

# L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

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Friday, 28 March 2014

At the General Audience the Pope speaks about the Sacrament of Holy Orders

## How to become a priest

One enters the priesthood only through the Lord's initiative. "He calls each of those whom he wills to become priests". The Sacrament of Holy Orders was the focus of Pope Francis' catechesis at the General Audience on Wednesday morning, 26 March, in St Peter's Square. The following is a translation of the Pope's address to the faithful, which was delivered in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We have already had occasion to point out that the three Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist together constitute the mystery of "Christian initiation", a single great event of grace that regenerates us in Christ. This is the fundamental vocation which unites everyone in the Church as disciples of the Lord Jesus. There are then two Sacraments which correspond to two specific vocations: Holy Orders and Matrimony. They constitute two great paths by which the Christian can make his life a gift of love, after the example and in the name of Christ, and thus cooperate in the building up of the Church.

Holy Orders, in its three grades of bishop, priest and deacon, is the Sacrament that enables a man to exercise the ministry which the Lord Jesus entrusted to the Apostles, to shepherd his flock, in the power of his Spirit and according to his Heart. Tending Jesus' flock not by the power of human strength or by one's own power, but by the Spirit's and according to his Heart, the Heart of Jesus which is a heart of



love. The priest, the bishop, the deacon must shepherd the Lord's flock with love. It is useless if it is not done with love. And in this sense, the ministers who are chosen and consecrated for this service extend Jesus' presence in time, if they do so by the power of the Holy Spirit, in God's name and with

love. A first aspect. Those who are ordained are placed *at the head of the community*. They are "at the head", yes, but for Jesus this means placing one's authority *at the service* [of the community], as Jesus himself showed and taught his disciples with these words: "You know that

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## First members appointed Commission for the protection of minors

Pope Francis established the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors at the end of 2013, and has now appointed the first eight members to prepare the commission's statutes. These initial members are predominantly lay people, four of whom are lay women.

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*The Holy See in Geneva*

## Helping families will help children

The Holy See's Permanent Observer to the UN at the 25th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council on violence against children.

SILVANO M. TOMASI ON PAGE 13

## Pope Francis receives the President of the United States

On Thursday morning, 27 March, the President of the United States of America, Barack H. Obama, was received in audience by His Holiness Pope Francis, after which he met with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, and Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, Secretary for Relations with States. During the cordial meetings, views were exchanged on some current international themes and it was hoped that, in areas of conflict, there would be respect for humanitarian and international law and a negotiated solution between the parties involved.

In the context of bilateral relations and cooperation between Church and State, there was a discussion on questions of particular relevance for the Church in that country, such as the exercise of the rights to religious freedom, life and conscientious objection, as well as the issue of immigration reform. Finally, the common commitment to the eradication of trafficking of hu-

man persons in the world was stated.

Accompanied by his entourage, President Obama was greeted in the courtyard of San Damaso by the Prefect of the Papal Household, Archbishop Georg Gänswein. Pope Francis then received him in the Sala del Tronetto of the Apostolic Palace. The two heads of state then proceeded, with two interpreters, to the Library for a private discussion. When, after 50 minutes, the doors reopened, members of the U.S. delegation, led by Secretary of State John Kerry, were presented to the Pope.

Lastly, there was the traditional exchange of gifts. President Obama offered seeds from the White House Gardens, meant for the Pontifical Gardens of Castel Gandolfo which were opened to the public earlier this month. The seeds were presented in a blue seed chest made of reclaimed wood from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin



Mary. The Pontiff, in turn, gave the president a copy of *Evangelii Gaudium*, a medal reproducing Bernini's original project for the colonnade of St Peter's Square, and a cast in bronze by Guido Veroni, entitled "Solidarity and peace".

At the Angelus

## Love and prejudice



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Preparations for the eighth World Meeting of Families in 2015 officially begin with a conference in the Holy See Press Office

## A moment of grace in Philadelphia

VINCENZO PAGLIA AND CHARLES CHAPUT ON PAGE 8/9

To Catholic radio and television broadcasting stations in Italy

## The sins of the media

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# VATICAN BULLETIN

## AUDIENCES

Thursday, 20 March

H.E. Mr Filip Vujanović, President of the Republic of Montenegro, with his wife and entourage

Mr Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, with his entourage

## Appointments to the Commission for the Protection of Minors

Pope Francis established the Pontifical Commission for the Protections of Minors on 5 December 2013, and he has appointed the following persons as members: Dr Catherine Bonnet, France; Ms Marie Collins, Ireland; Prof. Sheila Hollins, the United Kingdom; Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley, OFM cap., United States; Prof. Claudio Papale, Italy; H.E. Ms Hanna Suchocka, Poland; Fr Humberto Miguel Yáñez, SJ, Argentina; Fr Hans Zollner, SJ, Federal Republic of Germany.

The first task of the Commission – to which other members, chosen from various geographical regions of the world will be added subsequently – will be the preparation of statutes which will define its competence and roles. Commenting on this announcement, the Director of the Holy See Press Office, Fr Federico Lombardi, SJ, said that the Commission would contribute “to the Holy Father’s mission to uphold the sacred responsibility to ensure the safety of young people”. Significant is the number of women on the board of this commission, making up half of its members at the moment, one of whom is a survivor of child abuse. The Marie Collins Foundation is named after her and stands at the forefront of the fight for the well-being of children and their families affected by sexual abuse or harm via internet and mobile technologies.

Fr Lombardi also stressed that the Commission was desired by Pope Francis “continuing the commitment undertaken by his predecessors, and having heard the advice of a number of cardinals, other members of the College of Bishops, and experts in the field”.

Friday, 21 March

Cardinal Gerhard Ludwig Müller, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

Archbishop Piero Pioppo, titular Archbishop of Torcello, Apostolic Nuncio to Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea

H.E. Mr George Abela, President of the Republic of Malta, with his wife and entourage

Mr Jean Vanier, Founder of the Community “L’Arche”

Saturday, 22 March

Cardinal Marc Ouellet, PSS, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops

Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco, President of the Episcopal Conference of Italy

H.E. Mr Ebele Jonathan Goodluck, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, with his wife and entourage

Mr Nguyen Sinh Hung, Chairman of the National Assembly of Vietnam

Monday, 24 March

Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples

Members of the Episcopal Conference of Guinea, on a visit *ad Limina Apostolorum*:

– Archbishop Vincent Coulibaly of Conary

– Bishop Emmanuel Féléhou of Kankan

– Bishop Raphaël Balla Guilaougouvi of N’Zérékoré

## CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Peter Marzinkowski, CSSP., of Alindao, Central African Republic. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law. He is succeeded by Bishop Cyr-Nestor Yapaupa, Coadjutor of the said diocese (19 Mar.).

Bishop Yapaupa, 44, was born in Bangassou, Central African Republic. He was ordained a priest on 18 March 2001. He was ordained a bishop on 22 July 2012, subsequent to his appointment as Coadjutor Bishop of Alindao.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Genival Saraiva de França of Palmares, Brazil. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (19 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Henrique Soares da Costa as Bishop of Palmares, Brazil. Until now he has been titular Bishop of Acufida and Auxiliary of Aracaju (19 Mar.).

Bishop Soares da Costa, 51, was born in Penedo, Brazil. He was ordained a priest on 15 August 1991. He was ordained a bishop on 19 June 2009, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Acufida and Auxiliary of Aracaju.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Francis Serrao, SJ, as Bishop of Shimoga, India. Until now he has been Provincial Superior of the Society of Jesus in India (19 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Serrao, SJ, 54, was born in Moodbidri, India. He was ordained a priest on 30 April 1992 and made his perpetual vows on 1 May 1999 to the Society of Jesus. He holds a master’s in theology. He has served in parish ministry and at the *Social Action-Loyola Vikas Kendra*. He has also served as director of the Regional Theologate; as superior of the Bejapur Jesuit Community; as rector of St Aloysius College in Mangalore; and as provincial of Karnataka Jesuit Province.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop José Trinidad Zapata Ortíz as Bishop of Papantla, Mexico. Until now he has been Bishop of San Andrés Tuxtla (20 Mar.).

Bishop Zapata Ortíz, 54, was born in Fresnillo, Mexico. He was ordained a priest on 9 May 1990. He was ordained a bishop on 31 July 2004, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of San Andrés Tuxtla.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop José Valmor César Teixeira, SDB, as Bishop of São José dos Campos, Brazil. Until now he has been Bishop of Bom Jesus da Lapa (20 Mar.).

Bishop Teixeira, 61, was born in Rio do Sul, Brazil. He was ordained a priest on 9 December 1979. He was ordained a bishop on 29 March 2009, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Bom Jesus da Lapa.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Werner Theissen of Hamburg, Federal Republic of Germany. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (21 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Malcolm Patrick McMahon, OP, as Archbishop of Liverpool. Until now he has been Bishop of Nottingham (21 Mar.).

Archbishop McMahon, 64, was born in London, England. He was ordained a priest on 26 June 1982. He was ordained a bishop on 8 December 2000, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Nottingham.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Giovanni D’Alise, as Bishop of Caserta, Italy. Until now he has been Bishop of Ariano Irpino-Lacedonia (21 Mar.).

Bishop D’Alise, 66, was born in Naples, Italy. He was ordained a priest on 23 September 1972. He was ordained a bishop on 17 July 2004

## Msgr Ferme Prelate Secretary of the Council for the Economy

The Holy Father has nominated Msgr Brian Ferme as Prelate Secretary of the Council for the Economy. With the *Motu Proprio Fidelis dispensator et prudens* of 24 February 2014, the Pope established the Secretariat for the Economy, appointing Cardinal George Pell as its Prefect, and instituted the Council for the Economy, appointing Cardinal Reinhard Marx as its coordinator.

The Holy See Press Office released a statement announcing Msgr Ferme’s appointment on Saturday, 22 March, explaining that the Prelate Secretary’s task will be to assist the Cardinal Coordinator in carrying out the responsibilities of the Council for the Economy, whose competences are associated with the guidance and supervision of the administrative and financial activities of the economic entities of the Holy See.

Msgr Ferme was born in 1955, and is a priest of the diocese of Portsmouth, England. He studied philosophy, theology and canon law in Melbourne, Oxford and Rome. He is the author of numerous scientific publications and articles. He has served as professor of canon law at the Gregorian Pontifical University and subsequently at the Pontifical Lateran University, where he became dean of the Faculty of Canon Law in 2000. In 2003, in Washington, he became dean of the Faculty of canon law at the Catholic University of America, after which he transferred to Venice as head of the St Pius X Faculty of canon law.

In addition Msgr Ferme collaborates with various dicasteries of the Roman Curia; in particular, he is a consultant of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts.

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Official schedule for 24-26 May released

# Pope Francis in the Holy Land

On Thursday morning, 27 March, the schedule for Pope Francis' visit to the Holy Land was presented in the Holy See Press Office. The Holy Father will travel to the Holy Land from Saturday, 24 May to Monday, 26 May, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the historic embrace between Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras in Jerusalem on 5 January 1964.

The Pope is scheduled to depart at 8:15 on Saturday morning, 24 May, and will arrive in Amman, Jordan at 1:00 pm local time. The welcome ceremony will take place at 1:45 pm at the Al-Husseini Royal Palace where he will pay a courtesy call to the King and Queen. At 2:30 pm the Holy Father will meet with authorities of the Kingdom of Jordan. At 4 pm he will celebrate Mass at the international stadium in the capital city of Jordan, and at 7 pm he will visit the site where Jesus was baptized in Bethany, on the banks of the River Jordan. There he will also meet with refugees and disabled young people in the Latin church.

On Sunday morning, 25 May, the Pontiff will go by helicopter to Bethlehem where he is scheduled to

arrive at 9:30 am. The welcome ceremony will take place in the Presidential Palace where he will meet the President of the State of Palestine Abu Mazen. He will then meet with other Palestinian authorities. At 11 am he will celebrate Mass in Manger Square, followed by the Regina Caeli. Then at 1:30 pm Pope Francis will eat lunch with several Palestinian families at the Franciscan convent Casa Nova in Bethlehem. At 3 pm he is scheduled to visit privately the Grotto of the Nativity; he will go to the Phoenix center of the Dheisheh Refugee Camp to meet the children of the camps of Dheisheh, Aida and Beit Jibrin. Then just before 4 pm he will depart and go by helicopter to the Ben Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv. The Pope will arrive at 4:30 pm and a welcome ceremony will take place in Israel. At 5:15 pm he will travel to Jerusalem by helicopter where he will meet with the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomaios I in the apostolic delegation for the signing of a joint declaration.



