

CHRISTIAN FEDERATION OF MALAYSIA
(PERSEKUTUAN KRISTIAN MALAYSIA)

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MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE CHRISTIAN FEDERATION OF MALAYSIA

CHRISTIANS DEPLORE LINK TO VALENTINE'S DAY AND SIN

Christians in Malaysia vehemently deplore and are hurt by public statements made recently which link Valentine's Day to sin and Christianity.

The Christian Federation of Malaysia strongly objects to the perpetuation of such statements and the impudence of some people to say that a religious faith in Malaysia indulges in sinful activities.

In a recent statement made by the Pas Youth leader, quoting a statement by the National fatwa Council, there is an insinuation that Valentine's Day has "some Christian elements and sin", which can be interpreted to mean that Christianity condones and promotes sinful activities on Valentine's Day.

Further, a certain Muslim lady evangelist has said in a programme aired on national television and circulated on www.YouTube.com sometime ago in regards to Valentine's Day that "maksiat, disco, couple-couple bersunyi sunyian, inilah tradisi masyarakat yang beragama Kristian" that is that vices, disco-going and couples meeting in quiet places are the traditions of the Christians.

Statements which have a tendency to promote feelings of ill-will and hostility against any particular religious community cannot and should not be tolerated.

We strongly urge that better research be done and no mistake be made of linking the Christian faith to Valentine's Day which is celebrated publicly in many countries today and not just in the West. It is not a Christian festival celebrated by the church today.

The earliest records indicate that a feast was dedicated to Valentine on February 14 by Pope Gelasius I, as a martyr of Rome. But details of his background are vague and much of the writings about him have been the stuff of legends and especially romanticised during the Middle Ages. The association with love and marriage may have arisen as part of popular culture at that time rather than as religious literature.

The Catholic Church has removed the memorial of his feast since the promulgation of the new Roman liturgical calendar in the year 1969 (although his name remains on the list of saints and martyrs). In place of this commemoration, the feast of two revered saints of the Eastern Church, Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the Apostles of the Slavs, are celebrated on 14 February.

Today, Christians do not commemorate Valentine's Day as a religious festival. Its celebration by the public is very much within the domain of secular culture and has nothing to do with the Christian faith.

CFM further reiterates that we do not believe in nor practise the moral policing of individuals and groups in our society. The Church in Malaysia has always advocated that we should educate and teach the beliefs and tenets of our faith and live by them rather than to be engaged in spying upon and arresting Malaysians presumed to be engaged in alleged immoral activities.

The Bible espouses love and hence CFM invites all Christians to express the love of God in their families, with their spouses and their loved ones and also with people from the various communities in Malaysia not only on this special day but throughout the year.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ng Moon Hing". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small cross-like mark at the beginning.

Bishop Ng Moon Hing
Chairman and the Executive Committee,
The Christian Federation of Malaysia