

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH

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Vatican City

Friday, 19 September 2014

The Bishop of Rome marries 20 couples in St Peter's Basilica
A life of joy and struggle



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Commemorating WWI in Redipuglia 100 years later
The folly of war

On Saturday, 13 September, the Holy Father visited the Italian province of Friuli-Venezia Giulia to commemorate the 100th anniversary of WWI and to pray for the victims of all wars. He first visited the Austro-Hungarian Cemetery and then the Italian military memorial of Redipuglia, where he celebrated Holy Mass.



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At the General Audience Pope Francis speaks about the universal nature of the Church

Catholic and Apostolic

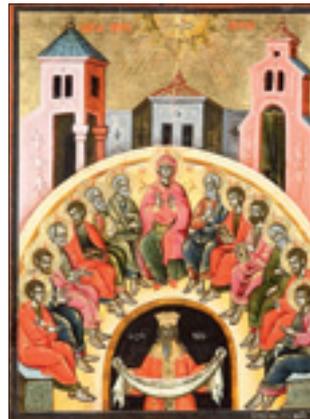
Pope Francis spoke about the catholic and apostolic nature of the Church to the faithful in St Peter's Square at the General Audience on Wednesday, 17 September. He highlighted that the Church "speaks all languages" and is capable of causing "the Good News of God's salvation and love to spread to all, even to the ends of the earth". The following is a translation of the Pope's catechesis, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
 Good morning,

This week we shall continue to speak about the Church. When we profess our faith, we affirm that the Church is *catholic* and *apostolic*. But what effectively is the meaning of

these words, of these two well-known characteristics of the Church? And what value do they have for Christian communities and for each one of us?

1. *Catholic* means universal. A complete and clear definition is offered by one of the Fathers of the Church of the first centuries, St Cyril of Jerusalem, when he affirmed: The Church is doubtless "called catholic, meaning universal, because it extends over all the world, from one end of the earth to the other; and because it teaches universally and completely one and all the truths which ought to come to men's knowledge, concerning things both visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly". (*The Catechesis* 18:23). A clear sign of the catholicity of the Church is that she speaks all languages, and this is the very effect of Pentecost (cf. Acts 2:1-13): the Holy Spirit, in fact, enabled the Apostles and the whole Church to cause the Good News of God's salvation and love to spread to all, even to the ends of the earth. Thus, the Church was born catholic, that is, "symphonic" from her very origins, and can be only catholic, projected to evangelization and encounter with all. The Word of God can be read today in all languages; everyone has the Gospel in his or her own language in order to read it. And I return to this concept: it is always good to take a small Gospel with us, to carry it in a pocket, in a purse and read a passage during the day. This is good for us. The Gospel



Athanas Zografi, "Pentecost" (1779, National Medieval Museum of Korça, Albania)

has been disseminated in all languages because the Church, the message of Jesus Christ the Redeemer, exists throughout the world. This is why the Church is *catholic*, because she is universal.

2. While the Church was born catholic, that is to say that she was born "outward-bound", that she was born missionary. Had the Apostles remained in the Upper Room, without going out to disseminate the Gospel, the Church would be the Church of only that people, of that city, of that Upper Room. But they all went out into the world, from the

moment of the Church's birth, from the moment the Spirit descended upon them. And this is why the Church was born "outward-bound", that is, missionary. This is what we express by deeming her *apostolic*, because an apostle is one who spreads the Good News of the Resurrection of Jesus. This term reminds us that the Church, on the foundation of the Apostles and in continuity with them – it was the Apostles who went and founded new churches, thus, they constituted new bishops throughout the world, and in continuity. Today all of us are in continuity with that group of Apostles who received the Holy Spirit and then went "out", to preach –, the Church is sent to take this Gospel message to all men, accompanying it with the signs of the tenderness and power of God. This too derives from the event of Pentecost: it is the Holy Spirit, indeed, who overcomes all resistance, to defeat the temptation of being self-absorbed, among the chosen few, thinking that God's blessing is for them alone. If, for example, some Christians do this and

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VATICAN BULLETIN

AUDIENCES

Thursday, 11 September

Archbishop Santo Gangemi, titular Archbishop of Umbriatico, Apostolic Nuncio in Guinea and in Mali

Archbishop Emil Paul Tscherrig, titular Archbishop of Voli, Apostolic Nuncio in Argentina

Members of the Episcopal Conference of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on a visit *ad limina Apostolorum*:

– Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya, Archbishop of Kinshasa with the Auxiliaries: Bishop Edouard Kisonga, SSS, titular Bishop of Grumento Nova and Bishop Timothée Bodika Mansiyai, PSS, titular Bishop of Naiera

– Archbishop François Xavier Maroy Rusengo of Bukavu

– Archbishop Marcel Madila Basanguka of Kananga

– Bishop Melchisédech Sikuli Paluku of Butembo-Beni

– Bishop Théophile Kaboy Ruboneka of Goma

– Bishop Placide Lubamba Ndjibu of Kasongo

– Bishop Willy Ngumbi Ngengele, M. Afr., of Kindu

– Bishop Sébastien Muyengo Mulombe of Uvira

– Bishop Valentin Masengo Nkinda of Kabinda

– Bishop Pierre-Célestin Tshitoko Mamba of Luebo

– Bishop Félicien Mwanama Galumbulula of Luiza

– Bishop Bernard-Emmanuel Kasanda Mulenga of Mbuji-Mayi

– Bishop Gérard Mulumba Kalemba of Mwaka

– Bishop Nicolas Djomo Lola of Tshumbe

– Bishop Cyprien Mbuka, CICM, of Boma

– Bishop José Moko Ekanga, PSS, of Idioba

– Bishop Philippe Nkieré Kena, CICM, of Inongo

– Bishop Jean Gaspard Mudiso Mund'la, SVD, of Kenge

– Bishop Edouard Mununu Kasiala, OCSO, of Kikwit

– Bishop Fidèle Nsielele Zi Mputu of Kisantu

– Bishop Daniel Nlandu Mayi of Matadi

– Bishop Louis Nzala Kianza of Popokabaka

H.E. Mr Mohamed Moncef Marzouki, President of the Republic of Tunisia with his entourage

Friday, 12 September

Archbishop Nikola Eterović, titular Archbishop of Cibale, Apostolic Nuncio in the Federal Republic of Germany

Members of the Episcopal Conference of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on a visit *ad limina Apostolorum*:

– Archbishop Marcel Utembi Tapa of Kisangani

– Archbishop Jean-Pierre Tafunga Mbayo, SDB, of Lubumbashi

– Archbishop Joseph Kumuondala Mbimba of Mbandaka-Bikoro

– Bishop Etienne Ung'eyowun of Bondo

– Bishop Dieudonné Uringi Uuci of Bunia

– Bishop Joseph Banga Bane of Buba

– Bishop Julien Andavo Mbia of Isiro-Niangara

– Bishop Sosthène Ayikuli Adjuwa of Mahagi-Nioka

– Bishop Janvier Kataka Luvete of Wamba

– Bishop Jean-Anatole Kalala Kaseba of Kamina

– Bishop Fulgence Muteba Mugalu of Kilwa-Kasenga

– Bishop Nestor Ngoy Katahwa of Kolwezi

– Bishop Oscar Ngoy wa Mpanga, CSSP, of Kongolo

– Bishop Vincent de Paul Kwanga Ndjibu of Manono

– Bishop Gaston Ruvezi Kashala, SDB, of Sakania-Kipushi

– Bishop Joseph Mokobe Ndjoku of Basankusu

– Bishop Fridolin Ambongo Besungu, OFM Cap., of Bokungu-Ikela

– Bishop Philibert Tembo Nlandu, CICM, of Budjala

– Bishop Louis Nkinga Bondala, CICM, of Lisala

– Bishop Ferdinand Maemba Liwoke of Lolo

– Bishop Dominique Bulamataru of Molegbe

Monday, 15 September

Mr Daniel Rubén Herrera Piedrabuena, Federal Judge of La Rioja, Argentina, with his wife and entourage

CHANGES THE EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed Msgr. Markus Stock from the clergy of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, as Bishop of Leeds, England. Until

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The Council of Cardinals meets for the sixth time

The Council of Cardinals gathered for the sixth time from Monday, 15 September, to Wednesday, 17. The Holy Father had established the Council in April of 2013 to assist him in governing the universal Church and to studying possible revisions to the Apostolic Constitution on the Roman Curia, *Pastor Bonus*. Previous meetings took place on: 1-3 October and 3-5 December 2013, 17-19 February, 28-30 April and 1-4 July 2014.

As of this meeting, the Council consists of 9 cardinals, the Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin having been assumed at the behest of the Pope.

Themes during the sixth meeting included: the laity and the family, with special reference to movements, pastoral care and the role of women; as well as, justice and peace, charity, the situation of migrants and refugees, the protection of life, healthcare and ecology. This was related by Fr Federico Lombardi, Director of the Holy See Press Office, during a briefing with journalists. Fr Lombardi noted that Pope Francis participated in all the working sessions except for the one which coincided with Wednesday morning's General Audience.

The director also explained that during this session the Cardinals no longer deliberated the economic and administrative issues as at prior meetings, concentrating instead on the path of the Congregations and the Pontifical Councils. He then announced that an initial draft of the new Apostolic Constitution on the reform of the Roman Curia had already been formulated and shared, and that subsequent meetings would be held from 9-11 December 2014 and from 9-11 February 2015.

The Council of Cardinals, Fr Lombardi continued, "does not take decisions, but formulates proposals for the Pope", who then dedicates himself to "expanding the consultation, also regarding the various dicasteries, engaging those in charge". In this respect, Fr Lombardi announced that in the autumn there will be at least one meeting of the dicastery heads, at which proposals are expected regarding aspects of the life and organization of the Church.

During the briefing, it was also stated that the committee charged with proposing the reform of Vati-

an media will hold its first meeting at Santa Marta from 22-24 September. Lord Christopher Patten will be presiding over the committee, which will in substance "frame the common base of information necessary for the members' work", dedicating itself to "planning the work to be carried out in the coming months, and the method to be followed". The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors will return for a meeting from 4-5 October, during which aspects will be defined with respect to Statutes and other members.

IOR Board of Superintendence appointments completed

The Cardinals' Commission of the Istituto per le Opere di Religione (IOR) has appointed Mr Mauricio Larraín of Chile and Mr Carlo Salvatori of Italy as members on the IOR Board of Superintendence. On the occasion of the appointment of Cardinal Santos Abril y Castelló, President of the IOR's Supervisory Commission of Cardinals, said: "The IOR is looking forward to working with these two new board members who will add significant financial experience and global perspective at a time when the role of IOR is being reinforced and confirmed to meet the objectives of the Holy Father."

