

# L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH

*Unicuique suum Non praevalent*

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Vatican City

Friday, 16 October 2015

Bishops from around the world discuss the vocation of the family

## The heart of the Synod

Pope Francis asks forgiveness for scandals that have occurred recently in Rome and in the Vatican

Thus far at the meetings of the Synod of Bishops, two of the three parts of the *Instrumentum Laboris* have been discussed and the language groups have presented their reports on both parts. The first section was dedicated to "Considering the challenges of the family" and the second: "The discernment of the family vocation". In fact at the most recent session for the presentation of the reports of the *circuli minores*, on Wednesday morning, 14 October, several of the Synod Fathers called the second part of the working document "the heart of the Synod", as it means to illustrate what the Church says regarding the reality of the Christian family, its vocation and mission. The 13 relators unanimously requested more biblical and magisterial references, as well as better organization and cohesion of the second part of the *Instrumentum laboris*, in order to guarantee the clarity and incisiveness necessary for the text.

During the presentations there were 264 Synod Fathers in the Hall, however Pope Francis was not present as he was engaged with the General Audience in St Peter's Square. During his catechesis, the Pontiff discussed the promises that are made to children, "important promises, decisive for their expectations regarding life, for their trust in regard to human beings, for their capacity to perceive the Name of

God as a blessing". To them, "we promise love", he said, "love which is expressed in welcome, care, closeness, attention, trust and hope, but the real promise is love. This is the best way to welcome a human being who comes into the world, and we all learn this, even before being conscious of it".

In this regard, "on behalf of the Church", the Holy Father asked forgiveness "for the scandals that have happened in recent times both in Rome and in the Vatican". Citing the words of Jesus: "Woe to the world, for scandals", Pope Francis added: "Jesus is realistic and says: 'It is inevitable that scandals arise, but woe to the man who causes scandal to occur'".

Discussion on the third part of the *Instrumentum laboris* ("The mission of the family today") began on Wednesday afternoon during the ninth general congregation and will continue in other congregations to follow.

For the reports of the *circuli minores*, see the Vatican website: ([www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)).



FOR SYNOD COVERAGE SEE PAGES 4-7

The Pontiff expresses his sorrow for Turkey at the Angelus

## A barbaric act



Women cry during victims' funerals after the bombing in Ankara (AFP)

"The news of the terrible massacre in Ankara, Turkey" deeply saddened Pope Francis, who at the Angelus on Sunday, 11 October, assured "the beloved country" of his prayers, asking "the Lord to welcome the souls of the dead and to comfort the suffering and the families".

Recalling the attack which had occurred the day before, the Pontiff expressed his "sorrow for the many dead; sorrow for the wounded; sorrow because the attackers struck defenseless people who were demonstrating for peace". The Pope invited the faith-

ful present in St Peter's Square to pray silently.

The Holy Father had previously sent a telegram – by way of Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin – to the country's President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. In it, he expressed his sadness and solidarity with Turkey. Francis – the message reads – "deplores this barbaric act, he asks you to convey his spiritual closeness to all the families affected during this time of grief, and to the security and emergency personnel working to assist the wounded".

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Cardinal Tagle at the United Nations on *Laudato Si'*

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## God loves children



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## Seven works of mercy



Pope Francis' message for the 31st World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland, on the theme: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy".

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# VATICAN BULLETIN

## AUDIENCES

Sunday, 11 October

Archbishop Alberto Ortega Martín, titular Archbishop of Midila, Apostolic Nuncio in Jordan and in Iraq, with his relatives

## CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Paolo Urso of Ragusa, Italy. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (7 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Carmelo Cuttitta as Bishop of Ragusa, Italy. Until now he has been titular Bishop of Novi, Auxiliary and Vicar General of Palermo, Italy (7 Oct.).

Bishop Cuttitta, 53, was born in Godrano, Italy. He was ordained a priest on 10 January 1987. He was ordained a bishop on 7 July 2007, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Novi and Auxiliary of Palermo.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Michel Hoàng Đức Oanh of Kontum, Vietnam. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (7 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Luy Gonzaga Nguyễn Hùng Vĩ from the clergy of Phú'ông Nghĩa, Kontum, as Bishop of Kontum, Vietnam. Until now he has served in parish ministry (7 Oct.).

