

UPF International Attends 77th Opening Prayer of the UN General Assembly

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UPF International -- UPF International attended the annual prayer before the 77th opening of the UN General Assembly hosted by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See on September 12, 2022 at the Church of the Holy Family in New York. **Rev. Gerald E. Murray**, parish pastor of the Church of the Holy Family, welcomed the diplomats, NGO representatives and other religious leaders. The service was officiated by **H.E. Archbishop Gabriele Giordano Caccia**, Apostolic Nuncio.

UN Secretary-General **H.E. António Guterres** gave a video message for the congregation praising the need for reverent services such as this. He stated,

To sail safely through the turbulent seas, we must stay true to the essential values common to all religions and central to the United Nations: compassion, solidarity, respect for the human person, the Golden Rule - "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." ... And as this important event reminds us, we need trust: trust in one another, and trust in humanity's ability to come together in pursuit of common goals, leaving no one behind. This trust inspired the founders of our United Nations, and it has sustained and guided our organization over 77 years.

H.E. Casaba Korosi, president of the United Nations General Assembly for the 77th session, spoke next in person, pointing out the values of trust and integrity are intrinsic to both the United Nations and the world's religions. **H.E. Korosi** said that since we are faced with a myriad of complicated and multidimensional crises today, we need to utilize both scientific evidence and the powerful influence of our faith, that is, our morality, respect and understanding. He emphasized his firm belief that science steered by our faith and morals are the essential keys of sustainable peace for which we all long.

H.E. the Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, next spoke, giving special attention to the threat and alarming consequences of nuclear war on innocent people around the world. His words conveyed an urgent call for building mutual cooperation amongst all faiths in order to address and solve our pressing global problems.

UPF, a non-governmental organization with general consultative status with ECOSOC, attended the solemn ceremony with many other NGOs. During the service the messages were complemented by the choir's heavenly voices and congregational recitation and singing. The whole experience was an affirmation of the need for setting aside time to remind ourselves of our common values, shared responsibilities, and oneness as God's children. The atmosphere also reminded us of our mutual need to seek God's wisdom and love as our fundamental source and guide in seeking peace for all in the world.