With these appointments, the IOR Board of Superintendence is now complete. Besides Mauricio Larraín and Carlo Salvatori, the Board is composed of Mr Jean-Baptiste de Franssu of France, President of the Board; Mr Clemens Boersig of Germany, Prof.

Mary Ann Glendon of the United States and Sir Michael Hintze of the United Kingdom, who assumed office on 9 July 2014. In addition to these six lay members of the Board, Msgr. Alfred Xuereb, Secretary-General of the Secretariat for the Economy, serves as its non-voting Secretary.

As set out in the Institute's revised Statute from 1990, the IOR Board of Superintendence defines strategy and ensures oversight of operations. The members of the Board of Superintendence are nominated in accordance with the new legal framework and for a period of five years.

The nomination of a non-voting Secretary and a sixth member on the IOR Board of Superintendence as well as the nomination of a sixth member to the IOR Cardinals' Commission will be formalized upon completion of the current review of the Institute's Statutes.

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During the General Audience, Pope Francis greeted Archbishop Chaput and blessed the icon for the World Meeting of Families which will take place in Philadelphia, 22-27 September 2015; for more information on preparations, see page 6/7.



Catholic and Apostolic

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SPECIAL GREETINGS

say: "We are the chosen ones, we alone", in the end, they die. They die first spiritually, then they die bodily, because they have no life, they are not capable of generating life, other people, other peoples: they are not apostolic. And it is precisely the Spirit who guides us to meet our brothers, even those who are most distant in every sense, in order that they may share with us the gift of love, peace, joy that the Risen Lord has bequeathed us.

3. What does it mean for our communities and for each one of us to belong to a Church which is catholic and apostolic? First of all, it means *taking the salvation of all mankind to heart*, not feeling indifferent or alien in facing the fate of so many of our brothers and sisters, but open and sympathetic toward them. It means, moreover, *having a sense of the fullness, the completeness, the harmony* of the Christian life, always rejecting partisan, unilateral positions, which close us within ourselves.

Belonging to the *apostolic* Church means being aware that our faith is anchored in the proclamation and the witness of the very Apostles of Jesus – it is anchored there, it is a long chain which comes from there –; and for this we always feel sent, we feel delegated, in communion with the Apostles' successors, to proclaim, with the heart filled with joy, Christ and his love, to all mankind. And here I would like to recall the heroic life of so very many missionaries, men and women who left their homeland in order to go to proclaim the Gospel in other countries, on other continents. A Brazilian Cardinal who works quite often in Amazonia, was telling me that when he goes to a place, to a village or a town in Amazonia, he always goes to the cemetery where he sees the tombs of these missionaries, priests, brothers, sisters who went to preach the Gospel: apostles. And he thinks: all of them could be canonized now, they left all in order to proclaim Jesus Christ. Let us give thanks to the Lord that our Church has so many missionaries, she has had so many missionaries, yet she needs even more! Let us thank the Lord for this. Perhaps among so many young people, teenagers who are here, someone has the will to become a missionary: go ahead! This is beautiful, to spread the Gospel of Jesus. Be brave young people!

Thus let us ask the Lord to renew in us the gift of his Spirit, that every Christian community and every baptized person may be the expression of the Holy Mother catholic and apostolic Church.

I offer an affectionate greeting to all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors present at today's Audience, including those from England, Scotland, South Africa, Denmark, Norway, China, Japan, Sri Lanka, Australia, Canada and the United States. May your stay in the Eternal City deepen your love for Christ and renew the grace of Pentecost in your lives. May God bless you all!

I address a welcome to the Arabic-speaking pilgrims, particularly those from the Holy Land and from the Middle East. The Church is *catholic* and *apostolic* because she opens her arms to all men; she proclaims the *Good News* steadfastly and freely, without coercion or duress; and she calls everyone to believe in the Son of God made man, with charity, with tenderness and with patience! Oh sons and daughters of those Holy Lands, whence the light of the message went out to the ends of the earth, may you always be, in spite of difficulties, brave and joyful bearers of the Message of salvation, of truth and of blessing. May the Lord always bless you and protect you!

Next Sunday, God willing, I shall go to Albania. I have decided to visit this country because it has suffered so much because of a terrible atheist regime and is now building a peaceful coexistence among the various religious constituents. As of now I greet with affection and thank the Albanian people for their preparations for this visit. I ask everyone to accompany me in prayer, through the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel. Thank you.

Dear Italian-speaking pilgrims: welcome! I greet the priests and religious men and women present, in particular the Hospital Sisters of Mercy, the Consolata Missionaries, the Oblates of St Joseph, on the occasion of their respective General Chapters. I greet the participants in the Seminar sponsored by *Caritas Internationalis* and the International Observatory for the social doctrine of the Church, with Bishop Crepaldi of Trieste. May the visit to the Tombs of the Apostles foster in all a sense of belonging to Christ and to the Church.

Lastly I turn to the *young people*, the *sick* and the *newlyweds*. Today we celebrate the memory of St Robert Bellarmine, a Doctor of the Church. May his obedience to the Lord show you, dear *young people*, that He is the way, the truth and the life; may he encourage you, dear *sick people*, particularly the *Unitalsi* group from Pescara and the "Alzheimer United" group, to face the dark moments of the Cross with faith; and may he encourage you, dear *newlyweds*, to found your marital home on Christ.

Schedule for the Pope's visit to Albania

A Martyr Church now a sign of dialogue

A tribute to a Church which was martyred under Communism, where the regime had declared an officially atheistic state, with atheism formally enshrined in the constitution. An encouraging sign for dialogue among faiths with progress in the political arena. These are the two aspects which will characterize Pope Francis' visit to Albania scheduled for Sunday, 21 September. The schedule of events was presented by Fr Federico Lombardi, Director of the Holy See Press Office, on Monday, 15 September. It will be the Holy Father's fourth international visit and his first in Europe and outside of Italy.

The Holy Father will spend his brief one-day visit in Tirana, however, it will be a full day with six addresses. The visit will make reference to Mother Teresa and to John Paul II's historic visit on 25 April 1993, where he began rebuilding the Catholic Church in the country by ordaining four bishops – including the current Archbishop of Tiranë-Durrës, Rrok K. Mirdita – at the reopening of the Shkëoder Cathedral.

There was terrible persecution in Albania at the hands of the atheist Communists and the Pontiff "wishes to pay tribute to this aspect of the life of the Church and of the various confessions and religions in the country", said Fr Lombardi. Additionally, as Pope Francis had explained on his return flight from South Korea, "he is very interested in encouraging a climate of serene and harmonious coexistence", Lombardi added, "so that good relations between various confessions and religions may also be a message to other countries and other parts of the world, considering that most of the population is Muslim despite the fact that there are a substantial number of Orthodox and Catholics".

The martyrdom of the Church in Albania will be relived, especially at the afternoon meeting in the new Cathedral of Tirana with the clergy, religious and lay people who are the forces behind the ecclesial community today. At that meeting a priest and a nun, both octogenarians, will share their stories of living through years of persecution. At the moment, Fr Lombardi recalled, a cause is underway for the beatification of 40 martyrs, including two bishops, about 30 priests and one woman.

Due to the brevity of the visit, the Pope will stay in Tirana, and will not visit Shkëoder, which is considered the centre of Catholicism in Albania. The capital city was chosen in order to underline "the meaning of the presence of the life of the Church in modern society" in a very different situation, in a small country which expects to enter the European Union but which for the Pope is the door to Europe, also in view of his upcoming visit to the Parliament in Strasbourg on 25 November.

His morning will include a meeting with the authorities, at which he is expected to give President Bujar Nishani a facsimile of the first missal in Albanian which dates back to the 1500s. Then Pope Francis will celebrate Mass in Mother Teresa Square and then recite the Angelus. A lunch with the bishops in the Nunciature is to follow, and then a meeting at the Catholic University "Our Lady of Good Counsel" with leaders of other religions and Christian denominations. There will be six in all: Muslims, Bektashi, Orthodox, Evangelicals, Jews and Catholics.

Pope Francis will celebrate Vespers in the Cathedral with priests, religious, seminarians and lay people of various movements. The last stop will be outside Tirana, where the Pope will visit the Centro Betania – founded in 1998 by Antonietta Vitale from Verona, Italy – which cares for abandoned and needy children. There the Holy Father will also meet several workers from various assistance centres in the country.

The media has recently reported alarm linked to Islamic terrorists in relation to the visit. "We are all concerned due to the history of IS and for what is happening in the Middle East". The situation, Fr Lombardi said, "is a cause for concern in today's world", but there are no "specific threats", nor are "particular measures" foreseen. In fact, the Director of the Holy See Press Office said, the Pontiff will use the same jeep which he uses in St Peter's Square.

Readers of 'L'Osservatore Romano' receive a special multimedia link

St Ephrem and the smartphone

When writing his religious poems in the fourth century in Nisibis, St Ephrem the Syrian, could not have foreseen the advent of the Quick Response Code (or QR code) – that special square motbag which puts the off-line world in contact with the web and is so common in the digital age – but at some points in his writings he seems to describe its effects. Sometimes, Ephrem wrote in one of his *Hymns on Paradise*, the written text comes alive and becomes an image, a dialogue, an embrace, a path for those whose gaze crosses it: “I read the opening of this book / and was filled with joy, / for its verses and lines / spread out their arms to welcome me; / the first rushed out to kiss me, / and led me on to its companion”. The mystic from Nisibis continues by saying that these words, which lead to Christ, are a way to the unknown world full of happiness: “The eye and the mind / traveled over the lines / as over a bridge, and entered together”, every line is an opportunity for an embrace, it is an ever new encounter.

The joy Ephrem receives from encountering a text which speaks of God helps us to understand why, on

8 September, the daily edition of our newspaper began inserting a QR code next to the article on Pope Francis' morning Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae. Using a smartphone or tablet, the code will lead the reader's gaze to the Vatican Television Centre's video recording of the homily. This decision neither gives into the latest trend or adapts to a worldly mentality but is rather an ulterior bridge which the reader can decide to take.

The QR code is not new for those who are familiar with tablets and smartphones; it was created 20 years ago by Denso Wave, a Japanese company that needed to better track parts in vehicle manufacturing, today it is printed on advertisements, magazines, gadgets, t-shirts. After taking a picture of the code and in one click, the information connects to those who want to receive it. This allows the user to dialogue, interact, ask questions, obtain answers and, thanks to social networks, share the



This QR code allows smartphone and tablet users with the corresponding app to watch the Vatican Television Centre's recording of Pope Francis' homily on Friday, 5 September, which he delivered in Italian

content with hundreds of thousands of people, in simple terms it is a multimedia link.

