



GLOBAL CHAPLAINS, ANIMATORS FORMATION AND EXCHANGE (CAFE) PROGRAM-2026

“Walking Together in Hope”

DATES: 13 -19 JULY 2026; VENUE: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE (IYTC)



ORGANISED BY THE PAX ROMANA – INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT OF CATHOLIC STUDENTS (IMCS-MIEC)

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE (IYTC), THE COMMUNAL LIFE OF LOVE AND UNITY OF THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE (CLUMP) FOUNDATION, LIFE SKILL ACADEMY AND THE CATHOLIC STUDENT NETWORK OF THAILAND

CHIANG MAI DECLARATION 2026

WE HAVE WALKED TOGETHER

We, the chaplains, lay animators, and student leaders from Bangladesh, Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Poland, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, and Thailand, gathered in the International Youth Training Centre (IYTC), Chiang Mai, Thailand from 13-19 July, 2026 united by our common faith and shared mission. Under the theme “Walking Together in Hope”, we came together not merely to attend a program, but to journey as one global family. Through prayer, dialogue, reflection, workshops, cultural exchange, and community encounters, we strengthened our bond and commitment to accompany young people in today’s changing world with hope.

We listened deeply to one another’s realities and struggles and discovered that, despite our different cultures and contexts, young people everywhere face common challenges such as migration, displacement, social change, inequality, conflict, social exclusion, mental health struggles, the search for meaning, and the like.

Together, we experienced the richness of synodality by praying together, learning together, and discerning together. We witnessed that hope grows when we walk side by side, listen with open hearts, and embrace our diversity as a gift.

We, as one global community, united in Christ and committed to walking together, choose listening before judging, dialogue before division, and accompaniment before isolation. We recognize the dignity, gifts, and leadership of every young person. We affirm that hope is born when we journey together across cultures, generations, and nations.

We commit ourselves to strengthening Pax Romana IMCS-MIEC and accompanying young people with faith, hope, justice, peace, and compassion. We return to our countries renewed in spirit, ready to build communities of solidarity and service.

WE HAVE HEARD the voices of young people from different countries, cultures, and realities. While every context is unique, many of their experiences echo one another. We have heard stories of conflict, forced migration, economic hardship, political uncertainty, environmental crises, and the rapid transformation of the digital world. We have also heard the hidden struggles of identity, social pressures, digital stress, mental wellbeing, and the growing fear of an uncertain future. These realities continue to weaken hope, restrain self-expression, limit opportunities, and silence the voices of many young people.

We have become aware that those who are poor, displaced, marginalised, or oppressed often carry the heaviest burdens. Many continue to face barriers to education, participation, and leadership, while longing to be recognised with dignity and treated as equal members of our human family. Yet we have also heard stories of resilience, generosity, and faith. Across different contexts, young people continue to seek justice, build communities of solidarity, care for our common home, and accompany one another with compassion.

Their witness reminds us that hope grows wherever people choose to walk together. We understand that we, as a Catholic community, all humans are equal and deserve the utmost dignity. We support the marginalized, oppressed, and minorities and practice God's wisdom and love to support the lived realities of those young people.

Above all, we have heard a shared desire from young people: not simply to be served, but to be listened to, trusted, and empowered to become protagonists of social transformation in the Church and society. We therefore urge the young generation to stand by each other under God's blessings and love. We emphasize that our dialogue is not understood as abstract concepts, but as an active, practical compass for their social, professional, and spiritual lives, setting the footprint for young people to become active for those who experience injustice, violence, and other challenges in this rapidly changing world.

WE RECOGNISE that accompanying young people is not simply one ministry among many. It is at the heart of our mission as chaplains, animators, and members of Pax Romana IMCS-MIEC.

Throughout Global CAFE, we have come to realise that authentic accompaniment begins with empathetic listening. Before offering answers, we are first called to understand the lived realities of young people, to share their hopes and struggles, and to journey with them through the complexities of today's world.

We recognise that young people are looking for more than activities or events. They seek relationships built on trust, communities where they can belong, spaces where they are free to ask questions, express doubts, discover their gifts, and grow in faith without fear of judgment.

We also recognise the many gifts within our movement. Across different countries, Pax Romana IMCS-MIEC continues to build communities of friendship, dialogue, leadership, solidarity, and service. We have witnessed young people becoming leaders, bridge-builders, and witnesses of hope within their universities, churches, and societies.

At the same time, we honestly acknowledge our limitations. We do not always reach those who remain on the margins. We sometimes measure success by participation rather than transformation, by programmes rather than relationships. We recognise the greater need to intentionally accompany those who struggle in silence, especially those facing mental health challenges, migration, poverty, violence, and social exclusion.

Therefore, we acknowledge that authentic accompaniment is not about walking ahead of young people or behind them, but beside them. It is a shared journey of listening, discernment, mutual learning, and hope, where both young people and their companions are transformed together.

