To the American Jewish Committee
To flourish in friendship and understanding

Jews and Christians can cooperate in constructing a more just and fraternal world. The Holy Father said this on Thursday morning, 13 February, to a delegation of the American Jewish Committee in the Vatican’s Consistory Hall. The following is the English text of the Holy Father’s greeting, which was delivered in Italian.

Dear Friends,
I welcome you here today. Your organization, which on various occasions has met with my venerable Predecessors, maintains good relations with the Holy See and with many representatives of the Catholic world. I am very grateful to you for the distinguished contribution you have made to dialogue and fraternity between Jews and Catholics, and I encourage you to continue on this path.

Next year we will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of the Second Vatican Council Nostri Aetate, which today constitutes for the Church the sure point of reference for relations with our “elder brothers”. From this document, our reflection on the spiritual patrimony which unites us and which is the foundation of our dialogue has developed with renewed vigour. This foundation is theological, and not simply an expression of our desire for reciprocal respect and esteem. Therefore, it is important that our dialogue be always profoundly marked by the awareness of our relationship with God.

In addition to dialogue, it is also important to find ways in which Jews and Christians can cooperate in constructing a more just and fraternal world. In this regard, I call to mind in a particular way our common efforts to serve the poor, the marginalized and those who suffer. Our commitment to this service is anchored in the protection of the poor, widows, orphans, and foreigners as shown in Sacred Scripture (cf. Ex 20:20-22). It is a God given duty, one which reflects his holy will and his justice; it is a true religious obligation.

Finally, in order that our efforts may not be fruitless, it is important that we dedicate ourselves to transmitting to new generations the heritage of our mutual knowledge, esteem and friendship which has, thanks to the commitment of associations like yours, grown over these years. It is my hope therefore that the study of relations with Judaism may continue to flourish in seminars and in centres of formation for lay Catholics, as I am similarly hopeful that a desire for an understanding of Christianity may grow among young Rabbis and the Jewish community.

Dear friends, in a few months I will have the joy of visiting Jerusalem, where – as the Psalm says – we are all born (cf. Ps 87:5) and where all peoples will one day meet (cf. Is 2:2-4). Accompany me, please, with your prayers, so that this pilgrimage may bring forth the fruits of communion, hope and peace. Shalom!

Lenten Message
Rich because we are poor

At the Angelus the Pope speaks about the Christian vocation
A lamp that shines

To Polish bishops on their visit ‘ad limina Apostolorum’
No one is excluded from God’s mercy

The World Council of Churches and the Baptist World Alliance
Learning to see with the eyes of the other
VATICAN BULLETIN

AUDIENCE

Thursday, 6 February
Archbishop Franco Coppola, titular Archbishop of Vinda, Apostolic Nunciato to the Central African Republic.

Members of the Episcopal Conference of Poland on an ad limina apostolorum visit:
— Archbishop Józef Michałek of Przemysl for Latins with Auxiliary Bishops: Bishop Adam Szal, titular Bishop of Lavello; Bishop Stanisław Jamrozek, titular Bishop of Chelm
— Archbishop emeritus Stanisław Budzik of Lublin with Auxiliary Bishops: Bishop Mieczysław Ciło, titular Bishop of Auca; Bishop Artur Grzegorz Miziński, titular Bishop of Trasa in Numiđia
— Bishop Jan Franciszek Watroba, of Rzeszów
— Bishop Marian Rojek of Zamość–Łubaczów
— Archbishop Edward Ozorski of Białystok with the Auxiliary, Bishop Ryszard Kalita, titular Bishop of Radom
— Bishop Konstanty Pocius of Szczecin–Kamienny, with the Auxiliary, Bishop Adam Ożimek, titular Bishop of Tarnobrzeg–Zamość–Lubaczów
— Archbishop Grzegorz Kasak of Sosnowiec

Friday, 7 February
Cardinal Angelo Amato, SDB, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints

Archbishop Ricardo Ezzati Andrello, Archbishop of Vinda, Apostolic Nunciato to Chile.

Emissary of Pope Francis to the Holy See, on his ad limina apostolorum visit:
— Archbishop Andrea Caggiano of Avellino, with the Auxiliary, Bishop Alfonso Seraphino, titular Bishop of Aurisina
— Bishop Jan Kopcie of Gliwice with the Auxiliary, Bishop Gerard Alfonso Kusza, titular Bishop of Targobóra
— Archbishop Andrzej Czaja of Opole with the Auxiliary, Bishop Adam Paweł Sobstawa, titular Bishop of Ełk
— Bishop Henryk Marian Tomasz of Radom with the Auxiliary, Bishop Adam Ożimek, titular Bishop of Tarnobrzeg–Zamość–Lubaczów
— Archbishop Grzegorz Kasak of Sosnowiec

Saturday, 8 February
Cardinal Marc Ouellet, PSS, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops

Archbishop emeritus Tadeusz Gocłowski, CM, titular Bishop of Hadrumetum

Sunday, 9 February
Bishop Józef Wróbl, SCL, titular Bishop of Suas

Bishop Krzysztof Nitkiewicz of Sandomierz with the Auxiliary, Bishop emeritus Edward Marian Frankowski, titular Bishop of Tarnobrzeg–Zamość–Lubaczów

Bishop Zbigniew Knierniok of Siedlce with the Auxiliary, Bishop Piotr Sawczuk, titular Bishop of Otarzysz

Bishop Antoni Pacyfik Dydzuc, OFM Cap., of Drohiczyn

Bishop Janusz Bogdawa Stepnowski of Lomia with the Auxiliary, Bishop Piotr Sawczuk, titular Bishop of Otarzysz

Bishop Tadeusz Bronakowski, titular Bishop of Tarnobrzeg–Zamość–Lubaczów

Bishop Stanisław Karol Małachowski, titular Bishop of Żagań-Lubin

Bishop Henryk Marian Tomasz of Radom with the Auxiliary, Bishop Adam Ożimek, titular Bishop of Tarnobrzeg–Zamość–Lubaczów

Bishop Grzegorz Kasak of Sosnowiec

Archbishop Andrea Dziega of Szczecin–Kamienny, with the Auxiliary emeritus, Bishop Marian Blażej Kuszewich, OFM Conv., titular Bishop of Hadrumetum

Archbishop Sławoj Leszek Głódź of Gdańsk, with Archbishop emeritus Tadeusz Gocłowski, CM

Archbishop Wojciech Ziemia of Warmia, with the Auxiliary, Bishop Jacek Jezierski, titular Bishop of Suęczyn

Memorial of the Episcopal Conference of Poland on an ad limina apostolorum visit:
— Archbishop Józef Puś, Kuyavia, with the Auxiliary, Bishop Andrzej Ziomek, titular Bishop of Toruń

— Archbishop Krzysztof Nitkiewicz of Sandomierz with the Auxiliary, Bishop Piotr Sawczuk, titular Bishop of Otarzysz

— Bishop Józef Wróbl, SCL, titular Bishop of Suas

— Bishop Krzysztof Nitkiewicz of Sandomierz with the Auxiliary, Bishop emeritus Edward Marian Frankowski, titular Bishop of Tarnobrzeg–Zamość–Lubaczów

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Cardinal José Jorge Benício, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments

Cardinal Agostino Vallini, Vicar General of His Holiness for the Diocese of Rome

Archbishop Gerhard Ludwig Müller, Bishop of Agüstino

Archbishop Cesare Nosiglia of Turin, Italy

Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt presents credentials

On Thursday morning, 6 February, Pope Francis received H.E. Mr. Wafaa Ashraf Moharram Bassim, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, for the presentation of the Letters by which she is accredited to the Holy See.

H.E. Ms Wafaa Ashraf Moharram Bassim, 58, is married with three children. She holds a degree in Economics and Political Sciences. She began her diplomatic career in 1978 and has served as Embassy counsellor in Rome (1997-98); diplomat of the Permanent Representation of Egypt to the Office of the United Nations and Specialized Institutions in Geneva (1999-2000); ambassador to Bucharest (2001-03); deputy minister of Foreign Affairs (2003-07); Permanent Representative of Egypt to the Office of the United Nations and Specialized Institutions in Geneva (2012-14).

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed Fr Harimoon Moon from the clergy of the Archdiocese of Piraeus as Auxiliary Bishop of San Martin, Argentina. Until now he has been Parish Priest of St Thomas and Damían in Buenos Aires (6 Feb.).

Bishop-elect Moon, 58, was born in Sowon, South Korea. While studying at the seminary, he immigrated to Argentina with his mother and was ordained a priest on 12 October 1984. He holds licences in theology and in spiritual theology. He has served in parish ministry and as chaplain at a Holy Family, in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The Holy Father appointed Fr John Keenan from the clergy of the Archdiocese of Glasgow, Parish Priest of St. Teodoro Alvarez Hospital, as a member of the Holy See's diplomatic corps, and as Apostolic Nuncio to the Islamic Republic of Iran. He has been ordained a priest on 9 July 1993. He has served as parish priest in King's Park and chaplain at Holy family, in Glasgow, Scotland.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Leopoldo Agüero, 58, as Apostolic Nuncio to Jordan and as Apostolic Delegate to the Holy Land, and to the Holy See's diplomatic corps in Iraq. He has been ordained a priest on 9 July 1993. He has served as parish priest in the city of Jordan and at the Sisters of Charity, in Amman, Jordan.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Mario Euz经, 58, as Apostolic Nuncio to the Islamic Republic of Iran and as Apostolic Delegate to the Holy See's diplomatic corps in Iraq. He has been ordained a priest on 9 July 1993. He has served as parish priest in the city of Jordan and at the Sisters of Charity, in Amman, Jordan.