In the fourth century the poetry of Ephrem the Syrian reminded his friends that Christianity is not a religion of books but of encounters and of incarnation. Many centuries later, a small black and white square – the QR code printed next to the homily – can help us remember this. (*Silvia Guidi*)

The Sistine Chapel Choir to perform in Macao, Hong Kong and Taipei

The Pontifical Sistine Chapel Choir will perform for the first time in Macao, Hong Kong and Taipei. The concerts are being made possible through the Hong Kong Institute for Promotion of Chinese Culture, in collaboration with the Coro Perosi of the Diocese of Macao and the Taipei Philharmonic Foundation. By sharing the rich musical traditions of East and West, these concerts aim to promote cultural exchange through art and music, thereby creating new channels of communication and communion.

The concerts, entitled “Reverberating Heavenly Tunes in Greater China”, will include pieces from notable composers such as Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso, Gregorio Allegri and Lorenzo Perosi, whose works, historically, have been found in the repertoire of Papal celebrations.

The concerts will take place on: 19 September 2014 at 6:00 pm in the Cathedral of Macao; 21 September at 8:00 pm at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre; and 23 September at 7:30 pm at the National Concert Hall in Taipei.

In addition, on 21 September at 11:00 am in the Cathedral of Hong Kong the Sistine Chapel Choir will assist, with the authorization of the Cardinal Secretary of State, at the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. Cardinal John Tong Hon will preside.

The Pontifical Musical Chorus of the Sistine Chapel (Sistine Chapel Choir) has its origins in the former Roman *Schola Cantorum* and for centuries has preserved the musical traditions of the Church. It is composed of trained vocal musicians who sing at Papal liturgies and at other celebrations as desired by the Holy Father.

Immediately after the Pope's return to Rome in 1378 from exile in Avignon, France, a need to provide for adequate sacred music was felt. Following his election on 9 August 1471, Pope Sixtus IV gave specific direction to this musical renewal by creating his own College of Cantors, which would later become the Sistine Choir.

With the intention of providing more stable leadership to the Pontifical Sistine Music Chapel Choir, Pope Pius VII appointed Giuseppe Baini as director (1818-1844). He was followed by Domenico Mustafà (1848-1902), Lorenzo Perosi (1902-1956), Domenico Bartolucci (1956-1997) and Giuseppe Liberto (1997-2010). The Sistine Choir has been under the direction of Massimo Palombella since 16 October 2010.

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now he has been General Secretary of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (15 Sept.).

Bishop-elect Stock, 53, was born in London, England. He holds degrees in theology and in dogmatic theology. He was ordained a priest on 13 August 1988. He has served in parish ministry and as director of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham and as director of the Catholic Educational Service.

CAUSES OF SAINTS

The Holy Father appointed as Members of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints: Cardinal Robert Sarah, President of the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, and Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, Major Penitentiary (12 Sept.).

EVANGELIZATION OF PEOPLES

The Holy Father appointed as Members of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples: Cardinal George Pell, Prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy; Cardinal Timothy Michael Dolan, Archbishop of New York, USA; Cardinal Luis Antonio G. Tagle, Archbishop of Manila, the Philippines; Cardinal Jean-Pierre Kutwa, Archbishop of Abidjan, Ivory Coast; Cardinal Orani João Tempesta, O. Cist., Archbishop of São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, Secretary General of the

Synod of Bishops; Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, titular Archbishop of Astigi; Archbishop Luigi Travaglino, titular Archbishop of Letere, Apostolic Nuncio in the Principality of Monaco, Permanent Observer of Holy See to the Organizations and Bodies of the United Nations for Food and Agriculture; Archbishop Claudio Maria Celli, titular Archbishop of Civitanova, President of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications; Archbishop Ignatius Suharyo Hardjoatmodjo of Jakarta, Indonesia; Archbishop Patrick Christopher Pinder of Nassau, Bahamas; Archbishop Dieudonné Nzapalainga, cssp., of Bangui, Central African Republic; Archbishop Giampiero Gloder, titular Archbishop of Telde, Apostolic Nuncio, President of the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy; Coadjutor Archbishop Paul Bùi Văn Đọc of Thành-Phó Hồ Chí Minh, Vietnam; Bishop Tarcisius Isao Kikuchi, SVD, of Niigata, Japan; Bishop Celmo Lazari, CSI, titular Bishop of Muzuca in Proconsulari, Vicar Apostolic of San Miguel de Sucumbios, Ecuador; Fr Michael Anthony Perry, OFM, Minister General of the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor; Fr Louis Lougen, OMI, Superior General of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate; Fr Socrates Mesiona, National Director of P.P.O.O.M.M., the Philippines; Sr Luzia Premoli, SMC., Superior General of the Comboni Missionaries (13 Sept.).

His Holiness appointed as Consultants of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples: Archbish-

op Jorge Carlos Patrón Wong, Bishop emeritus of Papantla, Mexico, Secretary for Seminaries of the Congregation for the Clergy; Bishop Juan Ignacio Arrieta Ochoa de Chinchetru, titular Bishop of Civitate, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts (13 Sept.).

START OF MISSION

On 24 July, Archbishop Anselmo Guido Pecorari, titular Archbishop of Populonia, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with the presentation of his Letters of Credence to the President, H.E. Dr Gjorgje Ivanov.

CARDINAL TAKES POSSESSION

On 14 September Cardinal Gerhard Ludwig Müller, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, took possession of the Deaconry of Sant'Agnese in Agone.

NECROLOGY

Bishop Servilio Conti, IMC, titular Bishop of Thuburbo maius, Bishop emeritus of the former Prelature of Roraima, Brazil, at age 97 (1 Sept.).

Bishop emeritus Joseph Abangite Gasi of Tombura-Yambio, South Sudan, at age 86 (13 Sept.).



Pope Francis celebrates Mass in Redipuglia for the centenary of World War I

The folly of war

Plotters of terrorism echo Cain's words: 'What does it matter to me?'

Pope Francis again denounced the "madness of war". On Saturday morning, 13 September, he flew to the Italian province of Friuli-Venezia Giulia to commemorate the 100th anniversary of WWI and to pray for the victims of all wars. He first went to the Austro-Hungarian Cemetery in Fogliano di Redipuglia where he paced the tombstones of the fallen soldiers of the military of Vienna and stopped to pray in front of the central monument to unknown soldiers. The Pope was then driven to the Italian military memorial of Redipuglia. There at the top of the shrine, which includes two large tombs holding the remains of 60,000 unknown soldiers, he celebrated Mass with more than 16,000 people, including about 10,000 military personnel. The following is the English text of his homily.

After experiencing the beauty of travelling throughout this region, where men and women work and raise their families, where children play and the elderly dream... I now find myself here, in this place, near this cemetery, able to say only one thing: War is madness.

Whereas God carries forward the work of creation, and we men and women are called to participate in his work, war destroys. It also ruins the most beautiful work of his hands: human beings. War ruins everything, even the bonds between brothers. War is irrational; its only plan is to bring destruction: it seeks to grow by destroying.

Greed, intolerance, the lust for power... These motives underlie the decision to go to war, and they are too often justified by an ideology; but first there is a distorted passion or impulse. Ideology is presented as a justification and when there is no ideology, there is the response of Cain: "What does it matter to me? Am I my brother's keeper?" (cf. Gen 4:9). War does not look directly at anyone, be they elderly, children, mothers, fathers.... "What does it matter to me?"

Above the entrance to this cemetery, there hangs in the air those ironic words of war, "What does it matter to me?". Each one of the dead buried here had their own plans, their own dreams... but their lives were cut short. Why? Why did humanity say, "What does it matter to me?"

Even today, after the second failure of another world war, perhaps one can speak of a third war, one fought piecemeal, with crimes, massacres, destruction....

In all honesty, the front page of newspapers ought to carry the headline, "What does it matter to me?". Cain would say, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

This attitude is the exact opposite of what Jesus asks of us in the Gospel. We have heard: he is in the least of his brothers; he, the King, the Judge of the world, he is the one who hungers, who thirsts, he is the stranger, the one who is sick, the prisoner.... The one who cares for his brother or sister enters into the joy of the Lord; the one who does not do so, however, who by his omissions says, "What does it matter to me?" remains excluded.

Here and in other cemeteries lie many victims. Today, we remember them. There are tears, there is mourning, there is sadness. From this place we remember the victims of every war.

Today, too, the victims are many.... How is this possible? It is so because in today's world, behind the scenes, there are interests, geopolitical strategies, lust for money and power, and there is the manufacture and sale of arms, which seem to be so important!

And these plotters of terrorism, these schemers of conflicts, just like arms dealers, have engraved in their hearts, "What does it matter to me?"

It is the task of the wise to recognize errors, to feel pain, to repent, to beg for pardon

and to cry.

With this "What does it matter to me?" in their hearts, the merchants of war have perhaps made a great deal of money, but their corrupted hearts have lost the capacity to cry. Cain did not cry. He was not capable of tears. The shadow of Cain hangs over us today in this cemetery. It has been seen here. It is seen from 1914 right up to our own time. It is seen even in the present.

With the heart of a son, a brother, a father, I ask each of you, indeed for all of us, to have a conversion of heart: to move on from "What does it matter to me?" to tears: for each one of the fallen of this "senseless massacre", for all the victims of the mindless wars, in every age. Weeping. Brothers and sisters, humanity needs to weep, and this is the time to weep.



In the shadow of Cain

Pope Francis alone, head bowed, among thousands of white tombstones on the greensward of the Austro-Hungarian Cemetery in Fogliano di Redipuglia: this will be the lasting image of the Pontiff's visit to the sites of the Great War. His visit took place a century after its outbreak in the summer of 1914, which opened an abyss of "useless slaughter", denounced in vain by Benedict xv.

Also to no avail was Pius XII's anguished appeal in 1939 when he sought to discourage the Second World War. Instead what came was a tragic "hour of darkness" – Pacelli wrote in his first Encyclical – when "the spirit of violence and of discord brings indescribable suffering on mankind". And today his Successor has returned to speak of "a third war, one fought 'piecemeal', with crimes, massacres, destruction", as Pope Francis stated during his return from Korea.

Francis repeated it in his homily at the Mass – a meditation rooted in Genesis, the opening text of the Christian and Jewish Holy Scriptures – on the madness of war: a reality which destroys and ruins everything, driven by greed, intolerance, ambition, often justified by an ideology. When this happens, Cain's hollow response echoes once again: "What does it matter to me?". Indeed, these words are ever-recurring, even in the face of the most frightful tragedies, the "scornful motto" of war which looks directly at no one, a near personification of evil.

