

Rome, 31 March 2025

Dear brothers and sisters,

With cordial greetings from Rome, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development commends the participants and organizers of this meeting, being held at Washington National Cathedral, and convening representatives of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faith communities together with WASH experts.

Since 2019, our Dicastery has helped to promote adequate WASH conditions in healthcare facilities. Personally engaged in responses to HIV-AIDS in Africa 10 years ago, I know what the lack of access to reliable healthcare means. Inadequate WASH presents grave risks to the well-being of many vulnerable patients and healthcare workers around the world; it undermines the dignity of each person; and it contributes to repetitive and worsening cycles of poverty and suffering.

While public aid for development cooperation is being drastically reduced in many countries, the fact that faith-based organizations are supporting WASH sends a powerful message. Yes, we do care, and we dare to get involved even in areas of much poverty and lack of public administration. All three Abrahamic faiths can say “Yes, we do care” as well as explain “Why?” Indeed, Pope Francis declared, “faith convictions can offer Christians, and ... other believers as well, ample motivation to care for nature and for the most vulnerable of [our] brothers and sisters” (*Laudato si’* 64).

Raising awareness, sharing lessons learned, combining resources, offering effective training, and improving communication are of paramount importance. Moreover, WASH improvements in hospitals and clinics must be monitored and maintained over time.

Your fine network of knowledge and lived experience includes major faith-based WASH-related organizations. May your meeting, reflecting, planning and strategizing all help to advance the common good for the poor of our human family and for our common home.

May God bless, protect and guide you, your colleagues, and all your beneficiaries.

Card. Michael Czerny S.J.
Prefect