Bishop-elect Nguyễn Hùng Vĩ, 63, was born in Hanoi. He holds a licence in Liturgy. He was ordained a priest on 7 April 1990. He has served as: parish vicar; director of the Minor Seminary of Kontum in Hochiminh City; secretary of the said episcopal office.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Peter Huỳnh Văn Hai as Bishop of Vinh

Long, Vietnam. Until now he has been vice-rector and teacher of philosophy at the Major Seminary of Cần Thơ (7 Oct.).

Bishop-elect Huỳnh Văn Hai, 61, was born in Bến Tre, Vietnam. He holds a Ph.D in philosophy. He was ordained a priest on 31 August 1994. He has served as: director of vocations for the Diocese of Vinh Long; teacher of philosophy at the Major Seminaries of Cần Thơ and Hochiminh City; vice-rector of the Major Seminary of Cần Thơ.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Giuseppe Cavallotto of Cuneo and of Fossano, Italy. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (9 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Msgr Piero Delbosco from the clergy of Turin as Bishop of Cuneo and of Fossano, Italy. Until now he has been parish priest in Poirino (9 Oct.).

Bishop-elect Delbosco, 60, was born in Poirino, Italy. He holds a degree in theology. He was ordained a priest on 15 November 1980. He has served in parish ministry and as: episcopal vicar for the Western Episcopal district of Turin; Provicar General and moderator of the Archiepiscopal Curia of Turin; delegate for the permanent diaconate and for the preparation to the diaconate; member of the presbyteral council; and member of the national presbyteral council.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Thomas Savundaranayagam Emmanuel of Jaffna, Sri Lanka. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (13 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Msgr Justin Bernard Gnanapragasam as Bishop of Jaffna, Sri Lanka. Until now he has been Vicar General of the diocese (13 Oct.).

Bishop-elect Gnanapragasam, 67, was born in Karampon, Kayts, Sri Lanka. He completed his studies in philosophy and theology. He was ordained a priest on 24 April 1974. He has served in parish ministry and as: director of a group of public schools; vice-rector and rector of St Henry's College, dean of the Deaconate of Ilavalai, for nine parishes; visiting professor at the Major Seminary of Jaffna; rector of St Patrick's College in Jaffna; examiner of doctoral theses at the University of Jaffna; director of the Catholic printing press in Jaffna.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Arthur J. Colgan, CSC, as titular Bishop of Ampora and Auxiliary of the Diocese of Chosica, Peru. Until now he has been Vicar General of the diocese (13 Oct.).

Bishop-elect Colgan, 68, was born in Dorchester, USA. He professed his solemn vows for the Congregation of Holy Cross on 11 August 1971. He was ordained a priest on 27 October 1973. He has served in parish min-

istry and as: superior of the Congregation of Holy Cross in Peru; executive secretary and theological assessor of the Episcopal Commission for Social Action of the Bishops' Conference of Peru; episcopal vicar of the Archdiocese of Lima; provincial superior of the Eastern Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross in Bridgeport, USA.

## CARDINALS TAKE POSSESSION

On 11 October, four Cardinals took possession of their Titles:

– Cardinal Francis Xavier Kriegensak Kovithavanij, Archbishop of Bangkok, Thailand, of the Title of Santa Maria Addolorata;

– Cardinal Alberto Suárez Inda, Archbishop of Morelia, Mexico, of the Title of San Policarpo;

– Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, SDB, Archbishop of Yangon, Myanmar, of the Title of Sant'Ireneo a Centocelle;

– Cardinal Ricardo Blázquez Pérez, Archbishop of Valladolid, Spain, of the Title of Santa Maria in Vallicella.

## NECROLOGY

Bishop Ferdinand Joseph Fonseca, titular Bishop of Aquae in Mauretania, Auxiliary Bishop emeritus of Bombay, India, at age 89 (2 Oct.).

## Initiative of the Office of Papal Charities

### A shelter for Rome's homeless

A new homeless shelter has opened on Via dei Penitenzieri, just outside of Santo Spirito Hospital in Rome. On Thursday, 7 October, the shelter officially opened with a blessing and a Mass celebrated by Papal Almoner, Archbishop Konrad Krajewski. The following week, on 15 October, after attending the Synod, Pope Francis visited the shelter and greeted each guest individually.