Press conference at the Patriarchate of Jerusalem

At 7 pm at the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre they will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the historic embrace between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras. That evening the Pope will dine with the Patriarch and bishops at the Latin Patriarchate.

The third day of the visit, 26 May, will begin with Pope Francis' visit to the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in the building of the Great Council on the Esplanade of the Mosques. Visits to the Western Wall, Mount Herzl - where he will lay a wreath -

and Yad Vashem will follow. At 10:45 am he will pay a courtesy call to the two chief Rabbis of Israel at the Heichal Shlomo Center near the Great Synagogue. Then at 11:45 am he will meet the President of Israel, Shimon Peres, in the Presidential Palace. At 1 pm Pope Francis will go to the Notre Dame Jerusalem Center where he will meet with the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. That afternoon at 3:30 pm he will visit privately with the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomaios I in a building near the Orthodox church on the

Mount of Olives. Afterward he will meet with priests, men and women religious and seminarians in the Church of Gethsemane. At 5:20 pm the Pope will celebrate Mass with the ordinaries of the Holy Land in the Upper Room. At the end of the celebration he will return to Tel Aviv by helicopter where he will take his leave of Israel and depart for Rome.

The schedule was released as Patriarch Fouad Twal was holding a press conference at the Latin Patriarchate.

## How to become a priest

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the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served by to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt 20:25-28/Mk 10:42-45). A bishop who is not at the service of the community fails to perform his duty; a priest who is not at the service of his community fails to perform his duty, he errs.



The Holy Father greeted Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia at the end of the audience; the Archbishop is in Rome this week for the official opening to preparations for the eighth World Meeting of Families which will take place in his diocese in September 2015.

2. Another characteristic which also derives from this sacramental union with Christ is a *passionate love for the Church*. Let us think of that passage from the Letter to the Ephesians in which St Paul states that Christ "loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the Church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing" (5:25-27). Through Holy Orders the minister dedicates himself entirely to his community and loves it with all his heart: it is his family. The bishop and the priest love the Church in their own community, they love it greatly. How? As Christ loves the Church. St Paul will say the same of marriage: the husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the Church. It is a great mystery of love: this of priestly ministry and that of matrimony are two Sacraments, pathways which people normally take to go to the Lord.

3. A final aspect. The Apostle Paul recommends to the disciple Timothy that he not neglect, indeed, that *he always rekindle the gift that is within him*. The gift that he has been given through the laying on of hands (cf. 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6). When the ministry is not fostered - the ministry of the bishop, the ministry of the priest - through prayer, through listening to the Word of God, through the daily celebration of the Eucharist and also through regularly going to the Sacrament of Penance, he inevitably ends up losing sight of the authentic meaning of his own service and the joy which

comes from a profound communion with Jesus.

4. The bishop who does not pray, the bishop who does not listen to the Word of God, who does not celebrate every day, who does not regularly confess - and the same is true for the priest who does not do these things - in the long run lose their union with Jesus and become so mediocre that they do not benefit the Church. That is why we must help bishops and priests to pray, to listen to the Word of God which is one's daily nourishment, to celebrate the Eucharist each day and to confess regularly. This is so important precisely because it concerns the sanctification of bishops and priests.

5. I would like to conclude with something which comes to mind: how does one become a priest, where is access to the priesthood sold? No. It is not sold. This is an initiative which the Lord takes. The Lord calls. He calls each of those whom he wills to become priests. Perhaps there are some young men present here who have heard this call in their hearts, the aspiration to become a priest, the desire to serve others in the things of God, the desire to spend one's entire life in service in order to catechize, baptize, forgive, celebrate the Eucharist, heal the sick... the whole of one's life in this way. If some of you have heard this call in your heart, it is Jesus who has placed it there. Pay atten-



tion to this invitation and pray that it might grow and bear fruit for the whole Church.

### SPECIAL GROUPS

I greet all the English-speaking pilgrims present at today's Audience, including those from the United Kingdom, England, Australia, Denmark, Malta, China, Japan and the United States. Upon you and your families I invoke joy and peace in Christ our Lord.

I address a special thought to the *young people, the sick, and newlyweds*. Yesterday we celebrated the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord to the Virgin Mary. Dear *young people*, especially the scouts who are present, may you know how to listen to the will of God as Mary did; dear *sick*, may you not become discouraged in difficult times, knowing that the Lord never gives a cross that surpasses one's strength; and may you, dear *newlyweds*, build your married life on the solid rock of God's Word.

To Bishops of Guinea on their 'ad limina' visit

## May unity prevail over conflict

*In a world wounded by so many ethnic, political and religious conflicts Christian communities must become examples of fraternal coexistence. This was Pope Francis' recommendation to the Bishops of the Episcopal Conference of Guinea, whom he received in audience on Monday, 24 March, on the occasion of their visit ad limina Apostolorum. The following is a translation of the Pope's address, which was consigned in French.*

Dear Brothers in the Episcopate,

I welcome you on the occasion of your pilgrimage to Rome for your *ad limina* visit! You have come to tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul, who bore witness to Christ crucified and Risen even to giving their very lives. Still today, they are models for all pastors to whom the Lord entrusts his people. You can

rely on them to enlighten and support you in the fulfillment of your duties.

I thank Bishop Emmanuel Félémou, President of your Episcopal Conference, for the words which he addressed to me on your behalf. To each of you, and through you to your priests, to the men and women religious, and to all the lay faithful of your dioceses, I would like to express my profound affection. Allow me also to mention here Cardinal Robert Sarah, who after having generously served the Church in your country, is now one of my esteemed collaborators.

I also wish to express my joy and gratitude for the good work of evangelization which is being carried out in Guinea. Christ's disciples there form a living body that manifests the joy of the Gospel by the enthu-

siasm of its faith, even though the conditions in which the Good News is being proclaimed are often difficult. To the human eye the means of evangelization might seem desirable. Far from becoming discouraged, you must never forget that it is Jesus' own work, which surpasses anything which we can discern and understand (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 12). However, you are not alone because all of your people together with you are missionary (cf. *ibid.*, n. 119). You ought therefore to have great trust and resolutely put out into the deep.

Yet in order that the Gospel might deeply touch and convert hearts, we must remind ourselves that we can only bear witness to the truth of the Gospel if we are united in love: "That they may all be one ... so that the world may believe" (Jn 17:21), Jesus tells us. The Church needs communion you to be in communion among yourselves and with the Successor of Peter. Discord among Christians is the greatest obstacle to evangelization. It fosters the growth of groups that take advantage of the people's poverty and credulity to propose easy but illusory solutions to their problems. In a world wounded by so many ethnic, political and religious conflicts, our communities must become "authentically fraternal and reconciled" so that in them "they will find that witness luminous and attractive" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 100). God gives us

the grace, if we know how to receive it, to make unity prevail over conflict. "Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of the ideal of fraternal love" (*ibid.*, n. 101).

In order that the proclamation of the Gospel may bear fruit, our whole life should be consistent with the Gospel we proclaim. I am pleased to see that this is already a living reality, from many points of view, in your dioceses. I think first of the lay faithful who are engaged in pastoral work, and in particular of the catechists who carry out an irreplaceable work of evangelization and inspiration within the Christian communities. May they be heartily thanked. You have opened formation centres to train them, and I cannot but invite you to persevere in your efforts to ensure the quality of this formation. I also exhort you to support families, whose Christian model must be proposed and lived without ambiguity, since polygamy is still widespread and mixed marriages are increasingly on the rise.

You also have the fundamental duty to invite the faithful to pray and live in authentic closeness to God, since the whole missionary dynamism comes from the quality of one's love of God (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 264). Through the worthy celebration of the Eucharist, the faithful are able to enter into the mystery of the Lord who gives his life for them, and find therein the joy of hope, consolation amid trial, strength to continue along the journey.

I also suggest that you invite the laity, in particular the youngest, to bear witness to their faith through greater involvement in society, thereby manifesting their attachment to their country. In collaboration with the various active members of societal life, may they always and everywhere be builders of peace and reconciliation in fighting the extreme poverty Guinea has to confront. From this perspective, despite the difficulties you encounter, I encourage you to deepen your relations with your fellow citizens who are Muslim, by learning to accept one another's different ways of being, thinking and expression.

My thoughts also go to the men and women religious who, in the variety of their charisms, bring to the people of Guinea the irreplaceable offering of their prayer of adoration, praise and intercession. Often living in situations of great poverty, in cooperation with the laity, they manifest the love of Christ through their work of assisting the people both in the sphere of healthcare and in the field of education and formation. I assure them of my support and prayer. They are carrying out a true evangelization by their works, and they bear authentic witness to God's tenderness for all people, especially for the poorest and the weakest, a witness that touches hearts and firmly roots the faith of the faithful. Despite the scarcity of means and the immensity of the task, I invite you to support them

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Audience with the plenary of the dicastery for health care workers

## Those who suffer are never alone

*In protecting and promoting life, we must recognize the dignity and value of every single human being. Pope Francis received the participants in the plenary meeting of the Pontifical Council for Health Care Workers on Monday, 24 March, in the Clementine Hall. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's words.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I welcome you on the occasion of your Plenary Session and I thank Archbishop Zimowski for his words. The Bishop of Rome is grateful to each of you for your commitment to the many brothers and sisters who bear the burden of sickness, disability, and difficult old age.

Your work in these days is inspired by what John Paul II said of suffering, 30 years ago, in the Apostolic Letter *Salvifici Doloris*: "to do good by one's suffering and to do good to those who suffer" (n. 30). John Paul II lived and witnessed to these words in an exemplary way. His was a living magisterium, which the People of God reciprocated with so much affection and veneration, recognizing that God was with him.

It is true, in fact, that also in suffering no one is ever alone because God – in his merciful love for man and for the world – embraces even



the most inhumane situations, in which the image of the Creator, present in everyone, is blurred or disfigured. Thus it was for Jesus in his Passion. In Him every human pain, every anxiety, every suffering was taken on out of love, out of pure desire to be close to us, to be with us. And here, in Jesus' Passion, is the greatest lesson for anyone who wants to dedicate him-herself to serving our sick and suffering brothers.

The experience of fraternal sharing with those who suffer opens us to the true beauty of human life which includes its frailty. In protecting and promoting life, at any stage or condition, we can recog-

nize the dignity and value of every single human being, from conception until death.

Tomorrow we will celebrated the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. "The one who accepted 'Life' in the name of all and for the sake of all was Mary, the Virgin Mother; she is thus most closely and personally associated with the Gospel of life" (John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Evangelium Vitae*, n. 102). Mary offered up her own existence, she made her whole self available to the will of God, becoming a "place" of his presence, a "place" in which the Son of God dwells.

Dear friends, in exercising your daily service, let us keep ever present the flesh of Christ present in the poor, in those suffering, in children, also in the unwanted, in those with physical or mental disabilities and in the elderly.

Thus I invoke upon each of you, upon all those who are sick and suffering together with their families, as well as upon all those who take care of them, the maternal protection of Mary, *Salus infirmorum*, so that she may illumine your reflection and your action in defending and promoting life and in health pastoral care. May the Lord bless you.



At the Angelus the Holy Father reminds the faithful that every encounter with Jesus changes one's life

## Love and prejudice

*Mercy was once again the core of the Pope's reflection. On Sunday, 23 March, speaking to the faithful gathered in St Peter's Square, the Pontiff reminded them that "mercy is greater than prejudice". The following is a translation of his words before the Marian Prayer, which were delivered in Italian.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning!

Today's Gospel presents Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman in Sicar, near an old well where the woman went to draw water daily. That day, she found Jesus seated, "wearied as he was with his journey" (Jn 4:6). He immediately says to her: "Give me a drink" (v. 7). In this way he overcomes the barriers of hostility that existed between Jews and Samaritans and breaks the mould of prejudice against women. This simple request from Jesus is the start of a frank dialogue, through which he enters with great delicacy into the interior world of a person to whom, according to social norms, he should not have spoken. But Jesus does! Jesus is not afraid. When Jesus sees a person he goes ahead, because he loves. He loves us all. He never hesitates before a person out of prejudice. Jesus sets her own situation before her, not by judging her but by making her feel worthy, acknowledged, and thus arousing in her the desire to go beyond the daily routine.

