

Bishop Barnes Closing Remarks

On behalf of my brother bishops, I want thank you. We have seen and we have heard, we have experienced, much work, enthusiasm, commitment and hope. We know that there are people who want to and are ready to work, to get involved. We are ready to get involved now.

We shared a lot, even in our present pain, even in this time of scandal, we didn't hide. It came up again and again and again. And even in the midst of hearing that, we love our Church. We love our Church. We know we must address our faults and our crimes and our sins, but we must also go ahead. We can't compromise what has been done here to the scandal that we are living. We must move on, even as we address our faults. We cannot live with fear. We have been saved. God is with his people. We have heard that time and time again. As bishops, we have heard that we are loved. That you love us, and you have affirmed us. And you ask of us, an accompaniment. You're asking us to accompany you. You've laughed with us and maybe at us. You've cried with us. You've heard our pain. You've given us all that you have. You're asking us to be accessible, not to intimidate you, not to keep you on the sidelines, to support you. Even in our budgets.

My brother bishops, our people are ready for leadership. They are already leaders. We must place them in leadership positions at all levels of the Church. Even as we strengthen our programs of formation and leadership training, we must show in our accompaniment that we also love our people and we must affirm them. People are committed. They are ready to lead. Let us walk together with them. Let us walk as brothers and sisters with them.

We have heard that there are clear priorities. We've heard some even mentioned this morning. Our youth and our young adults, in all that we do they must be first in our priorities. Our family, and the formation of the family, and our outreach to those in the peripheries, our brother and sister farmworkers, the incarcerated, and those that are suffering because of the broken immigration system of our country. We must bear fruit but we must do it together. We saw yesterday what one can do by just mentioning fruit. And I was waiting for the watermelon to come up to take part. To make a good fruit salad.

The V Encuentro has been the voice of millions, you are the delegates, you have brought the concerns, the dreams, of your brothers and sisters in your dioceses. And so in hearing you, we have heard them. We've heard your dreams, we've seen your tears, and we recognize your willingness and your commitment to be missionary disciples. These are the days that God has given us. We have been on the mountaintop, and now we need to come down and return to where we are from. It's time to come down from the mountain, but we have seen what can happen. What God wants of us: this unity, this fraternity, and this commitment. We go back home, but we go fortified, to share this experience. The Good News that we have lived here, we take back with us to put into action, to put into action. The V Encuentro will continue, it's a process, this is only an event of the process, now we need to see how we are going to carry it out in our parishes, and our dioceses and regions. We're going to make it real. And we know well, that these people do not get discouraged, and they don't give up.