

# Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, OP talks on Christian Hope

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THE THREE-DAY Theological Symposium on the Eucharist begins on January 20 at Cebu Doctors University with Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, OP as its first speaker. The symposium, which extends to January 22, is being held as the preliminary event to the 51st International Eucharistic Congress in the Philippines. The Dominican priest who hails from England is a much-sought speaker and a prolific author of books. His talk dwelt on the Christian virtue of hope.

Fr. Radcliffe recounted his visit to Iraq and his encounter with Christian communities who seem to have lost human optimism but have retained their hope in God. He also enumerated various reasons for disillusionment or despair

in other places like Africa and the Middle East.



Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, OP converses with Cardinal Chito Tagle of the Archdiocese of Manila after his talk in the 51st IEC 2016.

Fr. Radcliffe cites four ways to promote hope amid people and communities caught in terrible suffering. First is to stay put. "Abide in me, and I in you" (Jn

15:4). A person demonstrates great hope when one chooses to stay put when life at home, in the workplace, in the community or within the Congregation is terrible, Fr. Radcliffe says. In the same way, the beleaguered people of Iraq demonstrated hope by simply staying in their own country, without any prejudice to those who had decided to flee.

The second way to cultivate hope is by prayer. Fr. Radcliffe recalled how in war-torn Rwanda in 1993 he led the Christian communities in celebrating the Eucharist. He notes the fact that when Jesus celebrated the first Eucharist, it was the worst time of his life because his disciples either betrayed or denied him, and ran away. As a people of hope, Fr. Radcliffe reminds us not to be afraid of crisis.

The third way is simply to do good things the Lord wants you to do today, the speaker said. The opposite of these good acts are the expedient acts like the decision of Caiaphas who justified Jesus' execution.

The fourth way is to study and teach people, especially the young. Education and formation are both long-term responses to situations where hope seems to be obliterated.

Finally, Fr. Radcliffe points out how the children and those caring for them become clear signs of hope in our common desire for a better life today and a secure future for all. - *Fr. Paul Marquez, SSP*