Jesus' thirst was not so much for water, but for the encounter with a parched soul. Jesus needed to encounter the Samaritan woman in order to open her heart: he asks for a drink so as to bring to light her own thirst. The woman is moved by this encounter: she asks Jesus several profound questions that we all carry within but often ignore. We, too, have many questions to ask, but we don't have the courage to ask Jesus! Lent, dear brothers and sisters, is the opportune time to look within ourselves, to understand our true spiritual needs, and to ask the Lord's help in prayer. The example of the Samaritan woman invites us to exclaim: "Jesus, give me a drink that will quench my thirst forever".

The Gospel says that the disciples marvelled that their Master was speaking to this woman. But the Lord is greater than prejudice, which is why he was not afraid to address the Samaritan woman: mercy is greater than prejudice. We must learn this well! Mercy is greater than prejudice, and Jesus is so very merciful, very! The outcome of that encounter by the well was the woman's transformation: "the woman left her water jar" (v. 28), with which she had come to draw water, and ran to the city to tell people about her extraordinary experience. "I found a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" She was excited. She had gone to draw water from the well, but she found another kind of water, the living water of mercy from which gushes forth eternal life. She found the water she had always sought! She runs to the village, that village which had

judged her, condemned her and rejected her, and she announces that she has met the Messiah: the one who has changed her life. Because every encounter with Jesus changes our lives, always. It is a step forward, a step closer to God. And thus every encounter with Jesus changes our life. It is always, always this way.

In this Gospel passage we likewise find the impetus to "leave behind our water jar", the symbol of everything that is seemingly important, but loses all its value before the "love of God". We all have one, or more than one! I ask you, and myself: "What is your interior water jar, the one that weighs you down, that distances you from God?". Let us set it aside a little and with our hearts; let us hear the voice of Jesus offering us another kind of water, another water that brings us close to the Lord. We are called to rediscover the importance and the sense of our Christian life, initiated in Baptism and, like the Samaritan woman, to witness to our brothers. A witness of what? Joy! To witness to the joy of the encounter with Jesus; for, as I said, every encounter with Jesus changes our life, and every encounter with Jesus also fills us with joy, the joy that comes from within. And the Lord is like this. And so we must tell of the marvellous things



the Lord can do in our hearts when we have the courage to set aside our own water jar.

*After the Angelus, the Pope said:*

Dear brothers and sisters, now let us remember these two phrases: every encounter with Jesus changes our life and every encounter with Jesus fills us with joy. Shall we say it together? Every encounter with Jesus changes our life; every encounter with Jesus fills us with joy. So it is.

Tomorrow is the World Day of Tuberculosis: let us pray for all people stricken with this disease, and for those who in different ways support them.

This coming Friday and Saturday will be a special penitential moment, called "24 hours for the Lord". It

will begin with a Celebration in the Basilica of St Peter on Friday afternoon, then that evening and night several churches in the centre of Rome will be open for prayer and Confession. It will be – we could call it – a feast of forgiveness, which will take place simultaneously in many dioceses and parishes around the world. The forgiveness that the Lord grants us must be celebrated, as the father did in the parable of the prodigal son, when the son returned home he ordered a feast, forgetting all his sins. It will be a feast of forgiveness.

And now I greet you all from the heart, faithful of Rome and pilgrims from many countries, especially those from Zagreb and Zadar in Croatia, and from Bocholt in Germany; the school of "Capitania" from Seto-Shi, Japan; students from Illinois, USA and those from Ferrol, Spain.

I address a special greeting to the marathon runners and to the organizers of this lovely sporting event in our city.

To all of you I wish a good Sunday and a good lunch. *Arriuedero!*

Pope receives the Apostoliki diakonia

### Renewing the commitment to ecumenism

On Monday, 24 March, Pope Francis met with a delegation of the Apostoliki diakonia. The meeting was an opportunity to renew the commitment to ecumenism and collaboration with the Holy See. The delegation, led by the director general Bishop Agathangelos, is an ecumenical organization which promotes pastoral work, and cultural and editorial activities for the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in Greece.

Cultural collaboration between the Holy See and the Apostoliki diakonia was discussed, beginning with the improvement of relations which resulted after John Paul II's visit to Athens in 2001. Among the most important ecumenical initiatives is the summer programme of the neo-Greek language and Orthodox culture which is held in Athens and where Catholic students from the Pontifical universities come to study on scholarship. The programme has been in place for 10 years and hundreds of students have been able to take advantage of these scholarships offered by the Apostoliki diakonia. For two years the Pontifical Oriental Institute has also held a professorship for the modern Greek language. Lessons are offered by a native Greek to all students who



desire to learn the language and understand more deeply the Greek Orthodox Church and her rich theological heritage. The organization is also publishing a book on ancient Greek manuscripts, in collaboration with the Vatican Apostolic Library.

During their stay in Rome from 21-26 March, the group visited the papal Basilicas of St Peter and St Paul Outside-the-Walls – to venerate the tombs of both Apostles – and met the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the Archivist and Librarian of Holy Roman Church, and those responsible for the Vatican Publishing House.

### Bregantini to write Via Crucis meditations

Archbishop Giancarlo Maria Bregantini of Campobasso-Boiano will be the author of the meditations for the Via Crucis on Good Friday at the Colosseum with Pope Francis. The Archbishop, who is also chairman of the CEI Commission for issues regarding social welfare, employment, justice and peace, will follow the traditional style of one meditation for each of the 14 stations. The news of the assignment was released a few days after the Pope's meeting with the Libera Association, which supports families of the victims of mafia violence. In fact, when the Archbishop was in the Diocese of Locri-Gerace, he structured his pastoral formation on the fight against all forms of organized crime. He also wrote the afterword to the book *Dio non si stanca di perdonare* [God never tires of forgiving], which includes a series of Lenten meditations given between 2004-2011 by Archbishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Buenos Aires.

To the members of the Corallo association who coordinate the Catholic radio and television broadcasting stations in Italy

## The sins of the media

*Misinformation, calumny and defamation. Pope Francis identified these sins as the sins of the media, in an off the cuff address he delivered to members of the Corallo Association on Saturday morning, 22 March, in the Vatican's Clementine Hall. In greeting the Pope, the President of the Association, Luigi Bardelli, spoke about the need to recognize the unique role which individuals play in the common mission of the Church, and the consequent need to avoid all forms of clericalism. "Our desire", Bardelli said, "is that in the Church's mission we are all recognized". However, he said, "there still persists a certain clericalism, according to which all that does not originate in the Curia and receive the Curia's stamp of approval, struggles to be recognized and included in pastoral plans". Following the address, the official text that was prepared for the occasion was consigned to the Association's President. The following is a translation of the Pope's off the cuff address, which was given in Italian.*

I thank you very much for what you have said, and I thank you all for the work you do. That truth ... seeking the truth with the media. But not only truth! *Truth, goodness and beauty*, the three together. Your work ought to unfold along these three paths: the path of truth, the path of goodness and the path of beauty. But that truth, goodness and beauty which are consistent, that come from within, that are human. And along the path of truth, along these three paths we can encounter errors, even traps. "I think, I seek the truth...": take care not to become an intellectual without intelligence. "I am setting out, I am seeking goodness...": take care not to become an ethicist without goodness. "I take pleasure in beauty...": yes, but take care not to do what is often done, i.e. "masking" beauty, looking for cosmetics to create an artificial beauty that does not exist. Truth, goodness and beauty as they come from God and are present in man. And this is the work of the media, your work.

You mentioned two things, and I would like to go back to them. First of all, *the harmonious unity of your work*. There are great media outlets and those which are small.... But if we read Chapter 12 of St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians we see that there is neither great nor small: each fulfills a role, the help he gives the others. The hand cannot exist without the head, and so on. We are all members, also your media outlets which may be greater or smaller are members, are harmonized through the vocation to service in the Church. No one needs to feel that he is small, too small compared with someone too great. We are all little in the sight of God, in Christian humility, but we all have a role. Everyone! Like in the Church.... I would ask this question: who is more important in the Church? The Pope or that old lady who prays the Rosary every day for the Church? Only God can say: I cannot say. But everyone is important to this harmony, because the Church is the harmony of diversity. The body of Christ is this harmony in diversity, and the One who creates this harmony is the Holy Spirit: He is the most important of all. This is what you said, and I wish to emphasize it. It is important: to seek unity and not to follow the logic that the big fish swallows the little one.

You spoke of something else, which I mentioned in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*. You

spoke about *clericalism*. It is one of the evils, one of the evils of the Church. But it is a "complicit" evil, because priests take pleasure in the temptation to clericalize the laity, but many of the laity are on their knees asking to be clericalized, because it is more comfortable, it is more comfortable! This is a double sin! We must overcome this temptation. The layperson must be lay, one who is baptized, with the power that comes from his baptism. A servant, but with his lay vocation, and one does not sell this, one does not bargain with it, one should not be complicit with another person.... No. I am this way! Because that is my identity. I have heard this so many times in my homeland: "In my parish, you know, I have an excellent layman: he is a good organizer.... Your Eminence, why don't we make him a deacon?". The priest's suggestion is immediately to clericalize. Let's make this layman.... Why? Why is the deacon or priest more important than the layman? No!



This is the mistake! Is he a good layman? Then let him continue and grow as such. Why treat his Christian identity lightly. In my opinion, clericalism impedes the layman's growth. But keep in mind what I said: the two parties are accomplices in the temptation. For there would be no clericalism if there weren't laymen who wanted to be clericalized. Is this clear? Therefore I thank you for what you do. Harmony: this is another form of harmony, because the priest cannot carry out the role of the layman, and the Holy Spirit is free: sometimes he inspires the priest to do something, at other times he inspires the layman. We talk about this in the pastoral Council.



cil. Pastoral Councils are so important: a parish – and here I cite the Code of Canon Law – a parish that does not have a pastoral Council and a Finance Council, is not a good parish: it lacks life.

Then there are so many virtues. I noted at the beginning: travel along the path of goodness, of truth and of beauty. There are so many virtues along these paths. But there are also the *sins* of the media! Allow me to speak a little about this. In my view, the sins of the media, the gravest, are those that go along the road of lies and falsehood, and there are three: *misinformation, calumny and defamation*. The last two are very grave! but not as dangerous as the first. Why? I will explain. Calumny is a mortal sin, but one may clarify and come to know that it is calumny. Defamation is a mortal sin, but one can arrive at saying: this is an injustice, because this person did that a long time ago, but he repented, he changed his life. But *misinformation* is telling only half of the story, the half that is more convenient for me, and not telling the other half. And so the person who is watching TV or listening to the radio cannot judge correctly, because he doesn't have all of the facts and they aren't given to him. Please flee from these three sins. *Misinformation, calumny and defamation*.

I thank you for what you do. I have asked Msgr Sanchirico to give you the address that I had written: but the words [of the President] inspired me to speak to you spontaneously, and I spoke with the language of the heart: hear it this way. Not with the Italian language, because I don't speak in the style of Dante!.... I thank you very much, and now I invite you to pray an *Ave Maria* to Our Lady before giving you the blessing. *Ave Maria*...

*The following is a translation of the address prepared by the Holy Father.*

Dear Friends,

I welcome you and I thank the President for the words with which he introduced our meeting. I also extend my greetings to all those who are following us on the Corallo Association's radio and television network. These broadcasters seek to express the commitment of the Church in Italy *to be close and to be a friend* to every person, and to speak to people where they dwell, live, work, love and suffer.

You are a "*net*". I would like to begin with this image, which makes us think of Jesus' first disciples: they were fishermen, they worked with nets. Jesus called them to follow him and he made of them "fishers of men" (Mt 4:19). You too can be "fishers of men" through your local radio and television network which covers the whole of Italy; it is a simple, popular network and it would do well to remain so. Reaching every city and quarter, your broadcasts become instruments to enable Lord's voice might be heard by everyone.

The episode of the prophet Elijah on Mount Horeb springs to mind (cf. 1 Kings 19:9-13), as he stood before the cave and beheld startling phenomena: the mighty wind, the earthquake, the fire ... but the Lord did not speak through these. Then Elijah heard "a still small voice" (v. 12). And in that light breeze he heard the Lord's voice speaking to him. Well, your radio and television network can broadcast something of that voice over the air so that it can speak to the men and women who are looking for a word of hope and reassurance for their lives.