In this way and in the shadow of Cain, victims have multiplied by the million in a century stained by the blood of two world wars. Still today tens of thousands are sacrificed in wars which are forgotten but no less savage.

"How is this possible?", the Bishop of Rome asked himself, again denouncing the "interests, geopolitical strategies, greed for money and power", forcefully accusing "the profiteers of war", the outright "plotters of terrorism" and "schemers of conflicts" who, through the arms trade generate "bad dreams, foster bad feelings" and "falsify the very psychology of peoples", as Pope Paul VI stated to the United Nations half a century ago.

In the face of this grim reality the word of the Gospel rings out to encourage and admonish: "He who takes care of his brother enters into the joy of the Lord; however, he who does not do so, who, despite his omissions says 'what does it matter to me?', stays outside", the Pope said. Thus, in order to save oneself one needs to have the courage to move out of Cain's shadow and to implore "the capacity to cry". To renounce the bad dreams and return to the dreams of the victims of war and of today's elderly, to whom Francis alluded.



Upcoming events organized by the Pontifical Council for the Family

From the Synod to Philadelphia

There is just one year until the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia and the preparations for the celebration have begun. The city's Archbishop, Charles Joseph Chaput, confirmed this in a press conference in the Holy See Press Office on Tuesday morning, 16 September. Archbishop Chaput explained how the Archdiocese would focus on spiritually preparing families for the meeting, in addition to organizing and planning, which has found support from the local community.

The essence of the preparations is the catechesis, explained Archbishop, which will propose reflections on the central theme of the meeting: "Love is



Icon of the Holy Family by Neilson Carlin

our mission: the family fully alive". He also presented the official icon entitled "The Holy Family". This work of art, along with the prayer, was first unveiled on Sunday, 7 September, in the Cathedral of Sts Peter and Paul in Philadelphia. The oil painting was rendered by a local artist, Neilson Carlin.

President of the Council for the Family, Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, was also at the press conference and presented several details about Pope Francis' meeting with the elderly on Sunday, 28 September. "We are expecting in St Peter's Square at least 40,000 people from 80 different countries," the Archbishop said, "to dialogue and pray with the Pope". And those who will be unavailable to come – due to health or age – will be able to watch on the website of the Vatican Television Centre.

The day will begin at 8:30 am with a course on aging centred on five Biblical passages, to words and a narrative. Then the Holy Father will then engage in a conversation with the elderly. The Archbishop noted the im-

portance that the elderly attending will be accompanied by their grandchildren. Mass will be celebrated at 10:30 am and 100 elderly priests will celebrate with the Pope.

After the Angelus, the attendees will receive a copy of the Gospel of Mark with large print to meet the needs of those who are advanced in years. He also announced that an Iraqi refugee couple from Qaraqosh in the Diocese of Mosul will be present. The couple, who have to children, "will give voice to the experience of their peers – no longer young – who are tragically living through the conflict". A video was filmed, which will be shown together with their testimony. The voice of Andrea Bocelli, who will also be present, will provide the musical accompaniment.

The President of the Council then explained how the family is now, more than ever, at the centre of attention, especially in view of the upcoming Synod. "We can say that we are on a path with the Synod to Philadelphia", he added. Also on the dicastery's website www.familiava – where the documents can be consulted in five languages – it will be possible to closely follow the work of the Synod.

Archbishop Paglia presented a long series of events which will begin on Thursday, 18 September, in collaboration with *Caritas Internationalis*. The first event will be held in San Calisto Palace and will be a seminar on "Family and Poverty". Then from 22-24 January 2015 an international congress called Rereading the Extraordinary Synod on the Family Together will be held on 24 March a prayer vigil has been scheduled in the Basilica of St Mary Major to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Encyclical *Evangelium vitae*. A seminar entitled: "Family, a resource for Society" will be held on a date not yet determined.

The dicastery also has several editorial initiatives, including *Enchiridion della famiglia e della vita*, which is already on shelves. The next book to be published will be a volume of Jorge Mario Bergoglio's teachings from 1999 to today.

Also taking part in the press conference was the Riley family, who came from Philadelphia. Thomas and Barbara with their children, Penelope, 14, and Vincent, 10, explained how all of this work for the family has been put into action and how it is changing daily life for an increasing number of people. They also called for all the families of the world to participate in the event which will be held from 22-27 September 2015, in Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love.

Marriage is when "man and woman walking together, wherein the husband helps his wife to become ever more a woman, and wherein the woman has the task of helping her husband to become ever more a man". Pope Francis explained this in his homily on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, when he married 20 couples from the Diocese of Rome in St Peter's Basilica on 14 September. The following is the English text of his homily, which was given in Italian.

Today's first reading speaks to us of the people's journey through the desert. We can imagine them as they walked, led by Moses; they were families: fathers, mothers, sons and daughters, grandparents, men and women of all ages, accompanied by many children and the elderly who struggled to make the journey. This people reminds us of the Church as she makes her way across the desert of the contemporary world, reminds us of the People of God composed, for the most part, of families.

This makes us think of families, our families, walking along the paths of life with all their day to day experiences. It is impossible to quantify the strength and depth of humanity contained in a family: mutual help, educational support, relationships developing as family members mature, the sharing of joys and difficulties. Families are the first place in which we are formed as persons and, at the same time, the "bricks" for the building up of society.

Let us return to the biblical story. At a certain point, "the people became impatient on the way" (Num 21:4). They are tired, water supplies are low and all

they have for food is manna, which, although plentiful and sent by God, seems far too meagre in a time of crisis. And so they complain and protest against God and against Moses: "Why did you make us leave?...?" (cf. Num 21:5). They are tempted to turn back and abandon the journey.

Here our thoughts turn to married couples who "become impatient on the way" – the way of conjugal and family life. The hardship of the journey causes them to experience interior weariness; they lose the flavour of matrimony and they cease to draw water from the well of the Sacrament. Daily life becomes burdensome, and often, even "nauseating".

During such moments of disorientation – the Bible says – poisonous serpents come and bite the people, and many die. This causes the people to repent and to turn to Moses for forgiveness, asking him to beseech the Lord so that he will cast out the snakes. Moses prays to the Lord, and the Lord offers a remedy: a bronze serpent set on a pole; whoever looks at it will be saved from the deadly poison of the vipers.

What is the meaning of this symbol? God does not destroy the serpents, but rather offers an "antidote": by means of the bronze serpent fashioned by Moses, God transmits his healing strength, namely his mercy, which is more potent than the Tempter's poison.

As we have heard in the Gospel, Jesus identifies himself with this symbol: out of love the Father "has given" his only begotten Son so that men and women might have eternal life (cf. Jn 3:13-17). Such immense love of the Father spurs the Son to become man, to become a servant and to die for us upon a cross. Out of such love, the Father raises up his son, giving him dominion over the entire universe. This is expressed by Saint Paul in his hymn in the Letter to the Philippians (cf. 2:6-11). Whoever entrusts himself to Jesus

The couples' gift to their diocese

The 20 couples united in marriage on Sunday by the Bishop of Rome gave their diocese the gift of a playroom and gathering space for the youth from the outskirts. The area will be realized by *Caritas* in the Colli Aniene neighborhood in Rome. These couples responded to Pope Francis' appeal last year in the parish of Prima Porta to open themselves to the outskirts. The idea for the project came while they were preparing for the sacrament. This meeting place for young people and their families, which will aid the parents in educating their children, is a symbolic "thank you" to Pope Bergoglio, who for the first time in his pontificate, celebrated the rite. They are men and women of our time, the youngest at 25 years old and the oldest 58. The brides and grooms, chosen by the vicariate from the parishes of Rome, included those who were already living together and those who had children. They arrived in the Vatican Basilica in their formal wedding attire, accompanied by their parents, as tradition, they walked down the central nave to the Altar of the Confession, where they were awaited by their witnesses. Following them was Pope Francis, as well as

Cardinal Vicar Vallini, Viceregent Archbishop Iannone, and 40 priests, including the couples' parish priests, formators and friends.



The Bishop of Rome joins 20 couples in marriage in St Peter's Basilica

A life of joy and struggle



crucified receives the mercy of God and finds healing from the deadly poison of sin.

The cure which God offers the people applies also, in a particular way, to spouses who "have become impatient on the way" and who succumb to the dangerous temptation of discouragement, infidelity, weakness, abandonment... To them too, God the Father

gives his Son Jesus, not to condemn them, but to save them: if they entrust themselves to him, he will bring them healing by the merciful love which pours forth from the Cross, with the strength of his grace that renews and sets married couples and families once again on the right path.

The love of Christ, which has blessed and sanctified the union of

husband and wife, is able to sustain their love and to renew it when, humanly speaking, it becomes lost, wounded or worn out. The love of Christ can restore to spouses the joy of journeying together. This is what marriage is all about: man and woman walking together, wherein the husband helps his wife to become ever more a woman, and wherein the woman has

the task of helping her husband to become ever more a man. This is the task that you both share: "I love you, and for this love I help you to become ever more a woman"; "I love you, and for this love I help you to become ever more a man". Here we see the reciprocity of differences. The path is not always a smooth one, free of disagreements, otherwise it would not be human. It is a demanding journey, at times difficult, and at times turbulent, but such is life! Within this theology which the word of God offers us concerning the people on a journey, spouses on a journey, I would like to give you some advice. It is normal for husband and wife to argue: it's normal. It always happens. But my advice is this: never let the day end without having first made peace. Never! A small gesture is sufficient. Thus the journey may continue. Marriage is a symbol of life, real life: it is not "fiction"! It is the Sacrament of the love of Christ and the Church, a love which finds its proof and guarantee in the Cross. My desire for you is that you have a good journey, a fruitful one, growing in love. I wish you happiness. There will be crosses! But the Lord is always there to help us move forward. May the Lord bless you!

Prayers of the Pope at the Angelus on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Think of those being persecuted and killed

On the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the Pope turned his thoughts to the many "brothers and sisters who are being persecuted and killed because of their faith in Christ". With this message, he prayed the Angelus in St Peter's Square on Sunday, 14 September. The following is a translation of the Pope's words, which were delivered in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

On 14 September the Church celebrates the Feast of the Exaltation of the

Holy Cross. Some non-Christian person might ask: why "exalt" the Cross? We can respond that we do not exalt any cross whatsoever or all crosses: we exalt the *Cross of Jesus*, because in it God's love for humanity was fully revealed. That's what the Gospel of John reminds us of in today's liturgy: "God so loved the world that He gave his only Son" (3:16). The Father "gave" the Son to save us, and this resulted in the death of Jesus, and his death on the Cross. Why? Why was the Cross necessary? Because of the gravity of the evil which enslaved us. The Cross of Jesus expresses both things: all the negative forces of evil, and all of the gentle omnipotence of God's mercy. The Cross would seem to decree Christ's failure, but in reality it signals His victory. On Calvary, those who mocked him said to him, "If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross" (cf. Mt 27:40).

