



Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur

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My Dear People of God,

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:7

We have come to the end of a long journey which began in 2008 when we were told that we cannot call God in the way the majority of our Catholics in Malaysia have been used to for centuries. We mounted a challenge in the court to exercise our constitutional right to manage our own religious affairs. The Church took the position that the minister's restriction went against the spirit as well as the letter of our Federal Constitution.

My dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord, we have fought the good fight. Our team of lawyers must be congratulated for defending our right to practice our faith unhindered. They have presented the issues clearly and succinctly. From the beginning it had been an uphill journey, fraught with many challenges and obstacles. Yet, our Team persevered and we have now finished the race. Insofar as the Herald's case is concerned, we have exhausted the legal process to challenge the Minister's position which affects all Bahasa-speaking Christians in Malaysia.

We must now keep the faith. Do I know my faith well enough to defend it? I must deepen my understanding of why I believe what I believe. I must re-commit myself and my family to strengthening our faith. I must ensure the faith is passed down to the next generation intact. I must also attend formations that reinforces the faith that has been handed on to us.

The Government has said that the decision of the Court of Appeal is only confined to the Herald's case. We shall therefore take the government at its words. In no way does it include a prohibition in our Holy Scripture, the *Al-Kitab* as well as in our praise and worship during our celebration of the Holy Mass and prayer sessions.

We do not know what the future holds or what the repercussions of the decision of the Court of Appeal will be on rights of the minorities to practice their faith in the manner they consider in keeping with their religious practice, but we do know that we are a people of Faith and Hope. We believe all things happen for a reason. We must see with the eyes of faith and I believe we have gained much from this whole saga. We need to make a stand on the side of justice and truth. We need to protect the rights of the minority and the voiceless. We need to engage and to dialogue with the ignorant and bring about understanding. We need to forgive and to reach out in love especially to those who misunderstand and are misinformed. It is only Love that conquers all and God is Love.

Let us continue to worship and praise such a compassionate and loving God of ours.

Most Rev. Julian Leow
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