Johannes Baptistis te, 58, is married with three children. He holds a degree in Economics and Political Sciences. He began his diplomatic career in 1978 and has served as Embassy counsellor in Rome (1997-98); diplomat of the Permanent Representation of Egypt to the Office of the United Nations and Specialized Institutions in Geneva (1999-2000); ambassador to Bucharest (2001-03); deputy minister of Foreign Affairs (2003-07); Permanent Representative of Egypt to the Office of the United Nations and Specialized Institutions in Geneva (2012-14).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12
At the General Audience Pope Francis continues his reflection on the Eucharist

An encounter that changes your life

And asks the faithful to help those suffering from the floods and unemployment in Rome

A Eucharistic Celebration may be incomprehensible to the eye but if it does not lead to encounter with Jesus, it will unlikely bear any kind of nourishment for our heart and our life. This was a central point in the Holy Father’s catechesis on Wednesday morning at the General Audience in St Peter’s Square, 12 February. The following is a translation of the Pope’s address, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Good morning.

In the last Catechesis I emphasized how the Eucharist introduces us into real communion with Jesus and his mystery. Now let us ask ourselves several questions that spring from the relationship between the Eucharist that we celebrate and our life, as a Church and as individual Christians. How do we experience the Eucharist? When we go to Sunday Mass, how to we live it? Is it only a moment of celebration, an established tradition, an opportunity to find oneself or to feel justified, or is it something more?

There are very specific signals for understanding how we are living this, how we experience the Eucharist, signals that tell us if we are living the Eucharist in a good way or not very well. The first indicator is our way of looking at or considering others. In the Eucharist, Christ is always renewing his gift of self, which he made on the Cross. His whole life is an act of total sharing of self out of love; thus, he loved to be rejected and even expired. It is a gift of self, which was given in Italian.

Today, it would do us such good to think of these brothers and sisters of ours who are best by these problems here in Rome: problems that stem from the grave situation caused due to the rain, which has caused so much damage to entire districts, or because of the lack of work, a consequence of the global economic crisis. I wonder, and each one of us should wonder: I who go to Mass, how do I live this? Do I try to help, to approach and pray for those in difficulty? Or am I a little indifferent? Or perhaps do I just want to talk, did you see how this or that one is dressed? Sometimes this happens after Mass and it should not! We must concern ourselves with our brothers and sisters who need us because of an illness, a problem. Today, it would do us such good to think of these brothers and sisters of ours who are best by these problems here in Rome: problems that stem from the grave situation caused by the rain and social instability and unemployment. Let us ask Jesus, whom we receive in the Eucharist, to help us to help them.

A second indication, a very important one, is the grace of forgiving and ready to forgive. At times someone may ask: Why must one go to Church, given that those who regularly participate in Holy Mass are still sinners like the others? We have heard it many times! In reality, the one celebrating the Eucharist doesn’t do so because he believes he is or wants to appear better than others, but precisely because he acknowledges that he is always in need of being accepted and reborn by the mercy of God, made flesh in Jesus Christ. If any one of us does not feel in need of the mercy of God, does not see himself as a sinner, it is better for him not to go to Mass! We go to Mass because we are sinners and we want to receive God’s pardon, to participate in the re-demption of Jesus, in his forgiveness. The “Confession” which we make at the beginning is not “pro forma”, it is a real act of repentance! I am a sinner and I confess it, this is how the Mass begins! We should never forget that the Last Supper of Jesus took place “on the night he was betrayed” (1 Cor 11:23). In the bread and in the wine which we offer and around which we gather, the gift of Christ’s body and blood is renewed every time for the remission of our sins. We must go to Mass humble, like sinners and the Lord reconciles us.

A last valuable indication comes to us from the relationship between the Eucharistic Celebration and the life of our Christian communities. We must always bear in mind that the Eucharist is not something we make; it is not our own commeration of what Jesus said and did. No. It is precisely an act of Christ! It is Christ who acts there, who is on the altar. It is a gift of Christ, who makes himself present and gathers us around him, to nourish us with his Word and with his life. This means that the mission and the very identity of the Church flows from there, from the Eucharist, and there always takes its shape. A celebration may be flawless on the exterior, very beautiful, but if it does not lead us to encounter Jesus Christ, it is unlikely to bear any kind of nourishment to our heart and our life. Through the Eucharist, however, Christ wishes to enter into our life and permeate it with his grace, so that in every Christian community there may be coherence between liturgy and life.

The heart fills with trust and hope by pondering on Jesus’ words re-counted in the Gospel: “he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn 6:54). Let us live the Eucharist with the spirit of faith, of prayer, of forgiveness, of repentance, of communal joy, of concern for the needy and for the needs of so many brothers and sisters, in the certainty that the Lord will fulfill what he has promised: eternal life. So be it!

Special Groups

I welcome the pilgrims from the Czech Republic. I am delighted to welcome Cardinal Dominik Duka and Cardinal Vilik, a veteran fighter and defender of the faith in the Czech Republic, as well as the Bishop of the Czech Episcopal Conference on their visit ad limina Apostolorum. Dear brothers, convey my greeting to your priests, men and women religious and lay faithful. I assure you of my prayer for you and for those the Lord has entrusted to your care. Pray for me too. As I bless the Rosaries for the Palladium of the land of Bohemia, from my heart I impat to you and to the Czech Church the Apostolic Blessing.

I offer an affectionate greeting to all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors present at today’s Audience, including those from England, Denmark, Hong Kong and the United States. May Jesus Christ confirm you in faith and make you witnesses of his love and mercy to all people. God bless you all!

I extend a special thought to young people, the sick and newlyweds. This Friday we will celebrate the feast of St Cyril of Alexandria, evangelizers of the Slavs and Patrons of Europe. May their witness help you, dear young people, to become in every environment missionary disciples; may it encourage you, dear sick people, to offer up your suffering for the conversion of sinners; may it be an example for you, dear newlyweds, to make the Gospel the founding rule of your family life.
11 February: the 85th anniversary of the signing of the Lateran Treaty

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

they have responded to the duties of showing solidarity and of contributing to the material or spiritual progress of society that the Italian Constitutional Charter demands of every associate.

In conclusion, it may be noted that the harmony between the Church and the State, rediscovered in 1929, confirmed on the Italian part in the Constitution of 1945 and reciprocally renewed in 1984, has shown over time all its potential and has thereby fostered both the development of the person and of the common good.

The diplomatic corps to the Holy See

An irreplaceable witness

Jacques Maritain

The full freedom of the Catholic Church to carry out her pastoral mission of education, charitable assistance, evangelization and sanctification. The Church is guaranteed in particular, freedom of organization, the practice of public worship, the exercise of her magisterium and of her spiritual ministry, as well as her jurisdiction in ecclesiastical affairs.'

Therefore the acknowledgement of the order proper to the Church follows the reaffirmation of the distinction between the two orders; it is an order that is spelled out by the Italian Constitution but, obviously, its content is not specified. The corollary measure has proven to be of extreme importance because in avoiding any conflict of competencies it concretely indicates what is proper to the Church. However, it is a disposition that is also important from the viewpoint of principle, to the extent that it repudiates the former manner of reasoning of a jurisdictional tone, whereby the State would retain "the competence of competencies" in defining what belongs to the ecclesiastical order. Article 2 of the Agreement, consistent with the recognized reciprocal independence and sovereignty of the Church and of the State indicates — not unilaterally but through negotiation between the two Parties — all that pertains to the order proper to the Church.

Then the commitment "to reciprocal collaboration for human advancement and for the good of the Country", with which the above-mentioned Article 1 ends, is of great significance as regards values, but also at the practical level.

This provision met with great favour after the signing of the Accord. Its consonance with the directive expressed in the conciliar text and at the same time inherent in the text of the Constitution which stipulates that Church and State work together with no confusion of their fields of competence and roles so as to render as effective as possible the service to the human person, although different, that each is called to guarantee, was immediately accepted. Indeed, in the course of the 30 years that have now elapsed since 1929 this provision, which risked seeming but a nice formula, lacking substantial content, has proven its true fruitfulness and particular expansive force.

With regard to the Church, she has been close to the Italian people. She has shared in their joys and hopes, she has participated in their moments of mourning and sorrow and has continued to reinforce the social fabric with those ethical values that every democracy needs. The collaboration of the ecclesiastical institution has flourished in the sectors of solidarity, culture and formation; meeting new needs such as those, at times dramatic, imposed by the ongoing phenomenon of immigration or in the area of long-standing requirements, such as, for example, the preservation of the immense cultural patrimony of religious interest that exists throughout Italy.

Collaboration, however, posited as an essential directive of the entire Agreement, at the same time uniquely empowered Italian Catholics as individuals and in the multiplicity of their training, in carrying out an important task: the animation of temporal realities. In this way too it should be noted here that one of the results of the exhaustion of temporal power due to the Lateran Pacts was to significantly increase the importance of the diplomatic corps in the eyes of the Papacy, which sees an irreplaceable witness of the recognition of its sovereignty in the circle of Ambassadors and Ministers, of which it is surrounded'. Thus the French philosopher Jacques Maritain wrote in 1945 in the concluding report of his three years as ambassador of his country to the Holy See. With these words, Maritain summed up the extraordinary importance of the Holy See's diplomatic activity and the sensitivity of this extremely complex and unique mission.