But the opposite was true: it was precisely because Jesus was the Son of God, that He was there, on the Cross, faithful to the end to the loving plan of the Father. And for this very reason God "exalted" Jesus (Phil 2:9), conferring universal kingship on Him.

When we look to the Cross where Jesus was nailed, we contemplate the sign of love, of the infinite love of God for each of us and the source of our salvation. The mercy of God, which embraces the whole world, springs from the Cross. Through the Cross of Christ the Evil One is overcome, death is defeated, life is given to us, hope is restored. This is important: through the Cross of Christ hope is restored to us.

The Cross of Jesus is our one true hope! That is why the Church "exalts" the Holy Cross, and why we Christians bless ourselves with the sign of the cross. That is, we don't exalt crosses, but the glorious Cross of Christ, the sign of God's immense love, the sign of our salvation and path toward the Resurrection. This is our hope.

While we contemplate and celebrate the Holy Cross, we think with emotion of so many of our brothers and sisters who are being persecuted and killed because of their faith in Christ. This happens especially wherever religious freedom is still not guaranteed or fully realized. It happens, however, even in countries and areas which, in principle, protect freedom and human rights but where, in practice, believers, and especially Christians, encounter restrictions and discrimination. So today we remember them and pray for them in a special way.

On Calvary, there at the foot of the Cross, was the Virgin Mary (cf. Jn 19:25-27). She is Our Lady of Sorrows, whom we shall celebrate tomorrow in the liturgy. To her I entrust the present and the future of the Church, so that we may all always be able to discover and welcome the message of love and salvation of the Cross of Christ. In particular I entrust to her the newlywed couples whom I had the joy of joining in matrimony this morning, in St Peter's Basilica.

After the Angelus the Holy Father said:

Dear brothers and sisters, tomorrow the Mission of the United Nations Se-

curity Council will officially open in the Central African Republic in order to foster the peace-process of the country and protect the civilian population who are suffering acutely from the consequences of the ongoing conflict. While I assure the commitment and prayers of the Catholic Church, I encourage the efforts of the international community in coming to the aid of the Central Africans of good will. May the violence soon give way to dialogue; may the opposing factions set aside particular interests and strive to ensure that every citizen of whatever ethnic group or religion, may cooperate in building up the common good. May the Lord accompany this peace-process!

Yesterday I went to the Austro-Hungarian Cemetery and Military Memorial in Redipuglia. There I prayed for those who fell in the Great War. The numbers are frightening: it is said that approximately eight million young soldiers fell and seven million civilians died. This tells us the extent to which war is madness! A madness from which mankind has not yet learned its lesson, because a second world war followed it and many more are still in progress today. But when will we learn from this lesson? I invite everyone to look to the Crucified Jesus to understand that hatred and evil are defeated through forgiveness and goodness, to understand that responding with war only increases evil and death!

I ask you all to please pray for me. I wish everyone a happy Sunday and a good lunch! *Arrivederci!*

To the Italian Biblical Institute

Water and sand

Catholic biblical exegesis must not "become lost, like a stream of water, in the sands of a hypercritical analysis". Pope Francis emphasized this in his address to members of the Italian Biblical Institute, who he received in audience in the Vatican's Clementine Hall on Friday, 19 September at the close of the 58th National Bible Week. After a greeting by the Institute's president, Fr Luca Mazzinghi, who gave a presentation on the work performed by the Institute, the Pontiff delivered the following address in Italian.

Dear Friends,

I am meeting with you at the end of National Bible Week, promoted by the Italian Biblical Institute. This meeting inaugurates the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution. We should be grateful for the breakthroughs, the result of extensive research, the Council offered us, as well as for the abundance and ease of access to the Sacred Scriptures. The Christian needs it more than ever as today, assailed as we are by contrasting cultural stimuli. For the faith to respond, to avoid being suffocated, it



must be constantly nourished by the Word of God.

I express my esteem and appreciation for the valuable work you carry out in your ministry as teachers and as scholars of the Bible. In addition, this meeting gives me the opportunity to reaffirm, in continuity with the Magisterium of the Church, the importance of biblical exegesis for the People of God. Let us recall the affirmation of the Pontifical Biblical Commission: "Biblical exegesis", - I'm quoting - "fulfills, in the Church and in the world, an indispensable task. To attempt to bypass it when seeking to understand the Bible would be to create an illusion and display lack of respect for the inspired Scripture.... Addressing men and women, from the beginnings of the Old Testament onward, God made use of all the possibilities of human language, while at the same time accepting that his word be subject to the constraints inherent in the limitations of this language. Proper respect for inspired Scripture requires that every effort be made in order to gather its meaning correctly. Certainly, it is not possible that each Christian personally pursue every type of research which allows for a better understanding of the biblical text. This task is entrusted to exegetes, who have the re-

sponsibility in this matter to see that all profit from their labour" (cf. *L'interprétation de la Bible dans l'Eglise*, 15 April 1993, Conclusion).

Meeting with the members of the Pontifical Biblical Commission on the occasion of the presentation of the Document just quoted, Saint John Paul II recalled that "in order to respect the coherence of the Church's faith and of scriptural inspiration, Catholic exegesis must be careful not to limit itself to the human aspects of the biblical texts. First and foremost, it must help the Christian people to more clearly perceive the word of God in these texts so that they can receive them properly in order to live in full communion with God" (*ORE* 28 April 1993, p. 4). To achieve this, it is of course necessary that the exegete himself be able to perceive in the text the divine Word - and this is possible only if his spiritual life is fervent, rich in dialogue with the Lord; otherwise exegetical research is incomplete, losing sight of its main objective.

In the Conclusion of the Document, there is a very effective expression: "Catholic exegesis does not have the right to become lost, like a stream of water, in the sands of a hypercritical analysis".

Thus, in addition to academic competence, what is required of the Catholic exegete first and foremost is faith, received and shared with the body of believing people, which in its totality cannot err. I refer again to the words of St John Paul II: "to arrive at a completely valid interpretation of words inspired by the Holy Spirit, one must first be guided by the Holy Spirit and it is necessary to pray for that, to pray much, to ask in prayer for the interior light of the Spirit and docilely accept that light, to ask for the love that alone enables one to understand the language of God, who 'is love'" (cf. 1 Jn 4:8, 16) (*ORE* 28 April 1993, p. 4).

The model is the Virgin Mary, who, St Luke tells us, pondered in her heart the words and events concerning her Son Jesus (cf. Lk 2:19). May Our Lady teach us to welcome the Word of God fully, not only through intellectual research, but in our whole life.

Dear brothers and sisters, I thank you again, I bless you and your work, and I ask you to please pray for me.



President of the Italian Biblical Institute, Fr. Giovanni Canfora, reads his greeting to the Pope during the audience on 25 September 1964

Paul VI's call to biblicists after Vatican II

The man of today

The following is the central portion of an address delivered by Pope Paul VI on 25 September 1970 to participants in the 21st National Bible Week in Italy.

Our words reflect the Church's concern. The Church "listens religiously to God's Word" (*Dei Verbum*, n. 1) and is its authentic interpreter. It favours every effort aimed at "attaining ever deeper understanding of Holy Scripture, in order to be able to instruct its children with the divine words" (*ibid.* n. 23). It is concerned to see that doctrine shall be expounded, as the Council said in its Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops, "in harmony with the needs of the times in which we live, that is, in order that it may respond to the difficulties and problems by which men are assailed and troubled" (*Christus Dominus*, n. 13).

We cannot but have satisfaction in pointing to certain requirements which are emerging from the renewed interest in the hermeneutical process.

1) The conviction that interpretation has not fulfilled its task until it has demonstrated *how the meaning of Scripture may be referred to the present salvific moment*, that is, until it has brought out the application to the present circumstances of the Church and the world. Without taking anything away from the value of philological, archeological and historical interpretation of the text - always necessary - we have to lay emphasis on the continuity between exegesis and preaching. The Constitution on Divine Revelation expressed that continuity in these words: "Catholic exegetes and other students of sacred theology, working diligently together and using appropriate means, should devote their energies, under the watchful care of the Magisterium of the Church, to an exploration and exposition of the divine writings. This task should be done in such a way that as many ministers of the divine word as possible shall [be] able effectively to provide the People of God with the nourishment of the Holy Scriptures, thereby to enlighten their minds, strengthen their wills, and set men's hearts on fire with love of God" (*Dei Verbum*, n. 23). Let this be addressed particularly to you, who train future priests.

2) Again: in every interpretative process, and with greater reason when it is a matter of God's Word,

the person of the interpreter is not outside of the process itself, but is involved in it, brought into question, with all his being. God's word is "lively and powerful" (Heb. 4:12) and "able to build up and give an inheritance among all the sanctified" (Acts 20:32). If this is so, then, in order to get into serious contact with it and consider it for what it really is: God's word which works "in those that believe" (cf. Thess. 2:13), it is necessary to enter into the dialogue which it means to conduct in an authoritative fashion with every man. The divine aim of Scripture is to give that wisdom "which leads to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, that the man of God may be perfect, ready for all good works" (2 Tim 3:15-17).

3) Thirdly, we note the emphasis placed on the *need to seek a certain connaturality* of interests and problems with the argument of the text, in order to be able to open one's hearing to it. The same God who reveals himself in the Scriptures, the same Spirit who speaks through the mouths of the sacred writers, in the very same who moves our heart to seek him, and causes in us the grace to be ready and willing to listen. These Scriptures came to light in the Church's bosom. That same Church today still nourishes us for the life of the spirit, and by means of its Tradition transmits to us fundamental attitudes which find their first written motivation in Scripture.

It is particularly necessary to stress the need for true fidelity to the Word in the present context.

*Christ made himself the contemporary of some men and spoke their language
Fidelity to him demands that such contemporaneity shall go on*

This has been expressed by various students in varying ways and forms, often in opposition to one another, and it is fidelity which inspires all the Church's listening to the Word. Its final end is the person of the Lord who died and rose again, the giver of the Spirit, and the Father whom he manifested to us. Christ is the first "exegesis" of the Father; he is his "Word", the one who manifests him. All other words on God and Christ are based on that prime revelation of the Father.