In this way you become the voice of a Church that is not afraid to enter into man's deserts, to go out to meet him, to go in search of him in his restlessness, in his dismay, dialoguing with everyone, even with those who, for various reasons, have distanced themselves from the Christian community and feel far from God. But in reality God is never far away. He is always nearby! And you can contribute to making that "still small voice" resound, a voice capable of saying to each person: "The Teacher is here and is calling for



To executives and workers from the steel works in Terni

## Work for everyone

*Work is a good for everyone and it should be made available for everyone. Pope Francis addressed these words on Thursday morning, 20 March, to managers and employees of the steel works in Terni and faithful of the diocese, whom he received in audience in the Paul VI Hall on the 130th anniversary of its foundation. The following is a translation of the Pope's address, which was delivered in Italian.*

I extend my cordial welcome to each of you! The occasion that has inspired your visit is the 130th anniversary of the foundation of the steelworks in Terni, which stands as a symbol of the entrepreneurial and labour skills that have made this name well-known far beyond the borders of Italy. I greet your Pastor, Bishop Ernesto Vecchi, and I thank him for the words which he addressed to me, and especially for the service that he renders to the Church of Terni-Narni-Amelia. It is a service he is offering at a time of his life when he has the right to rest, and rather than resting he continues to work: thank you, Bishop Vecchi, thank you very much! I greet the civil authorities, as well as the priests, consecrated persons, lay faithful and the various social groups and members of your diocesan community.

This meeting offers me the opportunity to renew my own closeness and that of the whole Church not only to the society "Acciai Speciali Terni" but also to the companies in your region and more generally to the world of industry. Faced with current economic developments and the distress that employment is experiencing, it is necessary to reaffirm that work is essential for society, for families and for individuals. Work, in fact, directly concerns the human person, his life, his freedom and his happiness. The primary value of work is the good of the human person since it fulfills him as such, with his inner talents and his intellectual, creative and physical abilities. Hence the scope of work is not only profit and economics; its purpose above all regards man and his dignity. Man's dignity is tied to work. I listened to

several young workers who are unemployed, and this is what they told me: "Father, we at home – my wife, my children – we eat every day because they give us something to eat at the parish, or the club, or the Red Cross. But Father, I don't know what it means to earn bread for the table, and I need to eat, but I need to know the dignity being a breadwinner". And work means this! This dignity is wounded where work is lacking! Anyone who is unemployed or underemployed is likely, in fact, to be placed on the margins of society, becoming a victim of social exclusion. Many times it happens that



people without work – I am thinking especially of the many unemployed young people today – slip into chronic discouragement, or worse, into apathy.

What can we say before the grave problem of unemployment affecting various European countries? It is the consequence of an economic system

which is no longer capable of creating work, because it has placed an idol at the centre that is called money! Therefore, the various political, social and economic entities are called to promote a different approach based on justice and solidarity. This word now risks being removed from the dictionary. Solidarity: it seems like a dirty word! No! Solidarity is important, but this system is not very fond of it, it prefers to exclude it. Such human solidarity should ensure that everyone have the possibility to carry out a dignified form of work. Work is a good for everyone and it needs to be available for everyone. Periods of grave hardship and unemployment need to be addressed with the tools of creativity and solidarity. The creativity of *entrepreneurs* and brave artisans who look to the future with confidence and hope. And the solid-

leave behind the morass of a hard and difficult economic season of work.

With this hope, I invoke the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary upon you and upon the whole diocese, especially upon the world of work, and on families who are struggling, that they may not lose the dignity that work gives, on children and young people and on the elderly.

And now let us all, seated as we are, pray to Our Lady who is our Mother, that she might obtain for us the grace to work together with creativity, solidarity and faith. *Hail Mary...*

May Almighty God bless you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

And I ask you, please, to pray for me! Thank you!

## The death of Patriarch Iwas

*When Pope Francis learned of the death of Patriarch Ignatius Zakka I Iwas, who died on 21 March, at the age of 80, he sent a telegram of condolences to the 'locum tenens' Syriac-Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East. The following is the text of the Pope's telegram.*

With deep sorrow I have learned of the passing of His Holiness Ignatius Zakka I Iwas, father and chief pastor of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch and all the East, and I hasten to express to you, to the Bishops, clergy and lay faithful, my personal condolences and the prayerful closeness of all Catholics at this time of deeply-felt loss. The whole Christian world has lost one of its outstanding spiritual leaders, courageous and wise in leading people through very difficult times. Following his election as Patriarch in 1980 His Holiness was an engaged witness of the subsequent violent conflicts that have brought untold death and suffering to the Middle East, especially to Iraq and most recently Syria. His Holiness was a man of dialogue and peace with regard to the followers of all religious traditions. In particular I give heartfelt thanks to God for his constant work to improve relations among Christians and, from the time he attended the Second Vatican Council as an observer, for his extraordinary contribution to strengthening communion between Syrian Orthodox Christians and the Catholic faithful. May the Almighty receive him into his kingdom and grant him eternal rest, and may the memory of his long and devoted service to the Church live on as a challenge and a stimulus to all.

FRANCIS

## 'Ad limina' visit

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

always, both spiritually and materially, so that they might courageously persevere in the work of evangelization and the upbuilding of society.

The apostolate of priests, generously dedicated to the duties of the ministry, is often made difficult, particularly by their exiguous number. I assure you of my closeness and my encouragement. Be to them fathers and friends who support and guide them with a fraternal heart and spirit. Priests must also live in a manner that is consistent with what they preach; the very credibility of the Church's witness is at stake. It is essential to do everything possible to elicit abundant and strong vocations to the priesthood. I welcome the recent opening of the "Benedict XVI" Major Seminary, an event which holds great promise for the future. Make the most of this development

that is unfolding in the history of the Guinean clergy to spark a new impetus in priestly life. Seminary formation must offer young men a serious path of intellectual and spiritual growth. May priestly holiness be authentically proposed to them, beginning with the example of priests who live out their own vocation with joy; may future priests truly learn to live the demands of priestly celibacy, as well as a balanced relation to material goods, the rejection of worldliness and careerism – for the priesthood is not a means of social advancement –, and also the real commitment to accompany the poor.

Dear Brothers in the Episcopate, I entrust you, as well as the priests, the consecrated, catechists and lay faithful of your dioceses to the protection of the Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, and with all my heart I impart to you the Apostolic Blessing.

arity requires that all members of society renounce something and adopt a more sober lifestyle to help all those who are in need.

This great challenge calls the entire Christian community to action. This is why today you have come here together: steel workers, the bishop, the diocesan community. And this is why the contemporary history of your Church is inseparably tied to the visit Bl. John Paul II made to the steel works! The whole Church is engaged in a pastoral and missionary conversion, as your bishop underlined. In this regard, the primary commitment is always to revive the roots of faith and your fidelity to Jesus Christ. Here is the guiding principle of the choices made by a Christian: his faith. Faith moves mountains! The Christian faith can enrich society through the concrete fraternity that it bears within itself. A faith received with joy and lived fully and generously can confer a humanizing force on society. For this reason, we are all called to seek new ways to bear courageous witness to a living and life-giving faith.

Dear brothers and sisters, never stop hoping for a better future. Fight for it, fight. Do not be trapped in the vortex of pessimism, please! If each one does his or her part, if everyone always places the human person – not money – with his dignity at the centre, if an attitude of solidarity and fraternal sharing inspired by the Gospel is strengthened, you will be able to

Preparations for the eighth World Meeting of Families begins with a conference in the Holy See Press Office

## Ground work for the Meeting in Philadelphia

Official preparations for the next World Meeting of Families began with a press conference in the Holy See Press Office on Tuesday, 25 March. The 8th World Meeting will take place from 22 to 27 September 2015 in Philadelphia. The President of the Pontifical Council for the Family and the Archbishop of Philadelphia gave presentations, excerpts of which are published here.

VINCENZO PAGLIA\*

The Philadelphia Meeting will be held at a particularly important time for the Church. Pope Francis has chosen to focus the attention of Catholicism on the subject of the family. Last month, he convened a special consistory, an official gathering of his cardinals, to listen to their advice on the matter. This October (2014), he will preside at an Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to define the *status quaestionis*: "The Challenges to Families in the Context of Evangelization". This will be followed in October 2015 by an Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod. The 8th World Meeting of Families is found in this context. The timing will also coincide with discussions at the UN (only 150 kms away) to mark the 20th anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

The starting point and guidelines for this two-year journey of reflection were laid down by Pope Francis on 20 February, during his opening address at

### The logo

In developing a logo for the 8th World Meeting of Families, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia sought a design that would reflect family unity, the city itself and its role as the birthplace of religious freedom in the United States thanks to William Penn, for whom the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is named. The logo is a strong execution of this vision. The bell, while certainly evoking the countless bells calling families to church around the world, is the Liberty Bell, an iconic Philadelphia landmark. Known for its historic "crack," the small white siver depicts the reason for the Liberty Bell's fame. A family is represented through five distinct figures within the bell, all different heights and ages, in an effort to illustrate the many roles family members play: husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, etc. As part of the bell's yoke, the designer incorporated the Cross as the centre of the image to convey the role of Christ in the family.

the Extraordinary Consistory: "Our reflections must keep before us the beauty of the family and marriage, the greatness of this human reality which is so simple and yet so rich, consisting of joys and hopes, of struggles and sufferings, as is the whole of life. We will seek to deepen the theology of the family and discern the pastoral practices which our present situation requires. May we do so thoughtfully and without falling into 'casuistry', because this would inevitably diminish the quality of our work. Today, the family is looked down upon and mistreated. We are called to acknowledge how

beautiful, true and good it is to start a family, to be a family today; and how indispensable the family is for the life of the world and for the future of humanity. We are called to make known God's magnificent plan for the family and to help spouses joyfully experience this plan in their lives, as we accompany them amidst so many difficulties with a pastoral care that is sound, courageous and full of love."

This is our plan as we prepare for the Meeting in Philadelphia: to accompany families around the world with a shepherd's care, with wisdom, courage and love; wisdom in understanding what families face today; courage in facing today's many complex issues; and love in helping resolve those problems in the light of the Gospel of the Family and of Life.

We will deal with many issues in our work: theology of the family; spiritual-

ity and sanctity in married life; ecclesiology and the pastoral care of families, the family in contemporary culture; the family and immigration; the family and ecumenism.

We also hope that the Meeting in Philadelphia sees a broad and active presence from Christian denominations and ecclesial communities, as well as from representatives of the world's other great religions, and from men and women who, though not religious, are committed to bringing peace and good will to our world. May our coming together for the family encourage all peoples to remember that humanity is one family and that it is together as a family that we must walk on the path to true happiness.

\*Archbishop-President of the Pontifical Council for the Family

## A moment of grace

CHARLES JOSEPH CHAPUT\*

Gatherings like this are a tremendous source of joy. They also demand quite a lot of planning and a great deal of work. They draw many thousands of people – in this case, many thousands of families with children of all ages – and their magnitude poses some very special challenges. But these events also become moments of grace. They have the power to transform, in deeply positive ways, the whole public community.

That's an important point. The World Meeting of Families is meant to be a gift not just for Catholics in Philadelphia, but for every person of good will in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the surrounding regions and the wider world. Everyone with a generous heart is welcome to be a part

of it, and I'll be working closely with my brother bishops in the months ahead to encourage families across the globe, to come to Philadelphia in 2015.

Philadelphia is one of my country's greatest cities and uniquely rich in America's history. It's where the United States began as a nation. The political ideals conceived in Philadelphia have served human rights and human freedom for more than two centuries – not just in the United States but everywhere. Pope Francis has already stressed the importance of human dignity in *Evangelii Gaudium* and elsewhere. And he's placed a special emphasis on the strength of the family as a guarantee of human flourishing. The more we encourage and support the health of families, the more "alive" society becomes.

Philadelphia is also an American Catholic icon, with two great American saints. Mother Katharine Drexel spent her life serving African Americans and North American Indians. And Bishop John Neumann created parochial schools that became a national model and helped poor immigrant families educate their children. As a result, Philadelphia has a great Church legacy of Catholic education, and many decades of service to

immigrants, minorities, persons with disabilities, the elderly, the hungry and the poor. That service continues right now, today, in all our Catholic social ministries.

The Church in Philadelphia is also very much a community in need of renewal in the wake of the sexual abuse crisis of the past decade. In that sense, Philadelphia is a snapshot of the Church globally. We have a duty to help abuse victims and their families to heal, and to protect children and young people from harm in the years ahead.

At the same time, the Church still has the duty to help people find God and to live their faith with joy and conviction. The story of repentance and new life was the story of ancient Israel, and he's the story of the Church at her best throughout history.

Much work still needs to be done in perfecting the design and content of this event. But we very much want the World Meeting of Families in 2015 to be a moment of hope and joy for every person and every family that attends. It's especially fitting that next month Blessed John Paul II will be canonized a saint by our Holy Father. It was Blessed John Paul II, the Pope of the Family, who first proposed these global meetings on the family. And we in Pennsylvania are grateful to continue this great tradition of reaffirming the importance, the beauty and the joy of Christian family life.