This is a depiction, synthetic as it is, of the complexity one can find by consulting the list of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See, an invaluable tool to understand the Holy See's relations which are in their 80th year. Published on www.vatican.va, the list of the diplomatic corps was presented to Pope Francis on 7 February, as announced in a tweet by the Secretariat of State (@terzaloggia) on Monday morning, 10 February.

Last year, 46 ambassadors presented their credentials to the Holy Father: 20 reside in Rome and the other 26 outside of Rome. In total 16 ambassadors are women and there are 25 embassies which temporarily do not have an ambassador (or have been granted approval but have not yet presented their credentials), and thus the respective chargé d'affaires manages the embassy. There are 83 chanceries with offices in Rome and 78 outside of the city. Yemen is the only country without a head of mission but it has a chancery. There are 31 countries which have neither a head of mission nor a chancery. There are currently 180 states which maintain diplomatic relations with the Holy See. South Sudan was added to this list on 21 February 2013, at the level of an apostolic nunciature and an embassy. This list also includes the European Union, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, and the State of Palestine which has a mission of special character. With regard to international organizations, the Holy See became an extra-regional observer of the Central American Integration System (SICA) on 21 January 2013, and on 12 December 2013 it was accredited as the first observer to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Over the course of 2013 two agreements were signed regarding the legal status of the Church: in Cape Verde on 10 June and with Chad on 6 November. Furthermore on 21 October an agreement was signed with Hungary which amended a previous agreement signed on 20 June 1957 on the financing of Church activities and on various issues of patrimony.
At the Angelus the Pope speaks about the Christian vocation

The vocation of a Christian is to be a “burning lamp” which brings the light of Christ to others. Pope Francis recalled this at the Angelus on 9 February in St Peter’s Square. The following is a translation of the Holy Father’s words which were given in Italian.

Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

In this Sunday’s Gospel passage, immediately after the Beatitudes, Jesus says to his disciples: “You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world” (Mt 5:13-14). This surprises us a bit when we think of those who were before Jesus when he spoke these words. Who were these disciples? They were fishermen, simple people... But Jesus sees them with God’s eyes, and his assertion can be understood precisely as a result of the Beatitudes. He wishes to say: if you are poor in spirit, if you are meek, if you are pure of heart, if you are merciful... you will be the salt of the earth and the light of the world!

To better understand these images, we must keep in mind that Jewish Law prescribed that a little bit of salt be sprinkled over every offering presented to God, as a sign of the covenant. Light for Israel was a symbol of messianic revelation, triumph over the darkness of paganism. Christians, the new Israel, receive a mission to carry into the world for all men: through faith and charity they can guide, conciliate, and make humanity fruitful. We who are baptized Christians are missionary disciples and we are called to become a living Gospel in the world: with a holy life we will “flavour” different environments and defend them from decay, as salt does; and we will carry the light of Christ through the witness of genuine charity. But if we Christians lose this flavour and do not live as salt and light, we lose our effectiveness. This mission of giving light to the world is so beautiful! We have this mission, and it is beautiful! It is also beautiful to keep the light we have received from Jesus, protecting it and safeguarding it. The Christian should be a luminous person; one who brings light, who always gives off light! A light that is not his, but a gift from God, a gift from Jesus. We carry this light. If a Christian extinguishes this light, his life has no meaning; he is a Christian by name only, who does not carry light; his life has no meaning. I would like to ask you now, how do you want to live? As a lamp that is burning or one that is not? Burning or extinguished? How would you like to live? [The people respond: Burning!] As burning lamps? It is truly God who gives us this light and we must give it to others. Shining lamps! This is the Christian vocation.

After the Angelus the Pope said:

The day after tomorrow, on 11 February, we will celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes as well as the World Day of the Sick. It is a good opportunity to put the people who are ill at the centre of our communities, praying for them and remaining close to them. The Message for this Day had been inspired by an expression of St John: Faith and charity: “We ought to lay down our lives for one another” (cf. 1 Jn 3:16). We must especially approach all sick people as Jesus did: the Lord takes care of everyone, shares in their suffering, and opens their hearts to hope.

I am also thinking of all health care workers. What valuable work they do! Thank you very much for your meaningful work. Every day they encounter, in the sick, not only bodies marked by fragility, but people, and they provide them with care and appropriate answers. The dignity of the person can never be reduced to its faculties or capacities, and it does not become less when a person is weak, disabled or in need of help. I also think of the families, for whom it is normal to take care of those who are sick; sometimes situations can be so burdensome... Many of these families write to me, and today I would like to ensure a prayer for all of these families. I would like to say to them do not be afraid of fragility! Do not be afraid of fragility! Help one another with love, and you will feel the comforting presence of God.

The Christian attitude of generosity towards the sick is the salt of the earth and light of the world. May the Virgin Mary help us to practice it, and obtain peace and comfort for those who suffer.

During these days the Olympic Winter Games are being held in Sochi, Russia. I would like to extend my greetings to the organizers and all of the athletes, with the hope that the Winter Olympics will be a true celebration of sport and friendship.

I greet all the pilgrims gathered here today, the families, church groups, and associations. In particular I greet the teachers and students who have come from England; the group of Christian theologians from different European countries, who are in Rome for a convention; parishioners from Santa Marta Immacolata and San Vincenzo de Pauli in Rome; those who have come from Cavallina and Montecarelli in Mugello, from Lavellu and from Alì, the Sollievo Community, and the School of San Luca-Bovalino in Calabria.

I pray for those who are suffering damage and discomforts due to natural disasters, in many countries — even here in Rome — I am close to them. Nature challenges us to be sympathetic and attentive to protecting creation, and to prevent, as much as possible, the most serious of consequences.

Before leaving, the question that I asked again comes to my mind: A burning lamp or a burnt out lamp? Which do you want to be? Burning or extinguished? The Christian bears light! He is a lamp that burns! He always goes forward with the light of Jesus!

I wish everyone a good Sunday and a good lunch. Goodbye!

Pope Francis to the Sri Lankan community in Italy

Together to build a better tomorrow

Pope Francis met with the Sri Lankan community in Italy, during a meeting on Saturday, 8 February, in St Peter’s Basilica. The following is the English text of the Holy Father’s words:

Good morning, I greet you, dear brothers and sisters of the Sri Lankan community in Italy! I extend fraternal greetings to Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith and the other Bishops of your homeland. And I thank Cardinal Ranjith for the invitation to visit Sri Lanka. I welcome this invitation and I believe that the Lord will give me this grace. You have come on pilgrimage to Rome to render homage to Our Lady, at the end of the celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of the consecration to her of the Church in Sri Lanka.

Seventy-five years ago, the dark clouds of what would be the second world conflict were thickening in the skies and the faithful, guided by a sure intuition of faith, entrusted themselves to Our Lady, who always defends her children from all dangers. In 1940, in the dramatic circumstances of the war, the Archbishop of Colombo, Mgr Jean-Marie Masson, of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, made a vow to build a shrine in honour of Our Lady if the island were preserved from foreign invasion. So it came about, and after the end of the war the beautiful Shrine of Our Lady of Lanka at Tewatte was built, and was consecrated 40 years ago.

Dear brothers and sisters, Our Lady is always close to us, she looks upon each one of us with maternal love and accompanies us always on our journey. Do not hesitate to turn to her for every need, especially when the burden of life with all its problems makes itself felt.

Your homeland is called the Pearl of the Indian Ocean, on account of its natural beauty and its shape. They say that the pearl is formed from the tears of the oyster. Unfortunately, many tears have been shed in recent years, on account of the internal conflict which caused so many victims and so much damage. It is not easy, I know, to heal the wounds and cooperate with yesterday’s enemy to build tomorrow together, but it is the only path that gives hope for the future, hope for development and hope for peace. For this reason, I assure you that you have a particular place in my prayer. I ask the Lord to grant you the gift of peace and reconciliation, and to help you in your effort to ensure a better future for all who live in Sri Lanka.

I entrust you to the maternal intercession of Mary, Our Lady of Lanka. I ask you to pray for me and from my heart I bless you.
United Nations report in the media

This is not helping anyone

Sexual abuse of minors is a sin and a crime and no organization can be
complacent about addressing it. Sr Mary Ann Walsh, director of media
relations of the U.S. bishops, wrote this in her recent entry on the episcopal
conference’s blog. “The Catholic Church”, Sr Walsh continued,
“has failed Study Committee more than any other international organization
to face the problem and it will con-
tinue to lead in doing so”.
She, then, criticizes the United Nations report which, mixes the is-
sues of the Child with the Church’s
teaching on abortion and contracep-
tion, overlaps the issues. “Unfortu-
nadly the report is weakened in-
cluding objections to Catholic teaching
on such issues as gay marriage,
abortion and contraception. This
seems to violate the UN’s obligation
from its earliest days to defend reli-
gious freedom. In 1948, the organiza-
tion adopted its Universal Declara-
tion of Human Rights that declared
that “everyone has the right to free-
dom of thought, conscience and reli-
gion”. Certainly the UN charge to
defend religious freedom includes de-
fending the Church’s right to de-
termine its own teachings”. She
noted that the UN was unclear as to
whether it was defending children’s
rights or waging a war on culture.
The report, according to Enzo Bi-
ría y Aguirre, Bishop of
La Ribagorza, “does not seem to push
with the exchange of the instru-
mens of ratification”.