The Word - *Verbum* - was mani-

Address to Bishops of the Democratic Republic of Congo

For a just and lasting peace

Encourage dialogue and support the disarmament process

With a call to "work tirelessly for the establishment of a just and lasting peace", Pope Francis addressed the Bishops of the Democratic Republic of Congo on Friday morning, 12 September, during their visit 'ad limina Apostolorum'. The following is a translation of the Pope's address, which was given in French.

Dear Brothers in the Episcopate,

It is with great joy that I address my fraternal greeting to Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya and each one of you, on the occasion of your visit *ad limina Apostolorum*. I thank Bishop Nicolas Djomo, President of your Episcopal Conference, who, expressing your sentiments of faithful communion, described some of the characteristics of the life of the Church in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Your pilgrimage to the Tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul, joined in your witness to Christ who died and rose even to the supreme sacrifice, tightens your bonds of communion with the Apostolic See, as well as among you and with Bishops the world over. For my part, while expressing my deep appreciation for your dedication and your zeal in proclaiming the Gospel, I would also like to greet and encourage the priests, consecrated men and women and other pastoral agents who work with you, as well as all the faithful of your dioceses.

With you I thank the Lord for his many gifts to the Church in your country. The Family of God, on the path to the Kingdom, is comprised of living communities whose members actively participate in the celebration of the liturgy and bear a courageous witness of charity. As beautifully expressed by the Psalmist, the Lord has given what is good and our land has yielded its fruit (cf. Ps 85[84]:13).

Faithfulness to the Gospel implies that the Bishop, with wisdom, guides and governs the flock entrusted to him. The Good Shepherd knows his sheep and his sheep know him (cf. Jn 10:14). The presence, the closeness and the steadfastness of the Bishop in his diocese are necessary to reassure the priests and candidates to the priesthood, in order that all the faithful may feel accompanied, followed and loved.

An outstanding feature of the Church in your country is that it is in a phase of expansion. It is so beautiful to observe that some Christian communities are growing! But for the Church, as you know, the essential is not the numbers but full obedience, without reservation, to God revealed in Jesus Christ. The quality of faith in Christ who died and rose, the intimate communion with Him, is the basis of the soundness of the Church. As a result, it is of vital importance to evangelize in depth. Faithfulness to the Gospel, to Tradition, and to the Magisterium are sure points of reference which guarantee the purity of the spring to

which you guide the People of God (cf. Encyclical Letter, *Lumen Fidei*, n. 36).

The Church in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where several dioceses have recently celebrated the first centenary of their evangelization, is a young Church. But she is also a Church of young people. Children and adolescents, in particular, need the strength of God to resist the multitude of temptations that result from the instability of their life, from the impossibility of pursuing their studies or of finding work. I am sensitive to their difficult situation, and I know that you share their suffering, their joys and their hopes. I especially think with horror of those children, those youth, obliged to enlist in the army and compelled to kill their fellow countrymen! I encourage you to deepen the pastoral apostolate to young people. By offering them all possible help, above all through the creation of places for human, spiritual and professional training, you can reveal to them their deep vocation which prepares them to meet the Lord.

The most effective means of overcoming violence, inequality and also ethnic divisions, is to offer an education which teaches critical thinking and encourages the development of mature values of the Gospel (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 64). Pastoral care should also be strengthened in universities, as well as in Catholic and State schools, by coordinating the work of education with the explicit pronouncement of the Gospel (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, nn. 132-134). Dear Brothers in the Episcopate, I invite you to be apostles of youth in your dioceses.

In the same spirit, facing the breakdown of the family, caused especially by war and poverty, it is essential to value and encourage all

the initiatives designed to stabilize the family, the wellspring of all fraternity, the foundation and the first pathway to peace (cf. *Message for the 47th World Day of Peace 2014*, n. 1).

Faithfulness to the Gospel also implies that the Church contributes to building the city. One of the most precious contributions the local Church can offer your country is helping the people rediscover the relevance of faith in daily life and the need to foster the common good. In the same way, the nation's leaders, illuminated by the pastors, with respect for their respective roles, can also receive support in order to integrate Christian teaching in their personal life and in the exercise of their functions in service to the State and to society. In this sense, the Magisterium of the Church, the Encyclical Letter, *Caritas in Veritate* in particular, the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Africae Munus*, as well as the recent Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, constitute invaluable aid.

Dear Brothers in the Episcopate, I exhort you to work tirelessly for the establishment of a just and lasting peace, promoting pastoral dialogue and reconciliation among the diverse sectors of society, supporting the disarmament process and effective collaboration with other religious confessions. Now that your country is about to engage in high-level political meetings important for its future, it is necessary that the Church offer her contribution while, at the same time, avoid substituting for the political institutions and temporal organizations which must retain their autonomy (cf. Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 76). In particular, pastors must be careful not to occupy a post reserved to the lay faithful, whose mission it is to witness to Christ and the Gospel in politics and in all the spheres



of their special competence (cf. Conciliar Decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, nn. 4, 7). It is therefore fundamental that the lay faithful be trained in this view, and that you never cease to support them, to guide them and to provide them criteria for discernment in order to enlighten them. In this sense, I have no doubt that you will continue to work to raise the awareness of public authorities in order to conclude the negotiations for a signed Agreement with the Holy See.

It would be preferable, in the spirit of solidarity and sharing, that closer collaboration be developed with all agents of pastoral care engaged in the various areas of the apostolate and in social care, especially in education, healthcare and charitable assistance. Many expect vigilance and concern from you in the defence of spiritual and civic values: you are called to offer direction and solutions for the promotion of a society founded on respect for the dignity of the human person. In this respect, attention to the poor and the many in need, such as the elderly, people who are sick or disabled, should be the object of pastoral care that is appropriate and continually reexamined. In fact, the Church is called to concern herself with the wellbeing of these people and to draw the attention of society and of the public authorities to their situation. I greet and I encourage the work of all missionaries, priests, men and women religious and other pastoral agents who expend themselves serving life's wounded, the victims of violence, especially in the remotest and most isolated areas of the country. In mentioning this theme, I address a special thought to the internal refugees and to the many who come from neighbouring countries.

Dear Brothers in the Episcopate, lastly, I would like to reaffirm to all of you my affection and my encouragement. May you persevere in your generous commitment to the service of the Gospel! May you be men of hope for your people! May the bright testimony of Blessed Marie-Clémentine Anuarite Nengapeta and of Blessed Isidore Bakanja never cease to inspire you! I entrust you to the motherly intercession of the Virgin Mary, Queen of the Apostles, I wholeheartedly impart to you the Apostolic Blessing, which I willingly extend to all of your coworkers, priests, religious and lay people, and to each of your dioceses.

The man of today

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

fested historically in the flesh, and consequently in the assumption of the human language. Its words, those of the first witnesses and servants of the word, whom the Spirit moved to give authentic expression to the mystery of his appearance among men, will therefore always remain the fundamental norm for everything that will be said about Christ down to the end of time. The incarnation of the Word, its lowering of itself by assuming a temporal form in a certain historical period and within a certain culture, is a fact which has repercussions for all subsequent cultures, and obliges them to turn continually and loyally to that privileged moment and let it work in them as the indispensable formative principle. But fidelity to the incarnate Word demands, by virtue

of the dynamics of the Incarnation, that the message shall be made present whole and entire not just to man in general but to man of today, to whom the message is announced now. Christ made himself the contemporary of some men and spoke their language. Fidelity to him demands that such contemporaneity shall go on. This is the Church's whole task, with its Tradition, the Magisterium and preaching.

Exegetes ought to make a contribution to this task. Fidelity to modern man is demanding and difficult, but it is necessary, if we wish to be thoroughly faithful to the message. That fidelity is not servility or mimicry, but courageous preaching of the Cross and the Resurrection, with trusting certainty that the message has an echo in the heart of modern man also.

Morning Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae

Thursday, 11 September

Foolish Christians

Being Christian means being "a bit foolish", at least according to worldly logic. And this is by no means self-reflexive, since one cannot manage to do anything alone, and it is actually not to frighten us but to rescue us that the grace of God comes. During morning Mass, Pope Francis proposed these basic features of Christian life which are centred on the newness of the Gospel and which overturn worldly criteria.

Advising that Chapter Six of the Gospel according to St Luke – the day's liturgy focused on verses 27-38 in particular – be read and reread, even four times if necessary, the Pontiff recalled that Jesus gave us "the law of love: to love God and to love one another as brothers". And, the Pope added, the Lord did not fail to explain it "a bit further, with the Beatitudes" which nicely summarize "the Christian approach".

In the day's Gospel passage, however, Jesus goes a step further, explaining in greater detail "to those who surround Him to hear Him". Let us look, said Pope Francis, first of all at the "verbs Jesus uses: love; do good; bless; pray; offer; do not refuse; give". The Pope continued that, with these words, "Jesus shows us the path that we must take, a path of generosity". He asks us first and foremost to "love". And we ask, "whom must I love?". He answers us, "your enemies". And, with surprise, we ask for confirmation: "our actual enemies?". "Yes", the Lord tells us, actually "your enemies!".

But the Lord also asks us to "do good". And if we do not ask him, "to whom?", He tells us straight away, "to those who hate us". And this time too, we ask the Lord for confirmation: "But must I do good to those who hate me?". And the Lord's reply is again, "yes".

Then he even asks us to "bless those who curse us". And to "pray" not only "for my mama, for my dad, my children, my family", but "for those who abuse us". And "not to refuse anyone who begs from you". The "newness of the Gospel", the Pope explained, lies in the "giving of oneself, giving the heart, to those who actually dislike us, who harm us, to our enemies". The passage from Luke reads: "And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you?". It would merely be an "exchange: you love me, I love you". But Jesus reminds us that "even sinners" – and by sinners he means pagans – "love those who love them". This is why, Francis pointed out, "there is no credit".

The passage continues: "And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same". Again, the Pope said, it is simply "an exchange: I do good to you, you do good to me!". And yet the Gospel adds: "And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you?".

The Pontiff's clear-cut response: no credit, because "it's a bargain". St Luke then indicates, "even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again".

All of Jesus' reasoning, Pope Francis affirmed, leads to a firm conclusion: "Love your enemies instead. Do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Without interest. And your reward will be great". And thus "you will be sons of the Most High".

It is therefore evident, the Pope continued, that "the Gospel is a new message that is difficult to carry forward". In a word, it means "go behind Jesus". Follow him. Imitate him. Jesus does not answer his Father by saying, "I shall go and say a few words, I shall make a nice speech, I shall point the way and then come back". No, Jesus' response to the Father is: "I shall do your will". And indeed, in the Mount of Olives he says to the Father: "Thy will be done". And thus "he gives his life, not for his friends" but "for his enemies!".