To that purpose, we're bringing together the best experts we can enlist to address the pastoral, social, economic and cultural challenges that families now face. In the end, our goal is simple. We want to help families strengthen their family life in very practical ways. And so I'd ask everyone here today to pray that God will guide our efforts in a way that benefits his people, and proves worthy of the families and communities we serve.

\*Archbishop of Philadelphia

Presentation at the first of a series of conferences on the family hosted by the John Paul II Institute in Rome

## The icon of communion

CARL A. ANDERSON\*

Pope Francis has observed that the tendency of secular society to reduce Christianity to merely an ethical system with unpopular moral rules has too often resulted in a situation in which the Gospel message is hidden from public view. Blessed John Paul II had raised a similar issue in his 1995 encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae* when

he wrote: "The Gospel of Life is not simply a reflection, however new and profound, on human life. Nor is it merely a commandment aimed at raising awareness and bringing about significant changes in society. Still less is it an illusory promise of a better future. The Gospel of Life is something concrete and personal, for it consists in the proclamation of the very person of Jesus" (n. 29). Moreover, Blessed John Paul II continues, "In Christ, the Gospel of Life is definitively proclaimed and fully given" (*ibid.*).

Thus, we need to avoid the trap which secularism places in the Church's path of evangelization – which is to portray Christians as those seeking to "impose new obligations" on those around them rather than to "appear as a people who wish to share their joy" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 15). Again, quoting Pope-emeritus Benedict, the Holy Father writes, "It is not by proselytizing that

"Blessed John Paul II clearly understood that in our time the great point of encounter between Christianity and culture is the family"

the Church grows, but 'by attraction'" (*ibid.*, n. 18).

In this cultural context, the writings and personal witness of Blessed John Paul II are both inspirational and instructive. But it should be remembered that his belief in the beauty of the family did not come from some blindness to the times but a profoundly deep experience of the challenges of modernity, and experienced deeply the beautiful and powerful truth about man and the family as revealed by Christ. In *Familiaris Consortio*, Blessed John Paul II recognizes this fundamental divergence between secular culture and Christian families now face. In the end, our goal is simple. We want to help families strengthen their family life in very practical ways. And so I'd ask everyone here today to pray that God will guide our efforts in a way that benefits his people, and proves worthy of the families and communities we serve.

Another tendency, he suggests, is this: "Probably there is a certain prejudice against the body within us, a trace of Manichaeism such that we fail to

man life she sees the splendor of that 'Yes,' that 'Amen,' who is Christ Himself. To the 'No' which assails and afflicts the world, she replies with this living 'Yes,' thus defending the human person and the world from all who plot against and harm life" (n. 30).

More than two decades before *Familiaris Consortio*, Karol Wojtyła presented reflections upon marriage published recently in Italian under the title, *Bellezza*

imagine the achievement of perfection (spiritual and supernatural) in a state of life in which body issues are presented as a factor so important and essential of the life of two people."

This tendency also leads to a way of looking at marriage that is essentially negative. He writes that "the suggestion that marriage should be treated from 'the sin point of view' is so strong and overpowering that very few people



consider it 'in a dimension of perfection.'" In the development of pastoral approaches to marriage and family, one can be heartened as well about the benefits of the Christian view of marriage and family, beyond the vocation to holiness, especially regarding poverty. Indeed, *Evangelii Gaudium* calls for a heightened awareness of the social dimension of evangelization. It reminds us that "The need to resolve the structural causes of poverty cannot be delayed" (n. 202).

The United States is a case in point. According to a 2010 study of the United States Census Bureau, the percentage of married couple families living below the poverty level was 6.2 percent. For single mother households, the poverty rate was 31.6 percent. Children raised in married couple families are 82 percent less likely to be poor than those living with single parent and this disparity remains even among those of the same race and educational level. Approximately 75 percent of welfare assistance going to families with children in the United States goes to single parent families. In 2011, government assistance provided approximately \$330 billion in cash, food, housing, medical care, and social services to poor single parent families.

Today in the United States, seven out of ten poor families with children are those headed by a single parent – the vast majority of which are headed by single mothers. The economic realities faced by these families are often devastating.

Another tendency, he suggests, is this: "Probably there is a certain prejudice against the body within us, a trace of Manichaeism such that we fail to

## Preparing for the synods on the family

"John Paul II: the Pope of the Family": this was the theme of the international conference held on 20-21 March at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Rome. The Institute has planned a series of international conferences and symposiums to study the family as an aid to the Church in preparation for the synods of 2014 and 2015. Taking into account John Paul II's imminent canonization (27 April), the Institute chose to dedicate the first of this series to its founder and his profound contribution.

According to the Institute's president, Msgr Livio Melina, this two-day discussion was an "act of memory" – memory not as a nostalgic glance at the past, but rather a "resource for the future". For in John Paul II's development of an "adequate anthropology", his call to "take Jesus' invitation seriously to leave casuistry behind and return to 'the beginning'... that is, to the truth of the Father's creative plan for man and woman", and his deeply pastoral "love for human love", the soon-to-be-canonized Pope left the Church a rich inheritance.

The conference began with the testimonies of a married couple, a layman, and a Cardinal, all of whom had the privilege of working with the late pontiff. They described a man for whom integrity of doctrine and pastoral care formed an indivisible unity, and whose theology of marriage was necessarily "inspired and verified by life".

Ludmila Gryziel spoke of the "adequate pastoral care" – the natural expression of an "adequate anthropology" – that she and her husband discovered in their friendship with Archbishop Karol Wojtyła. Carl Anderson, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, recalled John Paul II's affirmation that "it is an eminent form of love to give [the family] back its reasons for confidence in itself ... and in the mission that God has entrusted to it" (*Familiaris Consortio*, 86). Citing the tremendous hunger of children of divorce, women suffering from abortions, and those suffering marital breakdown, he called for a pastoral accompaniment that is truly merciful, tending people's wounds while offering them the fullness and beauty of the Church's teaching on marriage. Cardinal Carlo Caffarra spoke from pastoral experience, describing how he daily witnesses men and women dying of thirst for the Gospel. If that Gospel is not proclaimed in all its power, responding to the whole question of the whole person and thus answering that thirst, it cannot but be perceived as

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## The icon of communion

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But the emotional, psychological and spiritual pathologies can be even more devastating. Compared to children living in intact married families, the children of single parents "are more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems; be physically abused; smoke, drink, and use drugs; be aggressive; engage in violent, delinquent, and criminal behavior, have poor school performance; and drop out of high school." (<http://www.heritage.org/child-poverty>)

A significant contribution to the Church's understanding of these issues occurred during our 2008 international conference "Oil on the Wounds: A Contemporary Examination of the Effects of Divorce and Abortion on Children and Their Families." The spirit of our work was beautifully summarized by these words of Pope Benedict XVI in his address to our congress: "The Church's first duty is to approach these people with love and consideration, which caring and motherly attention, to proclaim the merciful closeness of God in Jesus Christ. Indeed, as the Fathers teach, it is he who is the true Good Samaritan, who has made himself close to us, who pours oil and wine on our wounds and takes us into the inn, the Church, where he has us treated, entrusting us to her ministers and personally paying in advance for our recovery. Yes, the Gospel of love and life is also always the Gospel of mercy" (5 April, 2008).

The world we live in, in which millions of people have yet to encounter this love in any meaningful way, needs the family to be an icon of the God who is communion. It needs to see the God revealed by Jesus Christ saving man in all his relationships. This world which is starved for meaning needs to see all the elements of human life – as Pope Benedict identified these in *Porta Fidei*, "the joy of love... the drama of suffering and pain, the power of forgiveness in the face of an offence received and the victory of life over the emptiness of death" – visibly finding "fulfillment in the mystery of [Christ]... becoming man" (n. 13). It needs to see families that are true communities of life, love, and forgiveness.

Such families are truly *human* communities, which can thus point their unbelieving brothers and sisters to the beauty of the God who is a communion of love.

For this reason, as Blessed John Paul II taught us, the family is essentially missionary. In his own words, "the family has the mission to guard, reveal and communicate love" – the love that is a reflection of the Trinitarian communion and that shares in "God's love for humanity and the love of Christ the Lord for the Church His bride" (*Familiaris Consortio*, n. 17).

In the Church's mission of evangelization, love alone is "effective" – the love of the Lord, which Christian spouses first receive as a divine gift and a task.

Since 1981, it has been the responsibility of the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family to assist scholars,

teachers, pastors, bishops, religious and married couples themselves to become ever more conscious of the pressing need to help the Christian family in its mission "to become what it is" (*Familiaris Consortio*, n. 17): an icon of God's own communion. This is the only way for the family to be a place of healing and of humanity for the men and women of our time. Christian families need to be encouraged to undertake a variety of tasks, such as becoming active in parishes and ecclesial groups, in the work of charity, and in transmitting the faith to younger generations. But above all, families need help simply in coming to an awareness of what they are: a "saved and saving community," (*ibid.* n.49) a sacramental reality at the heart of the Church's mission of evangelization. In the words of St John Chrysostom, we need to understand that "Marriage is a mysterious icon

of the Church" (*In Epis. ad Coloss. Cap. IV, Homilia XII, PG 62:387*).

We can only hope to accomplish this if we can transmit in an undiminished way the sacramental beauty of Christian marriage.

This assistance is needed not only for the sake of the family itself. Blessed John Paul II clearly understood that in our time the great point of encounter between Christianity and culture is the family. Our world, in which ever increasing numbers of our brothers and sisters are deprived of God, are thus deprived of a genuine experience of communion and joy. Those who do not believe or whose faith wavers need the family to be a living witness to the God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the source of all the beauty in the world.

*\*Supreme Knight of the Knights of the Columbus*

## Preparing for the synods on the family

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an something ultimately irrelevant.

Bishops from Brazil, Nigeria and India bore witness to the renewal of the pastoral care of the family in their countries, set into motion by the "Pope of the family". Graduates of the John Paul II Institute living in Chile, Spain, Rwanda, Italy, the United States and France offered striking testimony to the pastoral fruitfulness of the late pontiff's approach. In manifold ways, each speaker described the transformation that occurs when families – even those in grave difficulty – are confronted with the greatness of the vocation to marriage and the beauty of God's plan for human love.

John Paul II's designation of the family as a "saved and saving community" (*Familiaris Consortio* 49) took on the dimensions of a living reality in descriptions of families in situations of material poverty rediscovering a reason to hope (Chile and Brazil); families evangelizing other families (Spain); couples contemplating divorce who not only found a reason to stay together, but brought the healing power of God's love to their relatives (South Korea); or divorced and remarried

Catholics who, once accompanied with love, respect and truth, not only wholeheartedly affirm the late pontiff's teaching on marriage but understand that their abstention from the Eucharist helps their entire community to realize the greatness of the vocation to marriage (Italy).

At Friday afternoon's session, reserved to delegates of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, participants discussed contemporary challenges to pastoral work with families in the light of the resource that the family itself is in the task of evangelization. As Prof. Juan José Pérez-Soba observed, need to get out of "a mentality of effective problem-solving techniques" and embrace a more integrated pastoral perspective of "witnessing to the love that saves the human person". Families themselves, "once they have become aware of the grace God entrusts to them", are the primary witnesses of this saving mystery: This is the principle that, "if accepted,



would truly revolutionize our pastoral structures", offering "a new approach toward the problems ... families face" and providing them with "empathy and aid".

In the face of the enormous cultural challenge, the Church must respond with "a different love" that involves, not exceptions to norms, but "a deeper awareness of the Gospel of the family". This alone corresponds to the tremendous need not only of our society, but of countless broken lives that need to encounter the mercy of God.

What Msgr Melina noted in his introductory comments to the conference took on flesh in the testimonies and discussions of those two days: In the saint who wished to be remembered as the "Pope of the family", the Church saw a living reflection of the unity of Christ the Good Shepherd and the divine Teacher – the unity of truth and mercy. In John Paul II's profound vision of marriage and the family and in the "adequate pastoral care" that he lived and bestowed on the Church, we learn once again "nothing is truly useful" – or as necessary – "to the men and women of our age as the one Truth that liberates and saves".



Holy See statement in Geneva on 10 March

## The global fight against hunger

On 10 March Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, spoke at the 25th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council on the right to food, in Geneva. The following is his statement.

