

Statement from the Bishop; Re:opening of Huttererpark

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, civic officials, dignitaries, the city of Innsbruck and most especially to the committee members of *Hutterer Arbeitskreis Tirol & Südtirol*.

We bring warmest greetings from the Hutterian Brethren Church of Canada and the United States... and deeply regret that we cannot be here with you today to share in this moment.

You are standing on the blood soaked ground where our leader, a young Jacob Hutter, was cruelly tortured and burnt at the stake for the religious freedom we have today. Many thousand's followed his lead, undeterred and unbroken by the suffering they had to endure. Religious freedom is a scared trust and we cannot help on a day like today to ask ourselves if we have done justice to this precious gift and how well we have nurtured the righteous zeal of our forefathers for our future generations.

Die frommen heiligen Seelen, die gingen fort und fort. Und änderten mit Quälen, Den erstbewohnten Ort. Sie zogen hin und wieder. Ihr Kreuz war immer groß. Bis das der Tod sie nieder, legt in der Grabes Schooß...So gings den lieben Alten, an deren Fuß`und Pfad, wir uns noch täglich halten, Wenns fehlt an guten Rath...Wir sein beides dein Pilger und dein Bürger, wie alle unsere Väter...Denn wir haben hier keine bleibende Stadt....Wir hoffen das diese Schilderungen der Leiden unserer Väter dazu beitragen, unsern Glauben zu stärken, und uns innerlich verbinden mit denen, die uns vorgegangen sind und überwunden haben durch des Lammes Blut und durch das Wort ihres Zeugnisses, und blieben treu bis ams ende.

Today, through this beautiful circle of stones you have acknowledged a great injustice and bestowed on the Hutterite community an outward and visible sign of your desire for a more honourable and uplifting relationship for which we are very grateful.

Many thanks to the *Arbeitskreis Tirol & Südtirol* and all those who participated in building this beautiful memorial to our brave and *treu-herzigen* (truehearted) forefathers. May *Huttererpark* provide a setting for reflection and inspiration to many, and be a place of grace and peace.

God's Richest Blessings to you all.

Bishop, Joseph Wurz.

Dariusleut. Sect. of the Hutterian Brethren Church of Canada..