood to the Covid pandemic. This mine tragedy is a grim reminder of the need for sharing God given natural treasures. The treasures of Myanmar belong to the people of Myanmar.

This is not the first time of this merciless tragedy and if the relevant stakeholders do not respond with compassion and justice, this will not be the last time of this inhuman tragedy.

While commending the prompt response of authorities to this tragedy, we earnestly urge the government and other stakeholders to ensure that such tragedies do not repeat. This land is blessed with natural resources to provide for all. Let this be the last tragedy.

Let the tragedy strengthen our resolve to bring economic and ecological justice to our country men and women.

With our prayers and Sympathy,
On behalf of Religions for Peace, Myanmar



+ Cardinal Charles Bo,
Archbishop of Yangon
President Federation of Asian Bishops Conference
Patron for *RfP*-Myanmar
Co-President of *RfP*-International