The large space, located in an extra-territorial area and which had been until recently a travel agency, was a gift to Pope Francis from the Society of Jesus' Generalate House, situated around the corner. The shelter is called: "Dono di misericordia." [the gift of mercy]. "Gift", because it is a true gift from the religious community and "of mercy" because mercy is another name for love, which is expressed through practical and generous action for one's neighbour.

The shelter holds up to 34 men, and like other shelters on Via Rattazzi, near Termini Station, and at

San Gregorio al Celio, it will be run by the Missionaries of Charity, founded by Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

Special rules help to manage good reception at the shelter. All guests must meet with the sisters before their acceptance and registration (which takes place at the "Dono di Maria", a shelter for homeless women, located in the Vatican) and they may stay for a maximum of 30 nights. A strict schedule regulates guests' entry, as well as the time they go to bed and wake up. There is time for personal hygiene and for making their bed and cleaning up their belongings. In addition the guests all participate in the general housekeeping. Those staying the night may eat dinner at the "Dono di Maria" soup kitchen, before returning to the shelter for the night.



Breakfast is provided at the shelter on Via dei Penitenzieri and the guests will have access to the showers located in the colonnade at St Peter's.

The construction of the building was financed by the Office of Papal Charities, through monies collected from the papal blessings sold by the office and through generous private donations. Together with Papal Charities, the Sisters of Mother Teresa will economically support the shelter.

## ERRATA CORRIGE

In last week's newspaper (9 October, n. 41) the third to last question of the interview with the Dean of the Roman Rota on page 4 should read:

*Is this legislation retroactive?*

As noted, the new judicial norms will enter into force on 8 December and will not have retroactive effect. However, for those cases already underway and whose sentences regarding nullity are given and noticed after 8 December, the effects of the reform will be applied and the affirmative sentences will be definitive.

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At the General Audience Francis recommends welcome and love for the little ones

## There is a God who loves children

And asks forgiveness for scandals that have occurred recently in Rome and in the Vatican

*Pope Francis asked "forgiveness for the scandals that have happened in recent times both in Rome and in the Vatican". The request was made on Wednesday, 14 October, during the General Audience held in St Peter's Square. The catechesis was also broadcast in the Paul VI Hall, where 700 sick people were gathered. The Pontiff dedicated the catechesis to children and recalled especially that when they do not find welcome and love, they are wounded by "an unbearable scandal". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's catechesis, which was delivered in Italian.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning!

Today since the weather was rather uncertain and rain was forecast, this Audience is being held simultaneously in two places: here in the Square and in the Paul VI Hall where 700 sick people are watching on the jumbotron. Let us all join and greet them with a round of applause.

The word of Jesus is powerful today: "Woe to the world, for scandals". Jesus is realistic and says: "It is inevitable that scandals arise, but woe to the man who causes scandal to occur". I would like, before beginning the catechesis, on behalf of the Church, to ask for your forgiveness for the scandals that have happened in recent times both in Rome and in the Vatican. I ask your forgiveness.

Today we will reflect on a very important topic: the promises we make to children. I am not speaking so much about the promises we make now and then, during the day, to keep them happy or make them be good (perhaps with some innocent little ruse: I'll give you a sweet and similar promises...), to encourage them to work hard in school or to coax them not to be wilful. I am speaking about other promises, the most important promises, decisive for their expectations regarding life, for their trust in regard to human beings, for their capacity to perceive the Name of God as a blessing. These are promises that we make to them.

We adults are ready to speak of children as a promise of life. We all say: children are a promise of life. And we are also inclined to feel a bit emotional telling young people that they are *our* future, it's true. But sometimes I wonder if we are as serious about *their* future, about the children's future and about the future of young people! A question that we should ask ourselves more often is: how sincere are we with the promises that we make to children, having brought them into our world? We make them come into the world and this is a promise. What do we promise them?