The Christian way is not easy, the Pope recognized, but "this is it". Therefore, to those who say, "I don't feel like doing this", the response is "if you don't feel like it, that's your problem, but this is the Christian way. This is the path that Jesus teaches us", the Pontiff said. This is the reason to "take the path of Jesus, which is mercy: be merciful as your Father is merciful". Because "only with a merciful heart can we do all that the Lord advises us, until the end". And thus it is obvious that "the Christian life is not a self-reflexive life" but "it comes outside of itself to give to others: it is a gift, it is love, and love does not turn back on itself, it is not selfish: it gives itself!".

The passage of St Luke concludes with the invitation not to judge and to be merciful. However, the Pontiff said, "it often seems that we have been appointed judges of others: gossiping, criticizing, we judge everyone". But Jesus tells us: "Judge not and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven". And so, "we say it every day in the Our Father: forgive us as we forgive". In fact "if I do not first forgive, how can I ask the Father to forgive me?".

There is also, the Pope said, another really beautiful image in the Gospel reading: "Give and it will be given to you". And here "Jesus' heart can be seen to grow and he makes this promise which is perhaps an image of heaven". The Christian life, as Jesus presents it, seems truly to be "folly", Francis indicated. St Paul himself speaks of "the folly of the cross of Christ, which is not part of the wisdom of the world". For this reason "to be a Christian is to become a bit foolish, in a certain sense". And "to renounce that worldly shrewdness in order to do all that Jesus tells us to do. And, if we make an accounting, if we balance things out, it seems to weigh against us". But "the path of Jesus" is "magnanimity, generosity, the giving of oneself without measure". He "came into the world" to save and

he gave himself, "he forgave, he spoke ill of no one, he did not judge".

Of course, the Pontiff recognized, "being Christian isn't easy" and we cannot "become Christian" with our own strength; we need "the grace of God". Therefore, there is a prayer, said the Pope, which should be said every day: "Lord, grant me the grace to become a good Christian, because I cannot do it" alone.

Francis concluded the meditation by acknowledging that "a first reading" of Chapter Six of Luke's Gospel "is unnerving". But, he suggested, "if we take the Gospel and we give it a second, a third, a fourth reading", we can then ask "the Lord for the grace to understand what it is to be Christian". And "also for the grace that He make Christians of us. Because we cannot do it alone".

Friday, 12 September

Mending holes in the fabric of the Church

Christians risk "disqualification", as St Paul admonishes, if they insist on performing brotherly correction without charity, truth and humility, making room for hypocrisy and gossip. In truth this service to others requires one, first of all, to recognize oneself as a sinner and not to sit in judgment, as the Pope recalled during Mass at Santa Marta.

Francis pointed out straight away that "in recent days the liturgy has led us to meditate on many Christian attitudes: to give, to be generous, to serve others, to forgive, to be merciful". These "are approaches", he explained, "which help the Church to grow". But today especially, "the Lord makes us consider one of these approaches, which he has already spoken of, and that is brotherly correction". The bottom line is: "When a brother, a sister from the community makes a mistake, how does one correct them?"

Always through the liturgy, the Pope continued, "the Lord has given us advice on how to correct" others. But "today he resumes and says: one must correct him or her, but as a person who sees and not as one who is blind". Pope Francis referred to the Gospel according to Luke (6:39-42): "Can a blind man lead a blind man?"

Thus to correct it is necessary to see clearly. And to follow several rules of behaviour that the Lord himself proposed. "First of all, the advice he gives to correct a brother, we heard the other day", the Pope recalled. "We heard it the other day; it is to take aside your brother who made the error and speak to him", telling him, "brother, in this regard, I believe you did not do right!".

And "to take him aside", indeed, means "to correct him with charity". It would be like "performing surgery without anaesthesia", resulting in a patient's painful death. And "charity is like anaesthesia which helps him to receive the care and to accept the correction". Here then is the first step toward a brother: "take him

aside, gently, lovingly, and speak to him".

The Pope then, turning also to the many religious present at the celebration at Santa Marta, advised that one always speak "with charity", without wounding, "in our communities, parishes, institutions, religious communities, when one must say something to a sister, to a brother".

Along with charity, it is necessary to "tell the truth" and never "say something that isn't true". In fact, Pope Francis pointed out, "many times in our communities things are said to another person that aren't true: they are libellous". Or, "if they are true" however, they "harm the reputation of that person".

In this respect, according to the Pope, the following may be a way to approach a brother: "I am telling you this, to you, what you have done. It is true. It isn't a rumour that I heard". Because "rumours wound, they are insults to a person's reputation, they are strikes at a person's heart". And so "the truth" is always needed, even if at times "it isn't good to hear it". In every case if the truth "is told with charity and with love, it is easier to accept". This is why it is necessary to speak "the truth with charity: this is how one must speak to others about faults".

Jesus speaks of the third rule, humility, in the passage of Luke's Gospel: correct others "without hypocrisy, that is, with humility". It is good, the Bishop of Rome advised, to point out to oneself "if you must correct a tiny flaw there, consider that you have so many" that are greater. The Lord says this effectively: first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck from the eye of another. Only in this way "will you not be blind" and "will you see clearly" to truly help your brother. Thus "humility" is important in order to recognize that "I am a greater sinner than him, a greater sinner than her". Afterwards "I must help him and her to correct this" flaw.

"If I do not perform brotherly correction with charity, do not perform it in truth and do not perform it with humility, I become blind", the Pope admonished. And if I do not see, it is asked, how do I "heal another blind person".

In substance, "fraternal correction is an act to heal the body of the Church". Francis described it with a compelling image: it is like mending "a hole in the fabric of the Church". However, one must proceed "with much sensitivity, like mothers and grandmothers when they mend", and this is the very manner with which "one must perform brotherly correction".

On the other hand, Francis indicated, "if you are not capable of performing fraternal reproof with love, with charity, in truth and with humility, you will offend, damage that person's heart: you will create an extra tale that wounds and you will become a blind hypocrite, as Jesus says". Indeed, the day's reading from the Gospel of Luke reads: "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your eye". And while it is neces-



sary to recognize oneself as being “a greater sinner than the other”, as brothers, however, we are called to “help to correct him”.

The Pontiff did not fail to offer practical advice. There is, he said, “a sign which perhaps can help us: when one sees something wrong and feels that he should correct it” but perceives “a certain pleasure in doing so”, then it is time to “pay attention, because that is not the Lord’s way”. Indeed, “in the Lord there is always the cross, the difficulty of doing something good”. And love and gentleness always come from the Lord.

This whole line of reasoning on fraternal correction, the Pope continued, demands that we not judge. Even if “we Christians are tempted to act as scholars”, almost as if to “move outside the game of sin and of grace, as if we were angels”.

This is a temptation that St Paul also speaks of in his First Letter to the Corinthians (9:16-19, 22-27): “lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified”. The Apostle therefore reminds us, “a Christian who, in community, doesn’t do things, even brotherly correction, in charity, in truth and with humility, is disqualified”. Because “he has not managed to become a mature Christian”.

Francis concluded by praying that the Lord “help us in this brotherly service, so beautiful and so agonizing, of helping brothers and sisters to be better”, pushing ourselves “to always do so with charity, in truth and with humility”.

Monday, 15 September

Three Women

Two women and mothers – Mary and the Church – bring Christ to the first woman, who resembles the third but is “little”: our soul. The Pope reaffirmed, with these wholly female images, that without the motherhood of Mary and the Church we would not have Christ. “We are not orphans”, he recalled during the Mass celebrated in the chapel at Santa Marta.

Francis highlighted right away that “the Church, in the liturgy, leads us twice, for two days, one after the other, to Calvary”: in fact, “yesterday she made us contemplate the Cross of Jesus, and today his Mother at the Cross” (Jn 19:25-27).

In particular, “yesterday she had us speak a word: glorious”. A word which refers to the “Cross of the Lord, because it brings life, it brings us glory”. But “today the strongest word of the liturgy is: Mother”. The Cross is glorious; the Mother humble, gentle”, the Mother whom the liturgy celebrates today as Our Lady of Sorrows.

Meditating on the Mother leads us directly to Jesus as son. Referring to the day’s Reading (Heb 5:7-9), the Pontiff pointed out that “in the passage from the Letter to the Hebrews, Paul emphasizes three strong words, speaking of Jesus the Son: he learned, he obeyed and he suffered”. Jesus, in essence “learned obedience and suffered”. Thus, “it is the opposite of what had befallen our father Adam, who had not learned what the Lord commanded, who had neither suffered nor obeyed”. Moreover, the Pope stated, “this passage from the Letter to the Hebrews reminds us of another passage from the Letter to the Philippians: “although he was in the form of God, he did not consider it an inalienable right; he renounced it, he humbled himself and took the form of a servant. This”, Pope Francis continued, “is the glory of the Cross of Jesus” who “came to the world to learn to be a man and, being man, to walk with men. He came to the world in obedience and he obeyed”. But “this obedience was learned through suffering”.

“Adam left Paradise with a promise”, he proceeded, “which went on throughout many centuries. Today, with this obedience, with this self-denial, this humbling of Jesus, that promise has become hope”. And “the People of God journey with confident hope”.

Mary too, “the Mother, the New Eve, as Paul himself called her, follows this path of her son: she learned, she suffered and she obeyed”. She “became ‘Mother’. We could say that she is the ‘anointed Mother’, the Pontiff affirmed, and the same is true for the Church.

Thus, this is “our hope: we are not orphans, we have mothers”: first of all Mary. And then the Church, who is Mother “when she follows the same path of Jesus and Mary: the path of obedience, the path of suffering, and when her approach is to constantly learn the way of the Lord”.

“These two women – Mary and the Church – carry on the hope which is Christ, they give us Christ,

they generate Christ in us”, the Bishop of Rome emphasized. Thus “without Mary, Jesus Christ would not have been; without the Church, we cannot go forward”. They are “two women and two mothers”.

“Mary”, Francis explained, “remained steadfast at the Cross, she was bonded with the son because she had accepted him and she knew, more or less, that a sword awaited her: Simon had told her so”. Mary is “the steadfast Mother”, he continued, “who gives us certainty on this path of learning, of suffering and of obedience”. And Mother Church is also “steadfast when she adores Jesus Christ and she guides us, teaches us, shelters us, helps us on this path of obedience, of suffering, of learning this wisdom of God”.

Moreover, the Pontiff again affirmed, “our soul also takes part in this, when it opens itself to Mary and to the Church: according to monk and abbot, Isaac of Stella, our soul is also female and likewise resembles Mary and the Church”. Thus “today, looking at the Cross, this woman – steadfastly following her son, suffering in order to learn obedience – we see the Church and we see our Mother”. But “we also see our little soul”, which will never be lost if it too continues to be a woman close to those two great women who accompany us in life: Mary and the Church”.

