



Scripture

Haman's orders... were written in the name of King Xerxes himself and sealed with his own ring. Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces with the order to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews—young and old, women and children—on a single day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods." Esther 3:12-13 (NIV)

Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right." Acts 10: 34-35 (NIV)

Catechism

Freedom is the power, rooted in will, to act or not to act, to do this or that, and so to perform deliberate acts on one's own responsibility. By free will one shapes one's own life. Human freedom is a force for growth and maturity in truth and goodness; it attains its perfection when directed towards God, our beatitude." Catechism of the Catholic Church #1731

Comment

Many magazines repeat the phrase "New Year, New You" at the start of the calendar year. Sadly for many Christians around the world, the phrase "Same Problem, Same Reaction" is the mantra heard. Still too many governments are reluctant to speak truth to power, to challenge states and regimes that flout international conventions and deny justice to Christians and their fellow citizens, leading to persecution and mass killings.

Organisation of the month

In his book *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, Raphael Lemkin coined the phrase "genocide" denoting the deliberate and systematic attempt to destroy an ethnic, national, racial or religious group. Professor the Lord David Alton KCSG, KCMCO is but one of a number of significant patrons of Coalition for Genocide Response, which describes itself as a non-governmental, non-political human rights coalition-building organisation that works towards a comprehensive response to genocide and other international crimes. Please visit their website on www.genocideresponse.org for more information about how you can make a difference by getting your member of parliament on board..

Think, Pray, Act

Think: Hitler felt that the world had forgotten the Armenian Genocide which reached its apex in 1915, resulting in the deaths of approximately 1.5 million Armenians, Assyrians and Pontic Greeks. Such international insouciance led to too little done to prevent the Holocaust in WWII, resulting in the deaths of 6 million Jews and many other minorities. The 90s also saw the horrors of the Rwandan Genocide. What would you expect your government to do to halt genocide?

Pray: that God the Father, through His Son Jesus Christ, may inspire you by the power of the Holy Spirit to be a voice for the voiceless.

Act: Visit www.genocideresponse.org for more information.

*"Do as much as you can. God will do what we ourselves cannot do."
St John Bosco, Letter to Cagliero, November 13, 1875*