Welcome and care, closeness and attention, trust and hope, are likewise basic promises, which can be summed up in a single word: love. We promise love, that is, love which is expressed in welcome, care, closeness, attention, trust and hope, but the real promise is love. This is the best way to welcome a human being who comes into the world, and we all learn this, even before being conscious of it. I like it very much when

I see fathers and mothers, when I am among you, bringing me a baby boy, a baby girl and I ask: "How old is he or she?" – "three weeks, four weeks... I ask for the Lord's blessing". This too is called love. Love is the promise that a man and woman make to every child: from the moment he or she is conceived in their mind". Children come into the world and they expect this promise to be confirmed: they expect it in a complete, trusting, defenceless way. It is enough to look at them: in all ethnicities, in all cultures, in all conditions of life! When the opposite occurs, children are wounded by a "scandal", by an unbearable scandal, all the more serious as they do not have the means to interpret it. They are unable to understand what is happening. God is alert to this promise, from the very first instant. Do you remember what Jesus said? "The children's angels mirror the gaze of God, and God never loses sight of children (cf. Mt 18:10). Woe to those who betray their trust, woe! Their trustful abandonment to our promise, to which we are committed from the very first instant, judges us.

I would like to add another thing, with due respect for everyone but also with much candour. Their spontaneous trust in God should never be disappointed, especially when it might be due to a certain (more or less unconscious) presumption of replacing him ourselves. The tender and mysterious relationship of God with the soul of children should never be violated. It is a real relationship, which God wants and God safeguards. Children are ready from birth to feel loved by God, they are ready for this. As soon as children



are able to feel they are loved for themselves, they also feel that there is a God who loves children.

Children, newborns, begin to receive the gift, along with nourishment and care, of the confirmation of the spiritual qualities of love. Acts of love pass through the gift of a personal name, the sharing of language, the intention behind a gaze, the illumination of a smile. They thus learn that the beauty of the bond between human beings focuses on our soul, seeks our freedom, accepts the difference of others, recognizes and respects them as interlocutors. A second miracle, a second promise: we – mother and father – give ourselves to you, children, in order to give each of you to yourself! And this is love, which bears a spark of the love of God! But you, dads and moms, have this spark of God which you give to your children, you are an instrument of God's love and this is beautiful, beautiful, beautiful!

Only if we look at children with the eyes of Jesus can we truly understand how, by defending the family, we protect humanity! The point of view of children is the point of view of the Son of God. The Church herself, in Baptism, makes great prom-

ises to children, by which she binds the parents and the Christian community. May the holy Mother of Jesus – through whom the Son of God came to us, loved and begotten as a child – render the Church able to follow the path of her motherhood and of her faith. May St Joseph – a righteous man, who welcomed and protected, courageously honouring the blessing and promise of God – render everyone capable and worthy to welcome Jesus in every child that God sends to the earth.

### SPECIAL GREETINGS

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, including those from England, Scotland, Ireland, Norway, the Netherlands, Australia, Papua New Guinea, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Canada and the United States of America. I ask you to pray for the Synod on the Family, and to be witnesses of God's presence in the world through your family life. God bless you all!

On the day on which we commemorate the martyred Pope St Callixtus, to whom the well-known catacombs are dedicated, my wish for all the pilgrims who have come to Rome is that the remembrance of so many brave witnesses of Christ may strengthen the faith of each one of you.

I address a special thought to *young people*, the *sick*, and *newlyweds*. In this month of October we are all called to support the missions with prayer and solidarity. Dear *young people*, may you joyfully welcome the Lord's invitation to devote your best efforts to proclaiming the Gospel; dear *sick people*, I thank you because the offering of your sacrifice is very precious for those who do not yet know the love of God; dear *newlyweds*, may you continue to proclaim with your life the steadfast love of the Lord!

## 'The thirty-three' of Chile meet the Holy Father



"Meeting the Pope was the culmination of our pilgrimage to thank the God of life and to bear witness to the power of hope". With this sentiment, the 33 Chilean miners – who five years ago were trapped when the San José mine collapsed – embraced Pope Francis. On 5 August 2010, these men were mining copper and gold 700 metres underground when the mine caved in. The world watched with bated breath until 13 October when all of "the thirty-three" – as they are now known – were rescued. Accompanying the men were Bishop Celestino Aós Braco, along with Bishop emeritus Gaspar Quintana Jorquera. The survivors gave the Holy Father two spiritual symbols: images of Our Lady of Candelaria and of St Lawrence, patrons of miners.