WE BELIEVE that in a wounded world marked by profound uncertainties, our faith calls us to walk together and accompany young people as genuine bearers of hope. Guided by the Gospel and the principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST), we affirm the inherent, priceless human dignity of every young person. In an era of the "fifth industrial revolution" and artificial intelligence, we echo Pope Leo XIV's encyclical Magnifica Humanitas, believing that technology must serve the human person, and young people must never be reduced to mere data points, consumers, or victims of a performance-driven digital culture.

We believe in the principle of solidarity, which compels us to combat the deep loneliness, digital exhaustion, and fragmentation of attention that young people suffer today. We believe in practicing the preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, standing with young people who carry the heavy burdens of academic and economic stress, violence, forced migration, and mental health crises.

We believe in the principles of participation and subsidiarity, acknowledging that young people are not passive followers but active protagonists and agents of change in both the Church and society. Authentic accompaniment requires a synodal approach that listens deeply with the "ears of the heart", creating safe, non-judgmental spaces for spiritual conversation. Through this, we can offer a liberating faith, hope, and love that frees young people from rigid moralism and empowers them to transform themselves and the world.

WE COMMIT ourselves to be true to our faith, values, and common mission of walking together in hope. Guided by this hope, we look to the rich tradition of CST as our roadmap for building a more just, peaceful, and loving world.

We commit to being active messengers, living out the Core Values of CST in our daily lives, our communities, and our mission of accompanying young people. We will walk alongside the youth, providing them with spaces for dialogue, formation, and growth, empowering them to become protagonists of social change. Also, we will enable the young generation to adopt these values not just as abstract concepts, but as a practical compass for their personal, professional, and spiritual lives.

We also commit to bringing the spirit of Global CAFE back to our National Movements, regions, and local communities. As members of Pax Romana IMCS-MIEC, we will continue to accompany Catholic tertiary students through friendship, dialogue, formation, and service. Inspired by our shared journey and discernment, we will strengthen our movements, nurture young leaders, and bear witness to the hope of Christ by responding with compassion, courage, fraternity, solidarity and internationality to the realities of our time.

We commit to move forward from this Global CAFE not as isolated individuals, but as a global family bound by solidarity. We will walk together, supporting one another through trials, celebrating our victories, and remaining steadfast in our belief that a better world is possible through our rootedness in Christ.

OUR CALL TO IMCS PAX ROMANA

To truly accompany young people today, we need our movement to take the following actions:

At the local and national level, we call on our movements to shift beyond merely organizing activities to prioritizing the “ministry of presence”. We urge local chaplains, lay animators, and student leaders to cultivate safe and non-judgmental communities that foster belonging, independence, generosity, and mastery. We must actively address the hidden struggles of young people by bridging the gap between faith formation and their daily, real-life experiences. Furthermore, we call on local movements to practice the Spirituality of Action through the “Review of Life” (See-Judge-Act) method, empowering young people to translate their faith into concrete social action and grassroots solidarity following the principles of CST, thereby forming them into sustainable and transformative leaders.

At the regional level, we call on our regional teams to intentionally equip our chaplains, animators, and elders with practical tools for synodal listening, spiritual conversation, and communal discernment. We ask the regions to foster holistic, cross-generational mentorship frameworks that treat young people as equals—journeying “at the eye level”. Regional coordinations must also actively promote skills needed for transformative leadership, intercultural and interreligious dialogue, bringing young people from various national movements together for networking and collaboration.

At the international level, we call on Pax Romana IMCS-MIEC to sustain a prophetic global network of mutual accompaniment as we step into our second century. We urge the international movement to amplify the voices of Catholic youth in global advocacy spaces (such as the United Nations and the Vatican), championing human rights, climate justice, and the ethical, human-centred use of artificial intelligence. Finally, we call upon the international leadership to ensure the institutional and financial sustainability of the movement through transparent stewardship, accountability, and capacity-building, ensuring that the charism of Pax Romana is firmly handed down to the next generation of leaders.

OUR HOPE is that every young person knows that they are never alone.

We hope that every Pax Romana IMCS-MIEC community will become a place where young people are welcomed before they are judged, listened to before they are advised, and accompanied before they are asked to lead. We hope to build communities where every young person can discover their dignity, develop their gifts, and find the courage to respond generously to the needs of the world.

We hope that the conversations, friendships, and experiences shared in Chiang Mai will continue to strengthen our movement, deepen our solidarity, and inspire greater collaboration across local, national, regional, and international levels.

As we leave Global CAFE, we do not simply return home with new ideas. We return with renewed hearts, deeper friendships, and a shared responsibility to continue walking together in hope.

May the Chiang Mai Declaration remind us that behind every milestone we achieve in the present or future, there is a humble spirit of accompaniment.

By signing our hearts and minds to this declaration, we commit to being the eyes, ears, hands, feet, and voice of hope in a world that so deeply longs for it.