Congregation for the Causes of Saints
Promulgation of Decrees
On 7 February, Pope Francis re-
ceived in private audience Car-
dinal Angelo Amato, SDB, Prefect
of the Congregation for the Ca-
ses of Saints. During the audience
the Holy Father author-
ized the Congregation to promul-
gate the following decrees:
— the martyrdom of the Servant of God Francesco Zirano, priest of
the Order of the Friars Minor Con-
solati, born in Sassari, Italy, in
1546 and killed in hatred of the faith in Algieri, Algeria, on 25
January 1669;
— the martyrdom of the Servant of God Paul Yun Ji-chang, lay-
member and his 135 Companions,
killed in hatred of the faith in Korea between 1571 and 1888;
— the heroic virtues of the Serv-
ant of God Jesus Maria Echav-
arría y Aguirre, Bishop of
Saltillo, Mexico, Founder of the Sister Catechists of Guadalupe;
born in Real de San Pedro de Bacuncho, Mexico, on 6 July
1858 and died in Saltillo, Mex-
ico, on 5 April 1954;
— the heroic virtues of the Ser-
vant of God Faustino Ghiardi
(in the world: Guglielmo Giac-
oimo), Priest of the Order of Fri-
ars Minor; born in Pieve a Niev-
za, Italy, on 6 May 1802 and
died in San Vivaldo di Mont-
aione on 25 October 1837;
— the heroic virtues of the Ser-
vant of God Maria Roscio di Je-
sus Crucified (in the world: Maria Josefa Rodríguez Xuárez
de la Guardia), Sister of the Con-
gregation of the Love of God;
born in Colmenar, Spain, on 16
May 1913 and died in Rome,
Italy, on 30 March 1956.

Joint Communiqué of the Bilateral Permanent Working Commission between the Holy See and the State of Israel

The Bilateral Permanent Working Commission between the Holy See and the State of Israel met
today, 11 February, in the David Citadel Hotel, Jerus-
alem, at the Plenary level, and continue negotiations pursuant to the Fundamental Agreement Art. 10 para-
graph 2.
The meeting was headed by Mr Ze’ev Elkin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and by Msgr Antoine Cam-
illeri, Undersecretary for the Holy See’s Relations with
States.
The Plenary received a report on the few remaining issues concerning the Single Document. The Parties
took note of the progress achieved, in a thoughtful and constructive atmosphere, since the last Plenary of June
2013, and agreed on future steps, in view of the next Plenary meeting in June 2014, in Vatican City.
The Delegation of the Holy See included:
— Msgr Antoine Camilleri, Undersecretary for Relations
with States
— Archbishop Antonio Franco, Apostolic Nuncio, Co-Chairman of the Working level of the Bilateral Permanent Working Commission
— Archbishop Giuseppe Lazzarotto, Apostolic Nuncio
to Israel
— Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, Patriarchal Vicar for Israel
— Msgr Maurizio Malvestiti, Undersecretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches
— Msgr Alberto Ortega Martín, Official of the Sec-
retariat of State
— Msgr Matteo De Mori, Counsellor of the Apostolic
Nunciature
— Mr Henry Amoroso, Principal Legal Adviser
— Mr Samir Abu Nassar, CPA, Financial and Tax Ad-
viser
— Archimandrite Maher Abbour, Greek-Melkite
Archeparchy of Akko
— Fr Ibrahim Falta, OFM, Custody of the Holy Land
— Sr Naomi Zimmermann, FSE, Secretary

The Delegation of the State of Israel included:
— Mr Ze’ev Elkin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Af-
fairs
— Mr Ehud Keinan, Deputy Director General, Legal
Division (MFA), Co-Chairman of the Working Level of
the Bilateral Permanent Working Commission
— Mr Oded Brook, Head of International Affairs
Division, Ministry of Finance
— Mr Akiva Tor, Head of World Jewish Affairs and
World Religions Bureau (MFA)
— Mr Rami Hatian, Director of World Religions
Affairs (MFA)
— Mr Moshe Golan, Senior Deputy State’s Attorney
Responsible for Civil Law Matters, Ministry of Justice
— Mr Itai Apter, Department for International
Agreements, Ministry of Justice
— Ms Karin Dosoretz, General International Law
Department, Legal Division (MFA)
— Mr Roni Tshuiberi, Chief of Staff, Deputy Minister
of Foreign Affairs
— Ms Rachel Gur, Senior Advisor, Deputy Minister
of Foreign Affairs
— Mr Gershon Kedar, Deputy Foreign Minister’s
Bureau
— Ms Noga Katz, Media Advisor, Deputy Foreign
Minister’s Bureau
— Ms Tamir Abo, Law Clerk, Department for Inter-
national Agreements, Ministry of Justice

Exchange of instruments of
ratification of the Holy See and Hungary
On Monday, 10 February, in the of-
fices of the Hungarian Parliament in
Budapest, Archbishop Alberto Bot-
tari de Castello, titular Archbishop
of Oderzo and Apostolic Nuncio to
Hungary, and Dr Zoltán Balog,
Minister of Human Resources of
Hungary, proceeded to exchange the
instruments of ratification of the
“Agreement between the Holy See
and Hungary, proceeding to exchange the
instruments of ratification of the
“Agreement between the Holy See
and Hungary”.
— Ms Tamar Abo, Law Clerk, Department for Inter-
national Agreements, Ministry of Justice

In short, the Prior of Bose Mon-
astic Community concluded, “it
does not help anyone to move for-
ward with ideological views regard-
ing similar tragedies: certainly not
for the victims, for the Church, and
least of all for society which in this way avoids asking it-
self the fundamental questions about shared ethics and the
degeneration of a climate that despises the
other and offends the weakest.”

John L. Allen of The Boston Globe
also expressed his own perplexity at
the waging of a culture war. To say
that the Vatican has not done any-
thing to fight the abuse of minors is
incorrect, he wrote. However instead
of addressing the issue directly, “the
(UN) committee joins its critique on
abuse with blunt advice to Rome to
jeer the Church teaching on matters
such as abortion, same-sex marriage,
and contraception”. However this
overshadows the fact that “there are,
in truth, many child protection re-
commendations in the report that
the Church’s own reform wing has
long championed”. For example, he
writes, “the panel suggests that a
new papal commission on child
protection, created by Pope Francis
and announced in December, should
be charged not only with investigat-
ing abuse charges” but also instances
in which bishops are alleged to have
failed in applying Church policy.
No one is excluded from God’s mercy

On Friday, 7 February, the Holy Father met with Polish Bishops for their visit ‘ad limina Apostolorum’ in the Vatican’s Clementine Hall. After conceiving his address to the Bishops, he thanked them “for these days of visiting, which have been beautiful. This is a beautiful family! Thank you so much!” He then asked for their prayers, “so that I can help the Church in the way the Lord wishes me to”. The following is a translation of the prepared text the Holy Father consigned to them in Polish on Friday, 7 February.

Dear Brothers in the Episcopate,

I cordially greet each one of you and the particular Churches that the Lord has entrusted to your fatherly leadership. I thank Archbishop Józef Michalik for his words, especially for assuring me that the Church in Poland is praying for me and for my ministry.

We are meeting, one might say, on the eve of the Canonization of Bl. John Paul II. We all carry him in our hearts: the great Pastor who, at every stage of his mission as priest, bishop and Pope, gave us a luminous example of total abandonment to God and to his Mother, and of complete dedication to the Church and to the world. He accepted us still from Heaven and reminds us how important the spiritual and pastoral companionship of Poland is. The unity of Pastors, in faith, in charity, in teaching and in the common concern for the good of the faithful, constitutes a point of reference for the entire ecclesial community and for any who seek a sure orientation in their daily journey in the ways of the Lord. Nothing and no one should be able to introduce division among you, dear Brothers.

You are called to build communion and peace rooted in brotherly love, and to give it to all people as an encouraging example. And certainly such an attitude will bear fruit and will offer to your faithful people the strength of hope.

During our meetings in these days I have been reassured of the fact that the Church in Poland has a great potential for the faith, for prayer, for charity and for Christian practice. That is why in Poland, as in other countries, ecumenism and catechesis, there is widespread charitable and social work, and a satisfied trend in priestly vocations. This must always be accompanied by human and spiritual formation, that they may enter into a deep personal relationship with the Good Shepherd, that they may be men of fervent prayer, open to the work of the Holy Spirit, generous, poor in spirit, full of ardor for the Lord and for neighbour.

In the priestly ministry the light of witness may be blurred or “hidden under a bushel” if it lacks the missionary spirit, the will to “step out” in an ever renewed missionary conversion to seek — even in the peripheries — and approach those who are waiting for the Good News of Christ. This apostolic style also requires the spirit of poverty, of abandonment, in order to be free in proclaiming and sincere in witnessing to charity. Concerning this aspect, the words of Bl. John Paul II: “It is expected of all us, priests of Jesus Christ, that we will be faithful to the example he left us: thus that we will be ‘for others’. If we ‘have’, it is so that we may have ‘for others’ (...) with a lifestyle close to that of the middle class family — or rather, close to that of a poorer family” (Address to seminaries, priests and religious, the Cathedral of St James Szczecin, 11

CONTINUATION PAGE 247


In his Lenten Message the Holy Father invites Christians to help relieve temporal, moral and spiritual destitution.

The Poverty of Jesus "frees us and enriches us". Pope Francis wrote this in his Lenten Message released on Tuesday morning, 4 February. Lent begins on 5 March. The following is the English text of the Pope's message:

Rich because we are poor

He became poor... so that you, by his poverty you might become rich (cf. 2 Cor 8:9).