Mr President,

My Delegation welcomes the opportunity to address this Council on the urgent need for governments and the global society better to respect, protect, facilitate, and fulfill the human right to food. We are deeply grateful to the outgoing Special Rapporteur for his significant efforts in this regard and express the sincere hope that additional progress will be made in order to ensure that the right to food is not "reduced to a right not to starve" and will truly be acknowledged as "an inclusive right to an adequate diet and all the nutritional elements" needed "to live a healthy and active life, and the means to access them" ([www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRC/HR-19-59\\_en.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRC/HR-19-59_en.pdf)).

The international community has indeed made progress in addressing food security. On the occasion of World Food Day 2013, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization reported that, since the end of the Second World War, the availability of food per person has increased by more than 40%. It further advised, however, that hunger still afflicts

more than 840 million people but is much less evident since it persists mainly among those living in developing countries. This type of hunger manifests itself as a "slow death" caused by under-nutrition, depriving children of opportunities and the achievement of such developmental milestones as growth within normal standards, neuromotory development, and school performance, all of which are taken for granted by well-nourished people who live in high-income countries... "this is a real scandal" (Pope Francis, *Message for the World Day of Peace*, 8 December 2013).

Mr President, in his Message for the most recent World Food Day, Pope Francis strongly asserted that "hunger and malnutrition can never be considered a normal event to which one must become accustomed, as if it were part of the system" (Pope Francis, *Message for World Food Day*, 16 October 2013). In order to break this vicious cycle, we need to take structural measures such as the enactment of framework laws at the national level and the development of just food policies. We also need well-developed processes, including

implementation and monitoring of policies as well as adequate resource allocations. Finally, we must carefully analyze outcomes and impact based on statistics related to hunger and under-nutrition and on indicators related to the availability of food, sufficient revenue and affordable prices to buy proper nourishment for families and the more vulnerable members of society.

In a certain sense, Mr President, Pope Francis has outlined a "roadmap" aimed at further advancing the full implementation of the right to food. "Something has to change, in ourselves, in our mentality, in our society," he urged, proposing that "an important step is to bring down, with determination, the barriers of individualism, of being shut-in on ourselves, of the slavery

of rural women to enhance agriculture and rural development. With regard to the private sector, we must strive for more equitable distribution of resources, one that does not disadvantage small, local food producers. In the provision of humanitarian assistance, access to food and resources by affected populations needs to be assured both within and across borders. Development assistance should include agricultural components so that the right to produce and market food can be assured without discrimination.

Solidarity at the international level is equally important in efforts to guarantee the right to food. The agreement reached in Bali, during the ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization "on public stockholding for food security purposes" is on the same line and is a clear example of how multilateralism can regain its central role in addressing new problems, tackling new opportunities, and, most importantly, promoting freer and more equitable trade, not as an end in itself, but as one of the many approaches to ending poverty

for all. The implementation of this interim agreement would provide a more secure, stable and equitable access to food for countries that need it.

During the current International Year of Family Farming, Mr President, my Delegation would urge this Council to include, as a special component of its efforts to advance and preserve the human right to food, "education in solidarity and in a way of life that overcomes the 'throw away culture' and really puts every person and his/her dignity at the center, as is characteristic of the family" (*ibid.*).

Thank you, Mr President.

*Development assistance should include agricultural components to protect the right to produce and market food.*  
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(@terzaloggia)

of profit at all cost" (*ibid.*) My Delegation, therefore, suggests that the achievement of the right to food requires social solidarity among all peoples, in addition to the legal and policy-related safeguards already established by this Council.

At the national level, this requires adequate public and private investment to enable small-scale farmers to increase productivity, to attain adequate revenue surplus to improve the conditions under which they farm and to be able count on long-term prospects of sufficient income to support their families. Special attention will be needed to facilitate the empowerment and participation

## The sins of the media

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you" (Jn 11:28). It is this being called by name that warms the heart!

In what way can you, through your "net", help Jesus Christ in his mission, in proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom of God today?

First, I would say by giving attention to issues that are important for the lives of individuals, families and society; and treating these issues not in a sensationalistic manner, but rather responsibly, with sincere passion for the common good and for the truth (cf. John Paul II, *Message for the 28th World Communications Day*, 24 January 1994). Often, in large broadcasting stations, these issues are addressed, without due respect for individuals and the values in question, in a spectacular way. On the contrary, it is essential that this respect in your broadcasts is evident, and that people's stories are never instrumentalized.

And the other contribution which you can make by the human and ethical quality of your work. You can help to form what Pope Benedict called a media 'eco-system', that is, an appropriate environment that maintains a just equilibrium between silence, words, images and sounds (cf. *Message for the 46th World Communications Day*, 24 January 2012). Today there is much pollution, and even the

media environment has its forms of pollution, its "poisons". People know it, they perceive it, but then unfortunately they become accustomed to breathing in contaminated air from the radio and television, which is not healthy. Clean air needs to be circulated so that people might breathe freely and receive oxygen for mind and soul.

All of this requires a fitting professionalism, but it goes beyond that. It requires you to live "communication in terms of 'neighbourliness'" (*Message for the 48th World Communications Day*, 24 January 2014). It calls you to become the face of a Church who becomes a "good Samaritan", even through radio and television. The Parable of the Good Samaritan, in fact, can also be a parable for the communicator: "Those who communicate, in effect, become neighbours. The Good Samaritan not only draws nearer to the man he finds half dead on the side of the road; he takes responsibility for him" (*ibid.*). In this parable Jesus reverses the situation: "It is not just about seeing the other as someone like myself, but of the ability to make myself like the other" (*ibid.*).

Therefore, as I thank you for your commitment, I ask the Lord that your network may increasingly become an experience of neighbourliness, capable of giving voice to the Lord who stirs hearts and spreads hope and joy.



## Audience with the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

On Saturday, 22 March, Pope Francis received in Audience in the Apostolic Palace H.E. Mr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Nigerian President subsequently met with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, and Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, Secretary for Relations with States.

During the meeting emphasis was placed on the cordial relations existing between the Holy See and Nigeria, and appreciation was expressed for the positive contribution offered by the Church to the welfare of the entire country, especially in the areas of education and health care, as well as in promoting dialogue between the various components of society. Particular attention was given in the meeting to the protection of the dignity of the human person and his or her fundamental



rights, beginning with religious freedom.

Joint condemnation of every form of violence was renewed and hope was expressed for a rapid return to peaceful coexistence in the whole Country. Finally, an exchange of views took place regarding several issues of regional interest, with particular reference to the situations of crisis and conflict in central and sub-Saharan Africa



According to a report by the National Crimes Record Bureau

## Religious discrimination in the prisons of India

The high number of inmates in Indian prisons who belong to socio-religious minorities is due to the attitude of those who target the most vulnerable sections of society. This is what Arun Ferreira, activist for Christian Dalits and of Tribals, stated recently, commenting on the latest report "Prison Statistics India" prepared by the National Crimes Record Bureau (NCRB). According to the statistics in 2012, 28.02% of the inmates in the entire country were Muslim. This is a very high percentage because at the moment Muslims represent only 13.4% of the population. The situation is similar for Christians, who make up 6% of the prison population, while overall they only constitute 2.3%.

"We get these percentages", the activist explained to AsiaNews, "because Dalits, Tribals, Muslims and Christians are often the victims of loopholes and sections of the Indian Penal Code". Ferreira knows the



reality of prisons in India. In May 2007 he was arrested in Nagpur (Maharashtra), having been accused of being a Naxalite (Maoist) guerrilla. He was indicted under 11 charges under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. During his time in prison, he was tortured and interrogated twice after being treated with a "truth serum", a substance

which is now illegal. After four years and eight months he was released on bail. In his experience, Ferreira says that "every state tends to target minorities". "In states where Hinduism is strong, like Orissa (where the effects of anti-Christian pogroms still linger), many innocent Christians have been arrested and thrown in prison, falsely accused of

being Naxalites. However, the same thing happened in Gujarat after the 2002 riots.... In Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, which are also under strong Hindu influence, the authorities have overtly attacked the Christian community, treating its members as the 'criminal' element in the Dalit and tribal groups." Christians often fall into the clutches of the justice system on false evidence because they support causes that embarrass the authorities. For example, "in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Orissa, some tribal Christians were arrested on false accusations of terrorism," Ferreira noted, "when in fact the problem was their struggle against large-scale mining projects that required huge tracts of land to be expropriated." Sadly, he said, neither the government nor the NCRB recognize political prisoners as a separate category, therefore there are no separate statistics.

## VATICAN BULLETIN

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subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Ariano Irpino-Lacedonia.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Cardinal Jean-Baptiste Pham Minh Mân, of Hôchiminh Ville, Vietnam. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law. He is succeeded by Archbishop Paul Bùi Văn Đọc, Coadjutor of the said diocese (22 Mar.).

Archbishop Bùi Văn Đọc, 68, was born in Đà Lạt, Vietnam. He was ordained a priest on 17 December 1970. He was ordained a bishop on 20 May 1999. In 2013 he was raised to the dignity of Archbishop and appointed coadjutor of the said diocese.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Juan Armando Pérez Talamantes as Auxiliary Bishop of Monterrey, Mexico, assigning him the titular episcopal see of Auzegera. Until now he has been parish priest of San Francisco de Asís (22 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Pérez Talamantes, 43, was born in Nuevo León. He was ordained a priest on 15 August 1997. He holds a licence in philosophy. He has served in parish ministry and as spiritual director, coordinator and prefect at the major seminary in Monterrey. He is currently episcopal vicar of Zone X and director of the Benedict XVI Institute for the formation of lay people involved in pastoral care.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Alfonso Gerardo Miranda Guardiola as Auxiliary Bishop of Monterrey, Mexico, assigning him the titular episcopal see of Idicra. Until now he has been Chancellor of the Archiepiscopal Curia (22 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Miranda Guardiola, 47, was born in Monterrey. He was ordained a priest on 15 August 1998. He holds a licence in theology. He has served in parish ministry and as prefect for the discipline and study at the Minor Seminary, as professor at the Major Seminary; as assessor for divorced people and rector of the Temple of *San Massimiliano Maria Kolbe*; as director of the ecclesiastical archives and of the history department of the archdiocese of Monterrey.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Aurelio Pesoa Ribera, OFM, as Auxiliary of the Archdiocese of La Paz, Bolivia, assigning him the titular episcopal see of Leges. Until now he has been Minister Provincial of the Province of San Antonio (25 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Pesoa Ribera, 51, was born in Concepción, Bolivia. He made his solemn profession as a Franciscan on 22 February 1988. He was ordained a priest on 16 April 1989. He holds a BA in theology and a licence in dogmatic theology. He has served in the Franciscan Province of San Antonio, Bolivia, in parish ministry and as professor of ecclesiology and theological anthropology at the Bolivian Catholic University San Pablo; as provincial definitor; as custodian and master of the temporally professed of philosophy, Santa Cruz de la Sierra; and as president of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of the first instance of the Archdiocese of Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Jorge Ángel Saldías Pedraza, OP, as Auxiliary of the Archdiocese of La Paz, Bolivia, assigning him the titular episcopal see of Phebes. Until now he has been Superior of his community at the Shrine of Cotoca,

Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia (25 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Saldías Pedraza, 45, was born in Buena Vista-La Arboleda, Bolivia. He was ordained a priest on 25 May 2001. He holds a licence in theology. He has served in parish ministry and as a member of the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Santa Cruz; as vicar provincial of the Dominican vice-province of Bolivia; as rector of the Chapel of Santa Catalina, Cochabamba; as rector of the Community of the Archdiocesan Shrine of Nuestra Señora de Cotoca, Santa Cruz de la Sierra; episcopal vicar of Cotoca; as judge of the ecclesiastical Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Santa Cruz della Sierra.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Getúlio Teixeira Guimarães, SVD, of Cornélio Procopio, Brazil. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (26 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Manoel João Francisco as Bishop of Cornélio Procopio, Brazil. Until now he has been Bishop of Chapecó (26 Mar.).

Bishop Francisco, 67, was born in Machados, Brazil. He was ordained a priest on 8 December 1973. He was ordained a bishop on 21 February 1999, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Chapecó.

### RELATIONS WITH STATES

The Holy Father appointed Archbishop Pedro López Quintana, titular Archbishop of Agropoli and Apostolic Nuncio to Lithuania, as Apostolic Nuncio to Estonia and Latvia (22 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed Archbishop Pierre Nguyễn Văn Tot, titu-

lar Archbishop of Rusticiana, as Apostolic Nuncio to Sri Lanka. Until now he has been Apostolic Nuncio to Costa Rica (22 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed Msgr Marek Zalewski as Apostolic Nuncio to Zimbabwe, at the same time raising him to the dignity of archbishop and assigning him the titular episcopal see of Africa. Until now he has been a Counsellor to the said Nunciature (25 Mar.).