Adopted by the participants of the Global CAFE on 19 July, 2026 at the International Youth Training Centre (IYTC) - Pax Romana Laudato Si' Centre

No.	Name	Country	National Movement
01	Fr. Chondon Biswas	Bangladesh	Chaplain, Bangladesh Catholic Students Movement
02	Fr. Joy Joseph Quiah	Bangladesh	Chaplain, Bangladesh Catholic Students Movement
03	Fr. Proshanto Kumar Aind	Bangladesh	Chaplain, Bangladesh Catholic Students Movement
04	Fr. Bikash Rebeiro, CSC	Bangladesh	National Chaplain, Bangladesh Catholic Students Movement
05	Fr. Palash Clarence Halder	Bangladesh	Chaplain, Bangladesh Catholic Students Movement
06	Fr. Manual Chambugong	Bangladesh	Chaplain, Bangladesh Catholic Students Movement
07	Bless Corraya	Bangladesh	Student, Bangladesh Catholic Students Movement
08	Fr. Merwyn Fernandes, SJ	India	Chaplain, All India Catholic University Federation
09	Fr. Jesu Benjamine, SJ	India	National Chaplain, All India Catholic University Federation
10	Fr. Chalil Devasia Baby, SJ	India	Chaplain, All India Catholic University Federation
11	Fr. Ravindar Bara, SJ	India	Chaplain, All India Catholic University Federation
12	Fr. Jiju Varghese, SJ	Nepal	National Chaplain, IMCS Nepal
13	Subbe Ghale	Nepal	Student, IMCS Nepal
14	Chang Tsung-te (Zonder)	Taiwan	Lay Chaplain, University Catholic Chinese Students Association
15	Yang Tsui Ju (Teresa)	Taiwan	Lay Chaplain, University Catholic Chinese Students Association
16	Benjamas Srisuk (Benz)	Thailand	Student, Catholic Students Network of Thailand
17	Fr. Tharadol Dongyasopa (Jen), SJ	Thailand	Chaplain, Catholic Students Network of Thailand
18	Br. Jakrapong Sriaumnauchok (Br. Pok), SJ	Thailand	Chaplain, Catholic Students Network of Thailand
19	Watcharaporn Anurakphanasakul (Ying)	Thailand	Student, Catholic Students Network of Thailand
20	Pisit Chaiprasit (Yok)	Thailand	Student, Catholic Students Network of Thailand

No.	Name	Country	National Movement
21	Fr. Samuel Abe Joseph Wani	South Sudan	Chaplain, South Sudan IMCS
22	Hwan Ho Lee	Germany	Student, Katholische Studierende Jugend
23	Jakub Maszkiewicz	Poland	Student, KIK Drum Bun – Klubu Inteligencji Katolickiej
24	Fr. David Shulist, SJ	Canada	Chaplain, Canadian Catholic Campus Ministry (CCCM)
25	Michael MacLean	Canada	Lay Chaplain, Canadian Catholic Students Association
26	Ruki Fernando	Sri Lanka	Former Regional Lay Chaplain, Pax Romana IMCS Asia Pacific, and Former Asian Coordinator, IYCS
27	Kristiana Aurel Alua	Indonesia	Union of Catholic Students of the Republic of Indonesia
28	Marcellino Egithio Monareh	Indonesia	IYTC Intern
29	Fr. Jojo M Fung, SJ	Malaysia	International Chaplain, Pax Romana IMCS-MIEC
30	Marina D'Costa	India	Coordinator, Animator and Elders Commission, Pax Romana IMCS-MIEC
31	Law Lap Man	Hong Kong	Former Regional Lay Chaplain, Pax Romana IMCS Asia Pacific, Chaplains, Animator and Elders Commission, Pax Romana IMCS-MIEC, HKFCS Alumni, Multicultural Connection
32	Fr. Pangkoj Nokrek, CSC	Bangladesh	Chaplain, IMCS Asia Pacific
33	Anne Beatrice	Malaysia	Lay Chaplain, NSI, IMCS Asia Pacific
34	Andrea Vaz	India	Subregional Coordinator, IMCS Asia Pacific
35	Maria Efralia Yunda Papu	Indonesia	Subregional Coordinator, IMCS Asia Pacific
36	Pasang Tamang	Nepal	IYTC Intern
37	Kean Jaramah	Philippines	Admin Secretary, IMCS Asia Pacific
38	Suman Ghale	Nepal	Coordinator, IMCS Asia Pacific
39	Argho Saiman Sku	Bangladesh	Media Coordinator, IYTC
40	Navodi Fernando	Sri Lanka	Program Coordinator, IYTC
41	Sailen Hajong	Bangladesh	Administrative Coordinator, IYTC
42	Rumjhum Borsha Mree	Bangladesh	IYTC Team
43	Salomi D Souza	India	IYTC Intern
44	William Nokrek	Bangladesh	President, Pax Romana IMCS-MIEC