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As Lent draws near, I would like to offer some helpful thoughts on our path of conversion as individuals and as a community. These insights are inspired by the words of the Prophet Isaiah: "For my dear Son has done nothing but suffer; he was despised and rejected, even as a help to others (Is 53:4, 7)."

Indeed, Jesus was despised and rejected. For many in the world, his way is perceived as one of poverty and weakness: a place that welcomes the stranger. The Apostle was writing to the Christians in Corinth to encourage them to be generous in helping the poor (2 Cor 8:9). The Apostle was writing to the Christians in Corinth to encourage them to be generous in helping the poor (2 Cor 8:9). The Apostle was writing to the Christians in Corinth to encourage them to be generous in helping the poor (2 Cor 8:9).

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What the people of Asia like to hear

Luis Antonio G. Tagle

Telling the story of Jesus in Asia is more effective if it springs from the experience of the storyteller. Pope Paul VI very wisely in Evangelii Nuntiandi pointed this out when he said that "a man who talks to people is listened to far more than a man who talks with people." What is true today was true in Asia where cultures put particular emphasis on the experientially verified truthfulness of the witness. The earliest apostles, who were Asian, spoke of their experience — what they had heard, they had seen with their eyes, and they have looked upon and touched with their hands concerning the Word of Life (1 Jn 1:1-4). There cannot be any other way for the contemporary Church in Asia. Without a deep experience of Jesus as Savior, how can I tell his story convincingly as part of my personal story? The experience of St Paul is truly the root of mission when he says, “It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:20). Telling the story of Jesus in Asia requires that the Church’s living encounter with Jesus in prayer, worship, interaction with people, especially the poor, and eventually constitute the “signs of the times”.

Narrating Jesus

Cardinal Luis Antonio G. Tagle’s book: Raccontare Gesù. Parola, comunione, missione [Narrating Jesus. Word, communion, mission] (Bologna, Eum, 2014, 69 pages, 6.00€) is now available in bookstores. The book includes various catechises delivered by the Archbishop of Manila. The following is an excerpt from his address “Mission in Asia: telling the story of Jesus,” which was given at the Asian Mission Congress of 2006 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

No one is excluded from God’s mercy

June 1987, n. 9)

Let us not forget, dear Brothers, vocations to consecrated life, especially female ones. As you observed, the decline in membership to female religious congregations in Poland too is concerning: it is a complex phenomenon, the causes of which are manyfold. I hope that women’s religious institutes may continue to be, in a way suited to the times, privileged places of affirmation and of human and spiritual growth for women. Women religious should be ready to tackle the difficult and demanding tasks and missions that fulfill their intellectual capacities, their talents and personal charisms. Let us pray for female vocations and let us accompany and esteem our sisters, who often in silence and unnoticed spend their lives for the Lord and for the Church, in prayer, in pastoral care and in charity.

I conclude by urging you to care for the poor. In Poland too, despite the current economic development of the Country, there are so many in need, unemployed, homeless, sick and elderly, as well as many families — especially the large ones — without sufficient means to raise and educate their children. May you be close to them! I know how much the Church in Poland does in this field, demonstrating great generosity not only at home but also to other countries of the world. I thank you and your communities for this work. Continue to encourage your priests, religious and all the faithful to have the “creativity of charity” and practice it always. And do not forget the many who for various reasons leave the Country and seek to build a new life abroad. Their growing number and their needs require perhaps more attention on the part of the Episcopal Conference. May you accompany them with appropriate pastoral care, so that they may retain the faith and religious traditions of the Polish people.

Dear Brothers, I thank you for your visit. Bear my cordial greeting to your particular Churches and to all your fellow countrymen. May the Virgin Mary, Queen of Poland, intercede for the Church in your Country. May she protect with her mantle the priests, men and women religious and all the faithful and obtain for each one and for every community the fullness of the grace of the Lord. And let us pray to her: Sub tuum praesidium confugiamus, Sancta Dei Genetrix, nostras deprecationes et despejamin necessitibus, sed a periculis cunctis libera nos semper, Virgo gloriosa et benedicta.

Cardinal Thottunkal made President of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India

Cardinal Baselios Cleemis Thottunkal, Major Archbishop of Trivandrum of the Syro-Malankara Church, was elected as president of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India on 12 February. The bishops conference includes three Catholic rites in India: the Latin, the Syro Malabar and the Syro Malankara rite.

Cardinal Thottunkal was elected at the end of the Bishops’ Conference’s Plenary Session which lasted eight days and was administered by Cardinal Oswald Gracias. Thottunkal, who will be 55 years old this 25 June, was made a cardinal by Pope Benedict XVI in November 2012. He is a member of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. In 1997 he obtained a doctorate in ecumenical theology at the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas.

Cardinal Thottunkal’s election is a recognition of the importance of interreligious dialogue in India and the Church’s commitment to promoting understanding and cooperation among people of different faiths. The Syro-Malankara Church, which is one of the oldest and most ancient Christian churches in the East, has a long history of dialogue and cooperation with other religions.

Witness is the first way to evangelize

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LUIS ANTONIO G. TAGLE

But just as a web of relationships with people, culture, and societal currents form a person’s story or identity, so is Christian storytelling in Asia to be done in relationship with others. The Christian identity and story in Asia is always with and not apart from those of other cultures and religions. The story of Jesus is to be told by Asian Christians who are with and among the poor, the diverse cultures and the various religions of Asia that partly determine their identities and stories as Asians. This reality of Asia has prompted Jonathan Yun-Ka Tan to propose that missio ad (towards) gentes should be understood now according to the new paradigm of missio inter (among or with) gentes. But I hold that missio ad gentes should not be eliminated but should rather be done inter gentes. There can never be a genuine mission without it being at the same time mission with people. And genuine mission with people should be understood as mission towards people. With and among the poor, cultures and religions, Asian Christians are Asian. To and for the poor, cultures and religions, Asian Christians are Christian. The blending of these stories, I believe, can enrich the apparently conflicting reflections of the FABC on mission as dialogue with the poor, cultures and religions of Asia.

Among and for other Asians, the Church tells the story of Jesus in the mode of keeping the memory of Jesus alive. Keeping the memory of Jesus does not mean locking it up in some untouchable realm of existence. It is kept when re-appropriated and shared. Trusting in the Holy Spirit and faithful to the memory guaranteed in the Tradition of the Universal Church, the Church in Asia should have the courage to rediscover new ways of telling the story of Jesus, retrieving its vitality and freeing its potentials for the renewal of the Asian realities. The story of Jesus, when freed from the museum piece, fails to be life giving. In Exsultet in Asia Pope John Paul II poses the challenge of finding the pedagogy that would make the memory of Jesus closer to Asian sensibilities, especially to theologians. He is confirming that the story of Jesus could be told in new perspectives and in the light of new circumstances.

The Church in Asia, with its rich heritage of storytelling acquired from Asian homes, neighborhoods, religions and traditional wisdoms, can be creative in telling the story of Jesus. The witness of a holy, ethical and upright life is still the best story about Jesus in Asia. The lives of holy men and women and martyrs show how the story of Jesus is inscribed in persons and communities. Men and women who have dedicated themselves to service of neighbor, like Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, are living stories that Asian peoples love to hear. Defense of the poor, work for justice, promotion of life, caring for the sick, educating children and the elderly, alleviation of foreign debt and stewardship of creation are some ways of retelling Jesus’ story in Asia today. But the Church must also be ready to accept the Holy Spirit’s surprising ways of retelling the story of Jesus.
The World Council of Churches and the Baptist World Alliance

Learning to see with the eyes of the other

GREGORY J. FAIRBANKS*

The resignation of Pope Benedict XVI and the election of Pope Francis were of importance not only for the Catholic Church, but also for the ecumenical partners of the Catholic Church. The transition marked an opportunity for our ecumenical partners to share in the thanksgiving for the ministry of Pope Benedict XVI and the joy of the installation of Pope Francis’ Petrine ministry.

Against this background, the year 2013 marked the publication of two important ecumenical texts. The Faith and Order convergent text The Church: Towards a Common Vision, was published in March, 2013. It is the only second convergent text published by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches since its establishment in 1948. In addition, the second report of conversations between the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and the Catholic Church was published in June, 2013, a result of a series of conversations which began in 2006, and is titled The BWA and the Catholic Church: A Conclusion of the Three Conversations.

During the long history of the Faith and Order Commission, only two texts have been granted the status of ‘convergence texts’, the first was the landmark 1982 Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry. The new document on ecclesiology was some 20 years in progress, during which time two study papers were published as working papers towards the final report. The first, The Nature and Purpose of the Church (Faith and Order Paper n. 181, issued at the Fourth Assembly of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Seoul, Korea, 1998) and the second, Faith and Order Commission was approved, which reduces the size of the commission and restores its ability to initiate and evaluate its own studies and texts. The new Faith and Order Commission will be a single body of 40 members, with 10% of the members (4) being Catholic, nominated by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCCU). The new leadership includes 30 delegates and 10 moderators. At least one of the leadership, drawn from the commission’s membership, will be an observer nominated by the PCCU. The old Faith and Order Standing Commission will meet for the last time at the March 2014 to formally nominate new commission members. The new commission will begin its work in 2015, and is scheduled to conclude in 2025.