Archbishop-elect Zalewski, 51, was born in Augustów, Poland. He was ordained a priest on 27 May 1989. He holds a degree in canon law. He entered the diplomatic service of the Holy See on 1 July 1995 and has served at the Pontifical Representations to the Central African Republic, to the United Nations in New York, to Great Britain, to Germany, to Thailand, to Singapore and to Malaysia.

### SPECIAL ENVOY

The Holy Father appointed Cardinal Ennio Antonelli, President emeritus of the Pontifical Council for the Family, as his Special Envoy to the celebration commemorating the 70th anniversary of the destruction and rebuilding of the Abbey of Montecassino on 21 March (19 Mar.).

### LENTEN SERMON

On 21 March, Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap., delivered the second Lenten sermon in the Redemptoris Mater Chapel in the presence of the Holy Father.

### NECROLOGY

Bishop Prelate emeritus Prospero N. Arellano of Libmanan, the Philippines, at age 77 (1 Feb.).

Holy See Statement in Geneva

## Help families to stop violence against children

On 13 March, Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, spoke in Geneva at the 25th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council on violence against children. The following is his statement.

Mr President,

The reports of the Special Rapporteurs dealing with various forms of violence and exploitation directed against children form a tragic litany of willful harm to the dignity, well-being, and future development of the world's most innocent and vulnerable citizens. My delegation is left with particularly serious concerns having read in one report after another that the international community possesses little understanding of the dimensions of such problems as the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and the horrendous violence against those affected by albinism. In the present day and age, we surely need to develop the political will, analytical capacity, and firm commitment to effective action, at the individual, community, national, regional and global levels, to address, adjudicate, and eliminate these crimes.

In a recent address to the new Ambassadors accredited to the Holy See on the occasion of the presentation of their credentials, Pope Francis encouraged more a focused and intense attention by governments to the "scourge" of human trafficking which he labeled a "crime against humanity", "a true form of slavery, unfortunately more and more widespread, which concerns every country, even the most developed." He made a further appeal. "People of good will, whether or not they profess religious beliefs, must not allow these women, men and children to be treated as objects, to be deceived, raped, often sold and resold for various purposes, and in the end either killed or left devastated in mind and body, only to be finally thrown away or abandoned" (Francis, *Address to the new ambassadors accredited to the Holy See*, 12 December 2013).

The Special Rapporteurs pointed to similar patterns of vulnerability that constitute the root causes of abuse perpetrated against children. Such conditions include abject poverty, economic and social crises, civil and political conflicts, and the widespread violence resulting from such disorders. My delegation noted with particular interest that family breakdown was acknowledged as a serious contributing factor to the violence against children. For many years, the Holy See has made efforts to alert the international community to the alarming fact that the number

of broken and troubled families is "on the rise, not simply because of the weakening sense of belonging so typical of today's world, but also because of the adverse conditions in which many families are forced to live, even to the point where they lack basic means of subsistence" (Pope Francis, *Address to the members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See*, 13 January 2014).

For this reason, the international community must acknowledge the need to enact suitable policies aimed at supporting, assisting, and strengthening the family. The promotion of strong family values and provision of social and economic help to fam-



Promotion of strong family values and social and economic help to families in need reduce domestic violence - [www.holyseemissiongeneva.org](http://www.holyseemissiongeneva.org)

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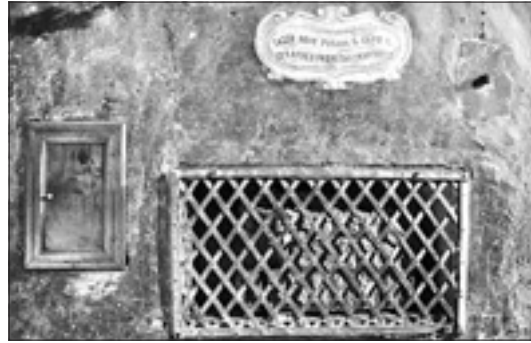
ilies in particular need will, at the same time, prove effective in reducing domestic violence and sexual abuse, which regrettably is the most frequently occurring cause of harm to women and children.

Mr President, with regard to the situation of children in armed conflict, my delegation insists that "full respect for humanitarian law remains essential. It is unacceptable that unarmed civilians, especially children, become targets" (*ibid.*). Together with all people of good will, we are deeply grieved by the fact that the youngest members of society so often are robbed of their childhood and forced to become soldiers, or are kidnapped, wounded and killed in armed conflicts.

At the MOBIA in New York City

## Devotion in alabaster

During the late Middle Ages England developed a thriving industry of devotional sculptures in alabaster, exported throughout Europe. The exhibition "Object of Devotion. Medieval English Alabaster Sculpture from the Victoria and Albert Museum" is dedicated to these sculptures. Open until 8 June at the Museum of Biblical Art (MOBIA) in New York City, the exhibition includes approximately 60 sculptures and looks at the importance of art in private devotion, as well as the role of the Bible as a source of inspiration for Medieval sculptors. The organizers have created a didactic route through the exhibition, striving to give young visitors a deeper understanding of the works on display. Thus the teachers who guide their students through the exhibition will be provided with materials which cover general information on the various rooms and a list of essential terms both religious and non-religious, useful to understanding the sculptures. Concepts such as 'saint', 'Annunciation', 'martyrdom', as well as recurring iconographic symbols are explained to permit a deeper understanding of the meaning of the works of sacred art.



The stone pillow used by the saint in the Church of San Francesco a Ripa

Collections online

## Restoring the Poverello's home in Rome

St Francis used to stay in the Church of San Francesco a Ripa in Rome. He remained there various times in the years spanning from 1209 to 1223, when he visited Innocent III. The brothers at the church have decided to finance the cell's restoration with a campaign to collect funds online, using a platform from the United States called Kickstarter. The money will be used to clean the walls, which are blackened with the smoke of candles and oil lamps; to remove and reinforce the plaster; to install new electrical wiring; to restore the wooden ceiling moulding; and to clean the terracotta floor, the wall murals at the entrance and the marble plates inside the church. The restoration will last five months and the church is scheduled to reopen on 4 October 2014.

Twenty five thousand copies sold in two weeks

## 'Evangelii Gaudium' a best seller in Korea

The announcement of Pope Francis' pastoral visit to South Korea in August has sparked great interest even among non-Christians in the country. According to AsiaNews, following the recent translation and publication of *Evangelii Gaudium* into Korean, 25,000 copies were sold in only two weeks.

It is an astounding number due to the fact that typically – according to local sources – no more than 4,000 copies of papal documents are sold. "Christians, Catholics but also Protestants and Anglicans, have come in droves to buy the book. Even non-Christians have begun to read it," explained a

nun who works in a Catholic bookshop in Korea. The announcement of the Pope's visit from 14-18 August "has boosted sales", she said. The Exhortation is seen "as a letter, which speaks of current issues and explains how to live well in a normal language".

According to the Catholic newspaper *Hankook*, various factors can explain this editorial success. The Pope's language is simple and friendly, and he strongly criticizes social inequality, which is an important issue in the country. The newspaper explained that "today this inequality is felt not only on an economic level, but also a spiritual level".

To further explore the text, the Jesuit-run Seokang University organized a symposium on the theme "*Evangelii Gaudium* and the Church of Korea". Participating in the conference were Bishop Peter Kang Woo-il of Jeju, President of the Korean Bishops Conference, Jesuit priest Park Sanghoon and Fr Park Dongho, Chairman of the Justice and Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of Seoul.

The Church in Korea has also established a special commission, comprised of bishops, religious, and lay people who are responsible for organizing the Holy Father's visit. According to Fides, the Church is receiving the government's full support and the government has in fact created a committee to collaborate and aid the ecclesial commission. The country is also preparing for both Asian Youth Day, which will take place in Daejeon on 10-17 August, and the beatification of the Korean martyrs.



"The Resurrection of Christ" (1400-1420)



# Morning Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae

Thursday, 20 March

## The nameless man

In his homily at Holy Mass, Pope Francis commented on the day's Readings from the Prophet Jeremiah (17:5-10) and the Gospel of Luke (16:19-31).

The two readings invite us to trust in God and not in ourselves, the Pope said. "Today's first reading begins with a curse: 'Cursed is the man who trusts in man' (Jer 17:5)". He then noted that "the same curse exists in other passages of the Bible, although perhaps phrased differently, for example: 'Cursed is the man who trusts in himself', adding that the man who trusts in his own strength is always cursed "because he bears a curse within himself".

"But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord", the Pope continued. The prophet says of him: "he is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit".

"This image makes us think of Jesus' words concerning one's house," the Pope said. "Happy is the man who builds his house upon the rock, he shall stand secure. But unhappy is the man who builds his house upon sand, since he lacks a firm foundation". Today, therefore, "God's word teaches us that only our trust in Jesus is secure: other trusts are useless, they do not save us, they do not give life, they do not give joy". Indeed, "they bring us death and drought".

We all agree on this clear teaching, the Pope said. "Our problem" as the Scriptures tell us, "is that our hearts are treacherous". Thus, even though we realize we making a mistake, "still we like to trust in ourselves or trust in a particular friend, or trust in a good situation, or trust in an ideology". We follow that tendency to decide where to place "our trust, leaving the Lord aside".

"But why is the man who trusts in man and in himself cursed?" the Pope asked. "Because that sort of trust causes him to look only at himself; it causes him to withdraw into himself, without horizons, without open doors, without windows". He becomes "a man who is closed in on himself" and "who will not be saved", since "man cannot save himself".

The Pope then turned to the day's Gospel from St Luke, in which the evangelist recounts the parable of "a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day, and who was leading the good life". Pope Francis observed that "he was so content that he failed to realize that Lazarus lay at the door of his home covered in sores: a poor homeless man, and like a good homeless man he had a dog". Lazarus "lay there, hungry, and he ate only what fell from the rich man's table: crumbs". The Pope remarked: "Perhaps when Jesus was recounting this parable, he was thinking of the

Canaanite woman who begged him to restore her daughter's health: she only asked for the crumbs" that are given to the dogs.

The Gospel account of Lazarus and the rich man causes us to reflect, Pope Francis said. "We know the homeless man's name: his name was Lazarus. But what was the rich man's name? He doesn't have a name!". This "is the most powerful curse" for the person who "trusts in himself or in the strength and human abilities rather than in God: he loses his name!". Such a man, when asked his name, responds not with his own proper name but by pointing to his possessions, his "property and villas", or "to things, to idols".

"Looking at these two men," the Pope continued, "to the poor man with a name who trusts in the Lord; and the rich man who has lost his name and who trusts in himself, we can say: it is true, we need to trust in the Lord!". And yet, he said, "we all have this weakness, this frail tendency to place our hopes in ourselves or in our friends or in human possibilities alone, and we forget the Lord". It is a frame of mind that leads us "down the road of unhappiness" far away from the Lord. This, Pope Francis said, is the authentic meaning of the biblical expression: "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord; cursed is the man who trusts in himself or in human abilities".

This reflection is especially fitting for Lent, the Pope said. "And so today we would do well to ask ourselves: Where do I place my trust? Have I placed it in the Lord or am I a pagan who trusts in things, in idols that I have fashioned? Do I still have a name, or have I begun to lose my name and to identify myself only as "I" with all its variations: "me, with me, for me, only me: always egoism, I!". This way of living, the Pope said, will most certainly "not bring us salvation".

And yet the Gospel offers "a door of hope to all those who have rooted themselves in a trust in man and in themselves, who have lost their name". "In the end, in the end, there is always a way", he said. The rich man himself bears witness to this. "When he realizes that he has lost his name, that he has lost everything, he raises his eyes and speaks a single word: 'Father!'. And God responds with one single word: 'Son!'. Thus, for those who have placed "their trust in man, in themselves, and who have lost their name and dignity, there still remains the possibility of speaking this word, which is far greater than magic, far greater and more powerful: 'Father!'. We know that "he is always waiting for us, waiting to open a door that we do not see, and he will say to us: 'My child!'".

Pope Francis concluded: "May the Lord grant us all the wisdom to trust only in him and not in things or in human strength: only in him". He also prayed for all those who have lost this trust, that God might grant them "at least the light" to perceive and pronounce "this word that saves, that opens a door and

enables us to hear the voice of the Father who calls us: 'My child'".

