

MINUTES

*Catholic Biblical Federation
10th Plenary Assembly
Mar Del Plata, Argentina*



PROCLAIMING
THE WORD

Gift of Life for
a Fragile World

(Rom 8:22-23)

Day 3

April 17, 2023

M01/17/04/23 OPENING OF THE SESSION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1.1 Opening of the Day by the Day's Moderator, Prof. Séamus O'Connell

The session commenced at 9.06 a.m. with the introduction by the day's moderator, Prof Seamus O'Connell, followed by a call to stillness and a reminder of the day's morning prayer, with references to Genesis ch. 1 and the primordial silence and silence of the tomb. He then prayed and invoked God's blessing, called the participants to follow Jesus, and prayed that he might feed us so that we might walk in his footsteps and become like him.

1.2 Organizational Matters. The CBF General Secretary, Fr. Jan Stefanów (GS)

- 1.2.1 SC stated that all documents of the Assembly: the program, documents, and minutes are available on the website of the Assembly at <https://c-b-f.org/CBFPA2023>
- 1.2.2 The minutes of the Assembly are published daily and are available for revision by the participants. Corrections and modifications should be brought to the General Secretary of the Assembly, Fr. Wojciech Szypula.
- 1.2.3 By noon today, the complete list of participants will be published with all the registered participants added.
- 1.2.4 The SG announced that the lists of afternoon seminars had been posted and that participants should consult the list and register themselves for the workshops of interest.

M02/17/04/23 CONFERENCE OF PROF. MORANDINI

Prof. Simone Morandini of Venice delivered the opening conference of the Assembly. The conference, which was broadcast live and presented in Italian with a simultaneous translation, was a presentation of the paper on the theme of fragility titled: "Quando sono debole è allora che sono forte" (2Cor. 12,10). La fragilità vissuta. La fragilità del mondo naturale e sociale della Chiesa."

Prof. Morandini holds doctorates in physics and theology. His expertise in ecology and Christian anthropology enables him to provide a unique perspective on the interconnectedness of humans and the environment and how Christian beliefs can inform our approach to environmental conservation.

Following the presentation, a discussion and question-and-answer session followed.

The main point of the speaker's responses can be summed up by his statement that our wealth as people of faith, both fragile and strong, bewildered and yet confident, must translate into co-responsibility in caring for our shared home as we confront the global crisis. In shared responsibility, our vulnerability can become our strength.

The moderator effectively summed up the session, who stated that we must now confront the fragility, tensions, and contradictions of our human condition in terms of co-responsibility, *Laudato Si'*, and the treasure we all carry within ourselves.

M03/17/04/23 CONFERENCE OF PROF. GEORGE OSSOM-BATSA

After a short break, the morning session of the Assembly resumed at 11:10 a.m. with a panel presentation by Prof. George Ossom-Batsa. He is an expert in African hermeneutics and biblical and missionary studies. He also studies the Krobo culture's conceptions of life and death and Ghanaian prosperity preaching.

His paper, titled "Socio-Environmental Fragility. Reading Romans 8:18–23 from a Ghanaian Perspective," examines the multifaceted theme of fragility in light of St. Paul's text and the context of Ghana.

The moderator accurately summarized the presentation by stating that the speaker emphasized that we must read the Scripture, but that how we read it is more important—not just from the point of view of human concerns but also in the context of caring for the entire creation.

A participant asked who is responsible for leading environmental protection efforts: God, the political leaders, or the Church. In this context, he asked why Catholic political leaders in Ghana failed to lead the Church in the environmental cause. The speaker gave a brilliant response by stating that a Catholic is a person who has been transformed through the Christ-Event. Leaders who identify themselves as Catholic are merely wearing a Catholic label.

M04/17/04/23 CONFERENCE OF MONS. JORGE LOZANO

Monsignor Jorge Eduardo Lozano, Archbishop of San Juan de Cuyo in Argentina, has been recently nominated to the responsible position of the Secretary General of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM).

His presentation, "La fragilidad de la Iglesia," explores several critical issues representative of the problem of the fragility of the Catholic Church.

The discussion session and comments emphasized the need for listening and faith formation as distinctive from form catechesis based on knowledge-based programs and fixed time frames.

M05/17/04/23 REPORT OF THE CBF GENERAL SECRETARY

The Assembly reconvened for the afternoon session at 3.15 a.m. with a prayer led by Mons. Mathieu Madega Lebouakehan followed by the presentation of the report of Fr. Jan Stefanów, CBF General Secretary.

The presentation was comprehensive and concluded with a video clip from the blessing and the official opening of the new headquarters of the Catholic Biblical Federation in the Vatican.

The report of the General Secretary was voted on and approved by the delegates.

M06/17/04/23 MEETINGS IN SUB-REGIONS

Following the break, the Assembly representatives were divided into regional groups, which met. Reports from these meetings should be provided to the secretary of the Assembly and included in the documentation.

The reports from the regions and subregions that were slated for the afternoon will be delivered at a later date that will be announced in the coming days.

The day concluded with the Eucharistic celebration in the Assembly's main venue starting at 7 p.m.