The BWA is a fellowship of 228 conventions and unions in 121 countries and territories comprising 42 million members in 2,770,000 churches and a wider community of more than 100 million. As Baptists have Anabaptist roots, they do not baptize infants and young children, which explains the higher number of the community compared to the membership totals. The relationship between Baptists and Catholics has been a source of difficult conversations years. A first series of conversations took place between the Baptist World Alliance and the Catholic Church from 1984-1988. Especially in areas where there is a Catholic presence, Baptist ministers experienced some resistance to the initial conversations, and it took nearly 20 years for a second series of conversations to be initiated. During this time, a number of additional conversations were held and the conclusion was reached that “The section in n. 147 is among the best articulations of the theology of the Immaculate Conception. By situating the Immaculate Conception in the context of preparing Mary of Nazareth to make a free response to grace, the document moves the discussion out of speculative theology and into a biblical theology which shows God preparing Mary to fulfill her role in salvation history as the New Eve” (Thomas Baima, “Commentary on The Word of God in the Life of the Church: A Catholic Reflection on the Report of the International Conversations between the Catholic Church and the Baptist World Alliance 2006-2010”). This focus on such a difficult issue for many protestants as the Immaculate Conception of Mary from a biblical basis, is not only helpful for protestants, but also for Catholics to continue on a more biblical approach to theology. While time for reception of the report is still needed, both sides believe a new series of conversations will be underway in the future.

These two documents, published in 2013, one a multilateral (Faith and Order) and the other a bilateral (BWA), are each in their own way expressions of a desire to work for the unity of the Church, by challenging Christians to look both within their own tradition and in the traditions of others for ways to express the love of God in the Church. Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium calls us to exactly this task. “We must never forget that we are pilgrims journeying alongside one another. This means that we must have sincere trust in our fellow pilgrims, putting aside all suspicion or mistrust, and turn our gaze to what we are all seeking: the radiant peace of God’s face. Trusting others is an art and peace is an art Jesus sold us: ‘Blessed are the peacemakers’ (Mt 5:9). In taking up this task, also among ourselves, we fulfill the ancient prophecy: They shall beat their swords into ploughshares” (Evangelii Gaudium, n. 544). May these texts, worked on together by faith-filled Christians, assist us on our common journey to the unity that Christ desires for His Church.

*Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity

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can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (10 Feb.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr José Domenico Jiménez Sánchez-Mariscal, OSA, as Bishop of the Territorial Prelature of Calafate, Argentina. Until now he had been legal representative of San Agustín College and Regional Vicar of the Augustinians in Argentina (10 Feb.).

Bishop-elect Jiménez Sánchez-Mariscal, 59, was born in Los Cer- rabos, Spain. He made his final vows on 11 October 1966 and was ordained a priest on 23 June 1988. He holds a licence in philosophy and a master’s in religious sciences. He has served in parish ministry and as professor of theology and philosophy at the College of the Immaculate Conception and as adjunct professor at the University of the Augustinian Province of Spain and Argentina, as general secretary of the Augustinian Order in Argentina and Uruguay, and as general coordinator of the said archdiocese (11 Feb.).

The Holy Father appointed the resig- nation of Bishop Howard James Hubbard of Albany, USA. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (11 Feb.).

The Holy Father appointed Msgr Edward Bernard Scharfenberger from the clergy of Brooklyn, as Bishop of Albany, USA. Until now he has been Episcopal Vicar of the territory of Queens (11 Feb.).

Bishop-elect Scharfenberger, 65, was born in Brooklyn, New York, USA. He holds a PhD in philosophy and a licentiate in moral theology and canon law, and a JD in civil law. He was ordained a priest on 2 July 1975. He has served in parish ministry and as judicial vicar, as promoter of justice, and as episcopal vicar for strategic planning (11 Feb.).

The Holy Father appointed Msgr Antonio Franco, 67, as Bishop of the Diocesan Office of Worship, Huntington (11 Feb.).

Bishop-elect Zgilezki, 52, was born in Białystok, Poland. In 1987 he moved to the United States, where he earned an MA in theology. He was ordained a priest on 26 May 1997. He has served in parish ministry and as adjunct professor at the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception, Huntington (11 Feb.).

The Holy Father appointed the resigna- tion of Archbishop Niccolò Cotugno Fanizzi, SDB, as Archbishop of Montevideo, Uruguay. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (11 Feb.).

Archbishop Sturla Berhouet, 54, was born in Montevideo, Uruguay. He was ordained a priest on 21 November 1987. He was ordained a bishop on 4 March 2012, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Phelhes and Auxiliary of Montevideo (11 Feb.).

The Holy Father accepted the resigna- tion of Bishop Sebastián Khoarai, OMI, of Mohoé’s Hock, Lesotho. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (11 Feb.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr John Jude Thlomona, SDB, as Bishop of Mohoe’s Hock, Lesotho. Until now he has been Director General of the Secular Institute of Servants of Christ the Priest, in Hammanskraal, South Africa (11 Feb.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr John Jude Thlomona, SDB, as Bishop of Mohoé’s Hock, Lesotho. Until now he has been Dean of the Diocesan Vicariate of Mohoé’s Hock, Lesotho (11 Feb.).

Archbishop Giuseppe Lazzorotto, Apostolic Delegate to Jerusalem and Palestine; Archbishop Antonino Franco, former Apostolic Delegate to Jeru- salem and Palestine; Bishop Maurizio Malvestiti, Undersecretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches; Msgr Albertino Wittig, Official of the Secretariat of State, Section for Relations with States; Fr Emil Salayta, Judicial Vicar of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem; Fr Pietro Felet, General Secretary of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land; Fr Pietro Felet, General Secretary of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land (11 Feb.).

The talks were chaired by H.E. Hanna Amireh, Member of Executive Committee of PLO, Head of the Presidential Higher Committee for Church Affairs of the State of Palestine, and by Msgr Antoine Camilleri, Undersecretary for the Holy See’s Relations with States (11 Feb.).

The discussions took place in a cordial and constructive atmo- sphere. Taking up the issues already examined at the technical level, the Commission noted with great satisfaction the progress achieved in drawing up the final draft of the text of the Agreement, which deals with essential aspects of the life and activity of the Catholic Church in Palestine. Both sides agreed to continue in the efforts to complete the constitutional and internal provisions in view of the signature of the Agreement. The Palestinian side expressed its warm welcome to the upcom- ing visit of His Holiness, Pope Francis, to the Holy Land (11 Feb.).

On 6 February 2014, the Bilateral Commission of the Holy See and the State of Palestine, which is responsible for finalizing the text of a Global Agreement following on the Basic Agreement, signed on 17 February 2000, held a Plenary Session in Ramallah at the PLO Headquarters to review and approve the work done at the level of the joint technical group follow- ing the last Plenary Meeting held in the Vatican on 26 September 2013.

The Holy Father appointed Mutiah Muolo, journalist from the daily Emmanuel, France; Mr Mimmo Miano, oat member of Vatican City. Until now he has been a consultant for the publication of the Vatican News, which deals with essential aspects of the life and activity of the Catholic Church in Palestine (11 Feb.).

On 6 February, the Holy Father ap- pointed the following as Members of the Pontifical Council for the Laity: Cardinal Ricardo Efigenio Corrêa de Belém do Pará, Brazil; Archbishop Filippo Santoro of Taranto, Italy; Bishop Anders Ar- borelius, OCD, of Stockholm, Sweden; Bishop Dominique Rey of Frejus-Toulon, France; Archbishop Christoph Hegge, titular Bishop of Sicilbia, Auxiliary of Minster, Fed- eral Republic of Germany; Archbishop Cattaneo, Professor at the Faculty of Canon Law of St Pius X of Venice, Italy; Fr Henri Stapel, OSF, Founder and President of the International Association of the Faithful Family of Hope, Brazil; Dr Alejandro Koen von Wutenus, Superior General of the Marian Fraternity of the Recon- ciliation, Peru; Dr Laurent Landete, most-traditionalist, of the Holy Land; Dr Emmanuel, France; Mr Mimmo Miano, journalist from the daily newspaper Avvenire, Italy; Dr Mar- guerite A. Peeters, USA, Director of the Institute for the Intercontinental Dialogue Dynamics, Belgium; Ms Silvia Recchi, Italian professor of Canon Law at the Catholic University of Cenere, Cameroon; Ms Maite Urbeil Bilbao, Director General of the Theresian Institute, El Salvador (11 Feb.).

SYNOW OF BISHOPS

On 6 February the Holy Father appointed Msgr Fabio Fabene as Undersecretary of the Synod of Bishops. Until now he has been a consultant for the Office of the Con- gregation for Bishops (8 Feb.).

NECROLOGY

Bishop emeritus Cornelius John Pasichny, OSBM, of the Ukrainian Archdiocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Canada, at age 86 (9 Jan.).

Bishop Deogratias Muganwa Buéa, Cameroon, at age 83 (9 Feb.).

Bishop emeritus Pasichny, OSBM, of the Ukrainian Archdiocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Canada, at age 86 (9 Jan.).

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A renewed Church for a renewed society

Responding to the call of Vatican II

We, the 187 member-bishops of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India (CBCI), came together at the Alphonse, Mother Mary Institute, Palai in Kerala, the place sanctified by St Alphonsa, from 5-12 February 2014, for the 51st Plenary Assembly. In continuation of the 50th Plenary Assembly’s theme, Role of the Church for a Better India, Bishops deliberated, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, on the theme: “Re -newed Church for a Renewed Soci- ety: A Call of Vatican II.”

On the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the CBCI Plenary Assem- bly reflected on this theme in the light of the Second Vatican Council documents in order to draw inspiration for her future course of life and ministry. We took into ac- count the reflections of the Catholic Council of India which studied the same theme at its December 2013 annual meeting in Varanasi.