Francis concluded by recalling that “as our fathers left Paradise with a promise, today we are able to go forward with hope: the hope we are given by Mary, steadfast at the Cross, and our hierarchical Holy Mother Church”.

Tuesday, 16 September

When God visits

With his witness, a Christian must show others the same attitudes with which God visits his people: closeness, compassion, the capacity to restore hope. Pope Francis affirmed this during Mass at Santa Marta.

“God has visited his people” is an expression which is “repeated in the Scripture”, the Pontiff noted. He immediately referred to the narrative in the Gospel of Luke, which tells of the resurrection of the widow’s son in Nain (7:11-17). They are words, he stated, which have “special meaning”, different from that of such expressions as “God has spoken to his people” or “God has given the Commandments to his people” or even “God has sent a prophet to his people”.

In the statement “God has visited his people”, the Pope said, “there is something extra, something new”. This phrase can be found in the Scripture; it is written, for example, “God visited [Naomi] in her old age and made her a grandmother”. And likewise, the Pontiff added, Scripture “tells of Elizabeth, Mary’s cousin: God visited her and made her a mother”.

So “when God visits his people, it means that he is present in a special way”. And, Francis highlighted, recalling the event in Nain, “in this Gospel passage, where it describes the resurrection of the young man, the son of the widowed mother, the

people speak these words: ‘God has visited us’”.

Why use this exact expression? Is it only because Jesus “performed a miracle?”, the Pontiff asked. In reality, there is “more”. In fact the key issue is to understand “how God visits”.

The Bishop of Rome indicated that God visits “first of all with his presence, with his closeness”. In the passage from the day’s liturgy “it is written that Jesus went to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him”. In essence, “he was close to the people: a close God who is able to understand the heart of the people, the heart of his people”. Then, Luke recounts, “he sees that procession and he draws near”. Thus “God visits his people”, he is “in the midst of his people he draws near”. Hence, “closeness is God’s way”.

Additionally, the Pope observed, “there is an expression repeated many times in the Bible: ‘The Lord was moved by great compassion’. And it is that “same compassion which, the Gospel says, he had when he saw so many people like sheep without a shepherd”. So it is a fact that “when God visits his people he is close to them, he draws near and feels compassion: he is moved”. He is “deeply moved, as he was in front of Lazarus’ tomb”. He is moved like the father in the parable, when he sees the prodigal son return home.

Closeness and compassion: this is how the Lord visits his people”, Francis remarked. And “when we want to proclaim the Gospel, to spread the Word of Jesus, this is the way”. However, “the other way is that of the teachers, the preachers of that time: the doctors of the law, the scribes, the Pharisees”. Characters “far removed from the people”, who “spoke well, taught the law well”. But they were also “distant”. And their way “was not a visit from the Lord: it was something else”. Such that “the people did not feel this as a grace, because it lacked closeness, it lacked compassion and suffering with the people”.

Adding to “closeness” and “compassion”, the Pope proposed “another word which is characteristic of the Lord’s visit to his people”. Luke writes: “And the dead man sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother”. Thus “when God visits his people, he restores hope to the people. Always!”.

In this regard, Francis pointed out that “one can preach the Word of God brilliantly” and “there have been many great preachers: but if these preachers do not manage to sow hope, their preaching is useless. It is in vain”.

This very image proposed by the Gospel of Luke, the Pope said, can bring a full understanding to “what is meant by God’s visit to his people”. We understand “by seeing Jesus in the midst of that great crowd; by seeing Jesus draw close to that funeral procession and the crying mother, and he tells her ‘Do not weep’, and perhaps he caresses her; by seeing Jesus give the mother back her son, alive”. In this way, the Pontiff concluded, we can “ask for the grace that our Christian witness may be the bearer of God’s visit to his people, that is, of closeness which sows hope”.

The great urgency of the mission 'ad gentes' today urges the Church to rediscover the joy of the announcement so that "the Church may become a welcoming home, a mother for all peoples". Pope Francis wrote this in his Message for World Mission Sunday 2014 that will be celebrated on 19 October. The following is the English text.



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today vast numbers of people still do not know Jesus Christ. For this reason, the mission *ad gentes* continues to be most urgent. All the members of the Church are called to participate in this mission, for the Church is missionary by her very nature: she was born "to go forth". World Mission Day is a privileged moment when the faithful of various continents engage in prayer and concrete gestures of solidarity in support of the young Churches in mission lands. It is a celebration of grace and joy. A celebration of grace, because the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, offers wisdom and strength to those who are obedient to his action. A celebration of joy, because Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, sent to evangelize the world, supports and accompanies our missionary efforts. This joy of Jesus and missionary disciples leads me to propose a biblical icon, which we find in the Gospel of Luke (cf. 10:21-23).

1. The Evangelist tells us that the Lord sent the 72 disciples two by two into cities and villages to proclaim that the Kingdom of God was near, and to prepare people to meet Jesus. After carrying out this mission of preaching, the disciples returned full of joy; joy is a dominant theme of this first and unforgettable missionary experience. Yet the divine Master told them: "Do not rejoice because the demons are subject to you; but rejoice because your names are written in heaven. At that very moment Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said: 'I give you praise, Father...' And, turning to the disciples in private he said, 'Blessed are the eyes that see what you see'" (Lk 10:20-21, 23).

Luke presents three scenes. Jesus speaks first to his disciples, then to the Father, and then again to the disciples. Jesus wanted to let the disciples share his joy, different and greater than anything they had previously experienced.

2. The disciples were filled with joy, excited about their power to set people free from demons. But Jesus cautioned them to rejoice not so much for the power they had received, but for the love they had received, "because your names are written in heaven" (Lk 10:20). The disciples were given an experience of God's love, but also the possibility of sharing that love. And this exper-

"The seventy-two disciples" (detail from an Ethiopian miniature, XI-XVI century)



Message for World Mission Sunday

A house and a mother for all

ience is a cause for gratitude and joy in the heart of Jesus. Luke saw this jubilation in a perspective of the trinitarian communion: "Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit", turning to the Father and praising him. This moment of deep joy springs from Jesus' immense filial love for his Father, Lord of heaven and earth, who hid these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to the childlike (cf. Lk 10:21). God has both hidden and revealed, and in this prayer of praise it is his revealing which stands out. What is it that God has revealed and hidden? The mysteries of his Kingdom, the manifestation of divine lordship in Jesus and the victory over Satan.

God has hidden this from those who are all too full of themselves and who claim to know everything already. They are blinded by their presumptuousness and they leave no room for God. One can easily think of some of Jesus' contemporaries whom he repeatedly admonished, but the danger is one that always exists and concerns us too. The "little ones", for their part, are the humble, the simple, the poor, the marginalized, those without voice, those weary and burdened, whom Jesus pronounced "blessed". We readily think of Mary, Joseph, the fishermen of Galilee and the disciples whom Jesus called as he went preaching.

3. "Yes, Father, for such has been your gracious will" (Lk 10:21). These words of Jesus must be understood as referring to his inner exultation. The word "gracious" describes the Father's saving and benevolent plan for humanity. It was this divine graciousness that made Jesus rejoice, for the Father willed to love people with the same love that he has for his Son. Luke also alludes to the similar exultation of Mary: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit exults in God my Savior" (Lk 1:47). This is the Good News that leads to salvation. Mary,

bearing in her womb Jesus, the evangelizer par excellence, met Elizabeth and rejoiced in the Holy Spirit as she sang her *Magnificat*. Jesus, seeing the success of his disciples' mission and their resulting joy, rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and addressed his Father in prayer. In both cases, it is joy for the working of salvation, for the love with which the Father loves his Son comes down to us, and through the Holy Spirit fills us and grants us a share in the trinitarian life.

The Father is the source of joy. The Son is its manifestation, and the Holy Spirit its giver. Immediately after praising the Father, so the evangelist Matthew tells us, Jesus says: "Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy and my burden light" (Mt 11:28-30). "The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 1).

The Virgin Mary had a unique experience of this encounter with Jesus, and thus became "*causa nostrae laetitiae*". The disciples, for their part, received the call to follow Jesus and to be sent by him to preach the Gospel (cf. Mk 3:14), and so they were filled with joy. Why shouldn't we too enter this flood of joy?

4. "The great danger in today's world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 2). Humanity greatly needs to lay hold of the salvation brought by Christ. His disciples are those who allow themselves to be seized ever more by

the love of Jesus and marked by the fire of passion for the Kingdom of God and the proclamation of the joy of the Gospel. All the Lord's disciples are called to nurture the joy of evangelization. The Bishops, as those primarily responsible for this proclamation, have the task of promoting the unity of the local Church in her missionary commitment. They are called to acknowledge that the joy of communicating Jesus Christ is expressed in a concern to proclaim him in the most distant places, as well as in a constant outreach to the peripheries of their own territory, where great numbers of the poor are waiting for this message.

Many parts of the world are experiencing a dearth of vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life. Often this is due to the absence of contagious apostolic fervour in communities which lack enthusiasm and thus fail to attract. The joy of the Gospel is born of the encounter with Christ and from sharing with the poor. For this reason I encourage parish communities, associations and groups to live an intense fraternal life, grounded in love for Jesus and concern for the needs of the most disadvantaged. Wherever there is joy, enthusiasm and a desire to bring Christ to others, genuine vocations arise. Among these vocations, we should not overlook lay vocations to mission. There has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the lay faithful in the Church, as well as a recognition that they are called to take an increasingly important role in the spread of the Gospel. Consequently they need to be given a suitable training for the sake of an effective apostolic activity.

5. "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7). World Mission Day is also an occasion to rekindle the desire and the moral obligation to take joyful part in the mission *ad gentes*. A monetary contribution on the part of individuals is the sign of a self-offering, first to the Lord and then to others; in this way a material offering can become a means for the evangelization of humanity built on love.

Dear brothers and sisters, on this World Mission Day my thoughts turn to all the local Churches. Let us not be robbed of the joy of evangelization! I invite you to immerse yourself in the joy of the Gospel and nurture a love that can light up your vocation and your mission. I urge each of you to recall, as if you were making an interior pilgrimage, that "first love" with which the Lord Jesus Christ warmed your heart, not for the sake of nostalgia but in order to persevere in joy. The Lord's disciples persevere in joy when they sense his presence, do his will and share with others their faith, hope and evangelical charity.

Let us pray through the intercession of Mary, the model of humble and joyful evangelization, that the Church may become a welcoming home, a mother for all peoples and the source of rebirth for our world.

From the Vatican, 8 June 2014, the Solemnity of Pentecost

Francis