Friday, 21 March

## The imprisoned word

In his homily at Holy Mass, Pope Francis commented on the Readings from the day's liturgy, taken from the Book of Genesis (37:3-4; 12-13; 17-18) and from the Gospel of St Matthew (21:33-43, 45). "During these days of Lent," the Pope began, "the Lord draws close to us and the Church leads us towards the Paschal Triduum, towards the Death and Resurrection of Jesus".

The first Reading recounts the story of "Joseph, who is a prophetic figure and type of Jesus: he was sold for 20 shekels by his brothers". The Gospel of Matthew presents the parable of the householder who let his property out to tenants. "Jesus tells the people and the Pharisees, the priests and the elders of the people this parable to make them understand how far they have fallen".

Pope Francis observed that the Gospel places us before "a drama, not of the people – for the people understood that Jesus was a great prophet – but of the leaders of the people, and some of the priests of that time, of the doctors of the law, and of the elders whose hearts were not open to God's word". In fact, "they heard Jesus, but rather than seeing in him God's Promised One, or rather than considering him to be a great prophet, they were afraid of him".

Essentially, the Pope said, theirs was "the same sentiment as Herod's". They too thought: "this man is a revolutionary, let us stop him in time, we must stop him!". Therefore "they sought to capture him, and they sought to put him to the test so that he would fall and be captured: it was a persecution against Jesus". But why this persecution, the Pope asked? "Because these people were not open to God's word; they were enclosed within their egoism".

It is within this context that "Jesus tells the parable: God gave as an inheritance a land with a vineyard which he had planted and tilled with his own hands". In fact we read in the Gospel that the householder "planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower". They are all things which "he did himself, with great love". And then "he let the vineyard out to tenants".

This is "exactly what the Lord has done with us," the Pope explained. "He has lent us life," and with it, "the promise" that he would come to save us. "Yet this people saw a profitable business venture in it: the vineyard is beautiful, let's take it, it's ours!". Thus, as the Gospel tells us, "the season of fruit drew near, and the householder's servants went to get his fruit. But the tenants, who had already placed themselves as masters of the vineyard, said: no, let us cast them out, this is ours!"

This parable recounts "the drama of this people and of us all", the Pope added. "They made themselves

masters of God's word; and the word of God became their word, a word fashioned according to their own interests, their own theologies, their own ideologies ... everyone interpreted it according to his own will, according to his own interests"; and "they murdered to maintain this". In fact, the Pope added, this is precisely what happened to Jesus. "The chief priests and the Pharisees understood that he was speaking about them when they heard this parable", and thus "they sought to capture him and have him killed".

Yet in this way "the Word of God becomes dead, it becomes trapped", he added. And "the Holy Spirit becomes locked up in the desires of each of them. The same thing happens to us when we are not open to the newness of God's word, when we are not obedient to God's word". Disobeying the word of God is like trying to say: "this is no longer God's Word: now it is ours".

As "the word of God died in the heart of these people, it can also die in our hearts," the Pontiff observed. And yet the word "does not end there, for it is alive in the heart of the simple, the humble, the people of God". In fact, those who were seeking to capture Jesus were afraid of the people because they considered him to be a prophet. "The simple crowd followed Jesus because what Jesus said did them great good and warmed their hearts. They didn't use the Word of God for their own interests". Rather, they "listened and sought to be better".

At this point, the Pope suggested that we think about "what we can do so as not to kill the Word of God, so as not to make ourselves masters of this word, to be docile, and not to lock up the Holy Spirit". He indicated two simple ways: humility and prayer.

"The people who would not accept God's word but rather who said 'this is God's word, but I interpret it according to my own interests!' were certainly not humble", he remarked. "They were proud, self important, they were the supposed 'doctors'. They were people who 'believed they had the power to change the meaning of God's word'".

However, he said, "there were also good and humble priests, humble Pharisees who received the Word of God in the right spirit; for example, the Gospels speak about Nicodemus". Therefore, "the main disposition one needs in order to listen to God's word is humility", since "without humility one cannot welcome and receive God's word".

The second disposition needed is prayer. The people of whom the parable speaks "did not pray, they didn't need to pray: they felt quite secure and strong, they felt that they were gods".

Therefore, Pope Francis said: "with humility and prayer let us go forward in listening to God's word and obeying the Church. Thus, what happened to these people will not happen to us: we will not kill in order to defend a word which we believe to be God's word" but which in reality is actually "a word we have utterly altered".



The Pope concluded, praying that “the Lord grant us the grace of humility to look upon Jesus as the Saviour who speaks to us: he speaks to me! Each one of us ought to say: he speaks to me! When we read the Gospels: he is speaking to me!” Pope Francis also invited those present to “open their hearts to the Holy Spirit, who gives power to these words” and “to pray, to pray much that we might all be docile to receive this word and to obeying it”.

Monday, 24 March

### Marginalized and therefore saved

In his homily at Holy Mass, Pope Francis delivered a powerful reflection on the virtue of humility, based on the day's Readings from 2 Kings (5:1-15a) and the Gospel of Luke (4:24-30). The Pope began by noting Jesus' statement that he was unable to work miracles in Nazareth “because of the lack of faith”. “They did not have faith” where the Lord was raised. Jesus in fact states that “no prophet is acceptable in his own country”. He then recalls the story of Naaman the Syrian and the prophet Elisha that is recounted in the day's first Reading, and that of the widow in Sidon with the prophet Elisha.

“The lepers and widows of that time were marginalized”, the Pope emphasized. “The widows who lived on public charity had no place in the normal spheres of society”, while the lepers had to live outside society, far from the people.

Thus, the Pope continued: in the Synagogue in Nazareth, “Jesus says that there shall be no miracle: no prophet is accepted here because you have no need of one, you are two self-assured”. The people whom Jesus had before him “were so secure in their supposed ‘faith’, they were so secure in their observance of the commandments, that they had no need of any other form of salvation”. This inner attitude, the Pope explained, reveals “the tragedy of observing the commandments without faith: I am saved only because I go to Synagogue every Sabbath, and because I seek to obey the commandments”; and “who is this to come and tell me that those who are marginalized, the leper and the widow, are better than I”.

Yet the Pope summarized Jesus' words in this way: “Take care because if you do not feel that you are on the margins, you will not be

saved!”. And he added: “this is humility, the path of humility: to feel so marginalized” that one “feels one's need for the Lord's salvation” for “it is he alone who saves and not our observance of the precepts”.

Yet, as the Pope observed, Jesus' teaching was received with such displeasure by the people of Nazareth that “they became enraged and wanted to kill him”. It is the same anger that Naaman the Syrian exhibited in today's first Reading from the Old Testament. In order to be healed of his leprosy, Naaman “goes to the king with many gifts, with great riches: he feels secure, he is the head of the army”. However, the prophet Elisha invites him to humble himself and to “wash in the river Jordan seven times”. An invitation which must have seemed “a bit ridiculous” to him, the Pope said. Indeed, Naaman “felt humiliated, and was angry and went away”, just like “those from the Synagogue in Nazareth”. In fact, the Scriptures use the same verb to describe both responses: they became “indignant”.

Naaman was asked to perform “an act of humility, of obedience, like a child: to do the ridiculous!”. But he reacts with indignation: “are not the Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all waters, and I am supposed to wash in this little stream? Something isn't right here!”. Yet those who were with him, who had good sense, “helped him to place himself on the margins, to humble himself”. And Naaman comes out of the river Jordan healed of his leprosy.

“This is today's message in this third week of Lent,” the Pope said. “If we wish to be saved, we must choose the path of humility, and of humiliation”. Mary is our greatest witness, Pope Francis said, for “in her canticle, she does not say that she rejoices because God has looked upon her virginity, her goodness, her sweetness, on the many virtues which she possessed”. Rather, she exults “because God has regarded the humility of his handmaiden, her littleness”. For “it is humility which the Lord regards with pleasure”.

“We must also learn the wisdom of placing ourselves on the margins so that the Lord will find us”, the Pope continued. “The Lord will not find us at the centre of our self-assurance. No, there the Lord does not go! He will find us on the margins, in our sins, in our mistakes, in our need to be healed spiritually, in our need to be saved. It is there that the Lord will find us”.

This “is the road of humility”, the Pope said. “Christian humility is not a virtue” which leads us to say “I am not needed”, and which thus masks a “hidden pride”. Rather, “Christian humility prompts us to speak the truth and to say: I am a sinner!”. Essentially, he said, it is a matter of “speaking the truth, and this is our truth”. Yet there is also “another truth ... the truth that God saves us! However, he saves us when we are marginalized. He does not save us in our self-assurance”.

Pope Francis concluded his homily in prayer, asking that God might “grant us the grace to marginalize ourselves; the grace of humility to receive the Lord's salvation”.

Tuesday, 25 March

### Salvation is a gift

In his homily on the Solemnity of the Annunciation, Pope Francis invited those present at Holy Mass to “celebrate and give thanks to God” because “today we commemorate a definitive step along the journey” of salvation “since man first departed the garden of paradise”.

“Today marks the celebration of the journey from one mother to another mother, from one father to another father”, the Pope explained. He therefore invited those present to contemplate “the image of Eve and Adam, the image of Mary and Jesus”, to survey salvation history, and to contemplate God who continually journeys together with his people. “Today”, the Pope said, “we can embrace the Father who, through the Blood of his Son ... has saved us”.

Pope Francis then reflected on God's command to Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply and to fill the earth and subdue it, and on his promise of redemption after they had sinned. “With this commandment and with this promise”, he said, our first parents “began their journey, a long road travelled over the course of many centuries” that began “through their disobedience”. Indeed, Adam and Eve “were deceived and seduced; they were seduced by Satan, who suggested: you will be like God's!”. “Pride and haughtiness” prevailed in them, the Pope said. “They fell into sin: they sought to take the place of God through self-sufficient pride”. The Pope added that “this is precisely the attitude that Satan himself embodies completely”.

Our first parents “did not make this journey alone”, the Pope explained. “The Lord was with them”, and has accompanied mankind on the long road that “began with disobedience yet ended in an act of obedience”. By way of explanation, and citing the famous words of a second century Bishop and Church Father, Pope Francis noted that “the Second Vatican Council takes up a beautiful expression of St Irenaeus who said: ‘the knot of Eve's disobedience was loosed by Mary's obedience’”.

God always abides “with his people along their journey”, the Pope added. “He sends the prophets and sends others to explain the Law”. But “why has the Lord walked with his people with such tenderness?”, the Pope asked. “To

soften our hearts”. In fact, he said, through the Scriptures God tells us explicitly: “I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh”.

The Lord desires “to soften our hearts” so that we might receive “the promise which he made in paradise: as sin came into the world through one man, so also through another Man salvation has come”. “This long journey” has helped “us all to have a more human heart, closer to God; not so proud, not so self-sufficient”.

“Today the liturgy speaks to us about this journey of restoration ... and it speaks to us about obedience, about docility to God's word”. The day's second Reading taken from the Letter to the Hebrews (10:4-10) “is very clear”: “Brothers, it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins”.

Therefore, Pope Francis said, “salvation cannot be bought and sold; it is given as a gift, it is free”. “We cannot save ourselves, salvation is a totally free gift”. As St Paul affirms in his Letter to the Hebrews, it cannot be bought “with the blood of bulls and goats”. The Pope continued: “since it cannot be bought, in order for this salvation to enter into us we need a humble heart, a docile heart, an obedient heart like Mary's”. Moreover, “the model on this journey of salvation is God himself, his Son, who did not count equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied himself, and was obedient unto death, even death on a cross”.

In conclusion, Pope Francis asked: what does “the path of humility, of humiliation” mean? Simply put, he said, it means saying: “I am a man, I am a woman, and you are God! And going forward in God's presence, as a man, as a woman, in obedience and docility of heart”.

## Evangelical church attacked in Kenya

Four people were killed and 17 more were injured on 23 March, in attack on an Evangelical church in Likoni, a village in southeastern Kenya. According to the local police chief who spoke to a radio station, the armed men escaped. No one has claimed responsibility but the local authorities believe that radical militant Islamists of Somalia are responsible. Al Shabaab has staged numerous other attacks in Kenya since October 2011 when the Government in Nairobi intervened against Somalia. Furthermore, various witnesses claim that the attackers were young Somalis. Among the first groups to condemn those responsible were the Muslim communities of the area. “Once again”, a statement reads, “we would like to underline that Islam is a religion of dialogue and tolerance and has nothing to do with acts of hate against our brothers.”