We first recalled the Church’s self-under- standing, enshrined in the Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, as the pilgrim People of God, a community rooted in a deep ex- perience of the Trinitarian God in Christ Jesus. This experience will lead to an inner con- version of our lives, in our attitude of love, compassion and forgiveness.

Joseph Chinnavyan*

The Church in India has tried to live up to the vision of Vatican II. Several people have been led to a deep experience of God through reading the Word of God, through the traditional practices of prayer and through the Charismatic Movement. In many places Small Christian Communities, rooted in the Word and Eucharist have been established.

"These communities are a sign of vi- tality within the Church, an instru- ment of formation and evangelization, and a solid starting point for a new society based on a "civilization of love" (Redemptoris Missio, n 51).

The Church has worked for the up- lift of the downtrodden. She has been appreciated for the way she has responded immediately to natural calamities, for her unbiased outreach to the needy and vulnerable sections of society. Participatory structures have been established in several re- gions, dioceses and parishes. The 2010 CBCI Gender Policy has been hailed as a step in the right direc- tion. Youth have experienced en- powerment through training pro- grams and services.

However, there is still need for improvement. The reflections of the Plenary Assembly centred chiefly on seven areas:

1. Fostering the Experience of God: While we are in a deep experience of the Trinitarian God drawing on the treasures of the Church espe- cially the Word and Sacraments. For this, our liturgies have to be well prepared, participative and meaningful.

2. We have decided to initi- ate a renewal in the celebration of the liturgy so that it becomes an ef- fective means for Christ-centred God experience. We bishops have to be ourselves Spirit-filled men of God, giving priority to prayer and to the Word of God, and helping our clergy and lay faithful to be- come aware of God’s presence and activity in their lives. The God ex- perience will lead to an inner con- version made visible in the simpli- city of our lives, in our attitude of love, compassion and forgiveness.

Following the example of Pope Francis, we will live a genuinely simple, humble, welcoming and out- going life reaching out to all people. We will so orient the formation of future priests and religious that they enter the ministry with an attitude of humility, ready to serve the poor and marginalized of society.

3. Addressing justice issues: The ex- perience of God will lead us to involve- ment in and solidarity with the mar- ginalized and the exploited, those suffering from disabilities, those liv- ing in the peripheries of economic, cultural and social spheres. We will speak out against all forms of in- justice meted out to them and we will defend their rights. We listened to the call of Pope Francis urging us to “work to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor” (Evangelii Gaudium, n 188).

We want the Church to be truly a Church of the Poor. We reaffirm our solidarity with the Dalits in India who continue to be oppressed. The CBCI reiterates its resolve to struggle for equal rights of Dalit Christians on par with their counterparts in other religions. We will continue the fight against the 1950 Presidential Order, which unjustly discriminates against Dalit Christians and we de- mand that the Government remove this 64 year injustice. Justice delayed is justice denied. We also commit ourselves to rooting out all forms of discrimination within the Church and ensuring equal opportunities in leadership roles for Dalit Christians.

4. Ensuring for our lay faithful their rightful place: Recognizing the God-given talents and potentialities of the lay faithful, we will, in the first place, listen more to their voice.

Hence, we commit ourselves to es- tablish Pastoral Councils in every diocese. We realize that formation of the lay faithful is the need of the hour. To this end, we commit ourselves, as a priority, to initiate programmes for lay formation to equip them to play their role in the Church and society.

5. Promoting Dialogue: India is home to a rich variety of ancient cultures and religions. The Church in India has to be a Church in dialogue. We urge our faithful to engage in the “dialogue of life”, mingling with our brothers and sisters of other reli- gious traditions, greeting them on their feast days and being with them in life’s vulnerable moments such as sickness and death. Besides strengthen- ing the already existing Small Christian Communities, we will seek to establish Basic Human Com- munities which would be a powerful means for communal peace and har- mony.

6. Safeguarding Ecology: The Bishops re-affirm their commitment to the protection of nature. We stand for sustainable development of peoples and human ecology. The CBCI Plen- ary Assembly shares the apprehen- sions of people living in the Western Ghats and in the areas affected by the 2011 Notification of the Ministry of Environment on the Coastal Reg- ulation Zone. We appeal to the Uni- on Government to protect the civic rights of the inhabitants in areas ad- versely affected by the proposals of the Madhav Gadgil and Kasturiran- gan Reports. The CBCI also shares the similar concerns of the tribal population in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand fast coming under mining projects.

The road ahead of us is challeng- ing. But we count on the presence of the Risen Lord who, through the power of His Spirit, “makes all things new” (Rev 21:5). Total renew- al is always the work of the Spirit. We place our efforts at renewing the Church in view of renewing society in the hands of our Mother, the Star of Evangelization.

*Deputy Secretary General and Spokesperson for the CBCI
Morning Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae

Thursday, 6 February

What we leave to others

To live our whole life within the Church, as sinners but not as corrup t traitors, and with an attitude of hope that allows us to leave a legacy, not of material wealth, but of a witness to holiness.

The Holy Father focused his homily on the mystery of death, referring to the First Reading (Kgs 2:1-4, 10-12) in which he said, “we hear the story of David’s death. We remember the beginning of his life, when he was chosen and anointed by the Lord”, when he was just “a little boy”. “After only a few years he began to reign”, but he was still only “a boy, at 22 or 23 years of age.”

David’s whole life was “a path, a journey he had made at the service of his people”. And “it ended just as it had begun”. It is the same with our lives, said the Pope. In our lives too we “begin, walk, go forward and finish.”

Thinking of David’s death “from the heart”, the Pope offered three points of reflection. First, he pointed out that “David died in the bosom of the Church, in the bosom of his people. Death did not find him outside of his people” but “within”. In this way he lives “belonging to the people of God”. It is true that David “had sinned: he called himself a sinner”. But “he never left the People of God: he was a prince, yes, but not a traitor.” This, the Pope said, “is a grace”. The grace to “remain in the People of God”. Second, he died in the bosom of the Church, right in the midst of the People of God. “he was a man of truth”. But “he did not want to be traitors nor corrupt”. The Church, the Pope explained, “is a mother and wants it to be so”, even “if at many times dirty”. For it is she who “cleanses us: she is our mother, and she knows how to do so”. But it is up to us “to ask for this grace of dying at home”.

Therefore it is important to “ask for the grace to die with hope, trusting in God”. But “trusting in God”, the Pope said, “must begin now, in life’s little things, and also in the big ones, we must always rely on the Lord. In this way, trusting the Lord becomes a habit and hope springs forth.” Therefore “to die at home and to die with hope”, are “two things that we can learn from David’s death”.

The third reflection Pope Francis shared was that of “two things that we can learn from the story of St Thérèse of the Child Jesus, who said that, at the end of her life, there was a struggle in her soul, and when she thought about the future, about what awaited her after death, in heaven, she felt as if a voice was saying: but no, don’t be foolish, darkness awaits you, only the darkness of nothing is awaiting you”. That, the Pope said, “was the problem he did not want her to trust in God”.

The Pope continued, “was that he was chosen and anointed by the Lord”, when he was just “a little boy”. “After only a few years he began to reign”, but he was still only “a boy, at 22 or 23 years of age.”

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The Pope then described the figure of St John the Baptist, pointing out that John did not allow himself to become possessed by his own moral authority, even when “the opportunity to say ‘I am the Messiah’ was offered to him on a platter”. John had “a great gift” and “was a man of faith”. The people came to him. The Gospel says that the scribes would “approach him to ask what they should do”, as did the people and even the King. But John, the Pope said, “did not fall into the temptation of showing off, seeking glory in life”. For it is said that John was “a man of truth”. “He is himself!”.

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imitated Christ, he imitated Jesus. He did this to the point that, in those times, the Pharisees and the doctors believed that he was the Messiah. Even Herod, who had him killed, believed that Jesus was John. This very fact shows the extent to which John had “followed the way of Jesus, especially in humility.” John was humiliated, and humbled himself even to the end, to his death. He went to meet the “same shameful death” as the Lord, “Jesus.” John, “a man who proclaimed so much joy.” This turned him into a “cousin” and “perhaps they later filled me with joy.” It is a way to spiritually return to that first encounter with the Lord, “to return to the first Galler encounter: we all have one!” The secret, the Pope said, is to “go there: encountering the Lord again and to continue down this beautiful path, on which he must increase and we must decrease.”

Monday, 10 February

At Mass without a watch

One does not attend Mass looking at his or her watch, as if they were at some performance, counting the minutes. One goes to participate in the mystery of God. This was the theme of Pope Francis’ homily at the Mass he celebrated in the Chapel of Domus Sanctae Marthae. “This is not a tourist excursion. No! You came here, we are gathered here, into the mystery. And this is the liturgy.”

To explain the meaning of this encounter with the mystery, Pope Francis said that the Lord has spoken to his people not only with words. “The prophets”, he said “recounted the Lord’s words. The prophets proclaimed them. The great prophet Moses gave the commandments, which is the Word of God. Many other prophets too have told the people what the Lord wanted. However, “the Lord”, he added, “also spoke in another way and in another form to his people: words, but also images. That is, he comes close to his people and makes them feel, makes them feel his presence”. Pope Francis referred to the First Reading (1 Kgs 8:17, 9-19) which says of other prophets.

