

I consider myself blessed to have met Pope Francis last year in March, at the start of the meeting of the Academy. He was truly a Papa, a Father, to every person; those he met and those he mentored and transformed through his talks and teachings. Distance did not matter when his words and exhortations could pierce right through our disturbed and confused world and touch our hearts.

It was with divine grace that he encountered every human being, whether religious, Heads of State, lay faithful, migrants, children, prisoners, ethnic groups and dissenters. His capacity to engage with global issues, and boldly convict our lack of brotherly love, our selfishness and greed, was disarming. He fearlessly raised the alarm on wars, climate crises, inequalities and injustices, and used his office to call for change.

We have lost a significant voice of our times, a mentoring father, a teacher and friend of the very least among us. His message will continue to resonate with us, and we earnestly pray that God may guide the election of his successor

Sharing in our collective grief

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