“The same thing happens in the Church”, the Pope said. He does this through his Word which is recounted in the Gospels and in the Bible, he speaks through catechesis, through his homilies. He not only speaks to us but “he makes himself present”, the Pope said, “in the midst of his people, in the midst of his Church. The Lord’s presence is there. The Lord draws close to his people; he is present with his people and shares his time with them”. This is what is taking place during this liturgical celebration, which is certainly a social affair”, he said, “nor a gathering for the faithful to pray together. It is something else”, because “in the Eucharistic liturgy God is present” and, if possible, he makes himself present “in the closest way”. His presence, the Pope said, “is a real presence”. “When I speak of liturgy”, the Pope explained, “I am mainly referring to the Holy Mass. When we celebrate the Mass, we are not representing the Last Supper. The Mass “is not a representation” it is something else. It truly is the Last Supper, it is truly living again the redemptive passion and death of Our Lord.” It is a visible manifestation: the Lord makes himself present on the altar to be offered to the Father for the salvation of the world.

Pope Francis then gave examples, as he usually does, of actions that are common among the faithful. “We hear and we say, ‘I cannot now, I have to go to Mass, I have to go home to Mass’. But you do not go to Mass. You do not go and participate in Mass. And you are participating in a visible manifestation, in the mystery of the Lord’s presence among us.” It is something that is different from all other forms of our devotion, he pointed out, using the example of the living nativity scenes “that are organized by parishes at Christmas, to listen to the Way of the Cross that we do during Holy Week”. These, he explained, are representations; “the Eucharist is a real commemoration, a theophany. God draws near and is with us as we participate in it, a mystery of redemption.”

The Pope then referred to another very common behaviour among us “How many times have I noted “do we count the minutes... I only have a half an hour, I have to go to Mass...”.” This is not the right attitude that the liturgy asks of us: the liturgy is God’s time and space, and we must put ourselves there in God’s time, in God’s space, without looking at our watches. The liturgy is precisely entering into the mystery of God; bringing ourselves to the mystery and being present in the mystery.

“The Holy Father continued, looking at the faithful who were gathered there for the celebration, saying: “For example, I am sure that all of you have come here to enter into the mystery. But perhaps someone has said “I have to go to Mass at Santa Marta, because it is one of Rome’s tourist excursions, to go and visit the Pope at Santa Marta every morning. No! You came here, we are gathered here, to enter into the mystery. And this is the liturgy, God’s time, God’s space, the cloud of God that surrounds all of us”. Pope Francis went on to share some childhood memories: “I remember as a child, when we were preparing for our First Holy Communion, they made us sing ‘O holy altar guarded by angels’, and this made us realize that the altar is guarded by angels, and it gave us a sense of God’s glory, of God’s space, and of his time. Then, when we were practicing for our First Communion, we brought forward the hosts and said ‘these are not the hosts which you will receive, they are not worth anything, because the consecration comes later’. It was good for us to distinguish one from the other: it is a memory of the commemoration”. Therefore to celebrate the liturgy means “to be willing to enter into the mystery of God”, in his space and his time.

Concluding his homily, the Pope invited those present to “ask the Lord today to give us all this sense of what is sacred, to understand that it is one thing to pray at home, to pray in Church, to pray the rosary, to pray many beautiful prayers, to do the Way of the Cross, and to read the Bible; but it is quite another, to the other: it is a memory of the commemoration”. Therefore to celebrate the liturgy means “to be willing to enter into the mystery of God”, in his space and his time.

A translator of five Popes, Sigrid Spath, dies

Sigrid Spath died in Rome on 5 February at the age of 74. She was a kind and exemplary collaborator of L’Osservatore Romano for many years. Born in Villach in Carinzia, Austria, she was a Lutheran. She studied Latin and Byzantine studies in Munich and was a classical philologist, who graduated with Endre Ivánká. For more than half a century she served the the Holy See working on papal texts since the time of Paul VI. Attentive and discrete, she translated five Popes into German, working on more than 70,000 pages of homilies, addresses, encyclicals and official documents from Latin, French, Greek, Spanish, Irish and Polish. In 1985 at the beginning of Vatican II, she came to Rome where she worked with the Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner. In her final days with the Curia Generalizia of the Jesuits. Among her last translations was a portion of the long interview from September with Pope Francis for the Jesuit journal Annali della Zeit.
One year ago

One year has passed since Benedict XVI announced his resignation. And the media from around the world has been looking back to 11 February. “At 11:41 a.m. the Pope left his apartment, took the elevator to the second Loggia and entered the hall,” Gian Guido Vecchi of Corriere della Sera wrote in a long article dedicated to this anniversary. “It was a short and unsteady journey; he had a shrunken air about him but his gaze was determined. At 11:49 the Cardinals turned pale”. Five minutes later, at 11:45, Giovanna Chirri of ANSA informed the world of the resignation: Benedict XVI’s iterum atque iterum.

Vecchi continues, “Ratzinger explained that he made the decision after ‘repeatedly’ examining his conscience before God. It was important that the Pope made his decision with a long period of discernment, reflecting on the decision, as well as on the date and time in which to communicate the news to the appropriate people. He thought for a long time ‘with the meticulousness of a scholar, and he calculated and planned every move’. Franca Gianossidatti of Il Messaggero called it ‘his meditated decision’, ‘an act of revolutionary government of impressive lucidity’. And Rubén Gómez del Barrio of La Ragazza chose to write about the shock he saw in the eyes of the Pope’s brother when Georg recalled that moment with both joy and concern.

Fr Federico Lombardi also spoke recently of the Pope emeritus. When Alessandro Gnozzi of Vatican Radio, the Director of the Holy See Press Office said: “I feel very strongly that he spiritually accompanies us, which is reassuring. I think of the great figures of elders in the history of the Church and in sacred history; especially Simeon”. He added: “This is my opinion, and I believe also the Church’s. Benedict XVI is a great and wise elder, let’s say holy too, who invites us with peace of mind – because he looks well when you see him: he really gives an impression of great spiritual serenity. He still has the smile that he is known for, and that invites us to move forward on the journey, with confidence and hope.”

Claudio Sardo of Lunetti writes that that day was “an historic event which rejuvenated the Church for believers”.”Ratzinger did not know that the cardinals were to elect Bergoglio, the first Pope from the southern hemisphere and the first to take the name Francis. But he desired, searched for and prepared the way for such a break”. Sardo continues that in the act of humility and of faith which was announcing the papacy “there was an intelligence of the times”.

Pope Francis, John L. Allen of The Boston Globe wrote, “is shaking things up in the Catholic Church to such an extent that many talk about a ‘Francis revolution.’ Yet the single most revolutionary act committed by any pope in at least the last 1600 years took place one year ago. ‘And it wasn’t Francis who did it’.

It was a choice, writes Isabelle de Gaulmyn in the French newspaper La Croix, which anchored the Second Vatican Council to Church tradition, giving witness to her uniformity together with Catholic tradition. “It is simply impossible to summarize how much Pope Ratzinger made his mark on the Church through his thoughts, his spirituality, his theology, and his books which, by now, are classics for generations.”

Meanwhile Marco Ansoldo of La Repubblica chose to look at Ratzinger’s life today. “The Pope emeritus lives ‘hidden from the world’, as he had promised, and yet not hidden from the Church. He often receives visitors: cardinals, bishops, priests he has known for some time, intellectual friends, and always with discretion and confidentiality.”

He continues adding: “A year ago, there were many who feared that the unusual presence of two popes in the Vatican would be problematic. This has not been so. In the former four-story convent, equipped with an elevator, Benedict has been careful so as not to intervene in the management of the Church. Francis has gone to him many times. The Pope emeritus lives ‘hidden from the world’, as he had promised, and yet not hidden from the Church. He often receives visitors: cardinals, bishops, priests he has known for some time, intellectual friends, and always with discretion and confidentiality.”

Vatican Television Centre’s interview with Archbishop Gänswein

Today I ask you to join me in prayer for His Holiness Benedict XVI, a man of great courage and humility. (@Pontifex)

From Benedict to Francis

“Last 11 February”, recalled Archbishop Georg Gänswein in an interview with the Vatican Television Centre (CTV), “was a very unusual day. Pope Benedict’s resignation was followed by sadness, but also gratitude. Taking leave is certainly always a sad thing, it hurts and it is painful. However, I was also full of gratitude for these years in which I was able to live alongside this great Pope. I knew a short time before, and when the Pope told me, he requested that I not tell anyone, and so of course I did not say anything. Despite knowing before, when the Pope made his announcement, I was shaken. The Pope’s last day was a day of intense sorrow for me.”

During his interview with Alessandro Di Bussolo – the first part of which can be found on CTV network’s website, and the full version of which will be published on 14 February – Gänswein added: “It was an act of great courage, revolutionary even, which opened a possibility that no one could have imagined at that time.”

You have said, Di Bussolo pointed out to the Archbishop, that Benedict also promotes the emotional impact Francis has shown the faithful. “I strongly believe this”, Gänswein responded, “it is an aspect that should not be overlooked.”

“We all see the impact Pope Francis is having on the world, not only on the faithful in the Church, but also on the world, he has made an enormous impact, and this impact was desired by Pope Benedict in his resignation. He opened up a possibility that was not there before, and you can see that Pope Francis took the situation into his own hands and we are pleased with how things are”.

On the occasion of their 30th anniversary, CTV has created a box set of five DVDs entitled From Benedict to Francis. The films present the most important coverage surrounding the change of pontificate. Without commentary, the footage shows the days between 11 February and 27 March, from Benedict’s resignation to Francis’ first audience – an important time in the Church’s history, and in the history of the world.