Reports of the *circuli minores* presented

## A Church that says 'yes'

On Thursday afternoon, 8 October, the 13 *circuli minores* concluded their discussions and the following morning the relator for each group presented the reports on the topic: the first part of the *Instrumentum laboris*, related to considering the challenges of the family. The following morning, Friday, 9 October, after the Synod Fathers prayed at the Hour of Terce, Patriarch Sako delivered a homily expressing heartfelt gratitude to Pope Francis on behalf of all the Synod Fathers present. The reflection given by the Patriarch of Babylon for Chaldeans, who spoke of the "challenge of faith" which "involves the shepherds as much as the faithful", was inspired by the Pope's appeal for peace in the Middle East and Africa (*see page*

5). Sako noted that today, "unfortunately, many Christians are ashamed of their faith", when instead they should be living it with courage in their "everyday lives". In this sense it may be useful for everyone to listen to the experiences of persecuted Iraqi Christians.

After the prayer, the Assembly – meeting for their fourth general congregation under Delegate President Cardinal Damasceno Assis, in the presence of 266 Synod Fathers – prepared to hear the reports of the *circuli minores*. The reports showed that the Synod Fathers are seeking simpler language for the final document, a language that is direct and engaging, and that sheds light not only on the challenges and problems that the family faces in the world, but also and most importantly on the beauty and hope that is sowed every day by families who are living in the light of the Gospel.

This was visible in nearly all 13 of the reports, which were summaries of the work of the *circuli minores* which – divided according to four languages (French, English, Italian and German) – came together on Wednesday and Thursday to discuss

Western" vision. The group highlighted issues that the members felt were not given enough attention, and also pointed to unclear and uncertain elements in the English translation of the document. They called for the use of a more engaging and appealing language, and the need to highlight positive aspects. Hence the suggestion was made to reverse Section II with Section I of the document, in order to begin with a message of hope.

In agreement with the other relators, Fr Arroba Conde, CME, relator of Italian group A, spoke of the spirit of collaboration that has been breathed into the working groups: an awareness of differing opinions, but a sincere desire to promote what unites them. He spoke of awareness that "is more complementary than conflicting". In the details of the group's proposals, it was again suggested that the document begin with a positive note. One of the goals the relator listed was to formulate a "Gospel of the family" as a cultural proposal offered to everyone. Particular attention was given to issues of gender ideology, secularisation and the issues of human trafficking and migration.

"We can only give thanks" for all of the "families who try to make God's dream their dream", said Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, the relator of English group B. In particular, this working group called for greater use of biblical references to facilitate clearer and more compelling understanding, stating that the language of Scripture "can become a bridge between faith and life".

A language that touches upon the real problems of the family was also called for by French group A: Archbishop Laurent Ulrich, the relator, said that the text should have a more open tone and promote dialogue with peers.

Self-criticism over family ministry ("What have we forgotten to do?")



and propose appropriate modifications to the first part of the *Instrumentum laboris*.

With the Synod Fathers' consent of amendments and additions to the individual proposals of the document, the Synod has reached its first key step. The Commission will now work with these results to draft the final report.

Archbishop Kurtz, the relator of the English group A, was the first to speak. He said that confidence in Jesus Christ "is to be the first and last word of the Synod". The working group proposed placing greater focus on a positive message and the signs of renewal that are encountered today. One of the suggestions pays particular attention to the theme of families who are forced to emigrate and to those who experience pain and disability. In this sense, the group aimed to highlight the role of public policy and recommended a more "global" and less "Euro-centric" tone.

An invitation was also made in the speech given by Archbishop Chaput, the relator of English group D, who said that the *Instrumentum laboris* displays an "overwhelmingly



Tamara de Lempicka, "Motherhood" (1922)

was heard from Cardinal Lacunza Maestrujuán, the relator of Spanish group A. One of the key points to emerge from his group was the invitation to learn more about cultures, and to focus on formation, not merely stopping at the norms.

In addition to the request for a more simplified text and the addition of more biblical references, Cardinal Piacenza, the relator of Italian group B, drew attention to themes such as: the equal dignity of man and woman, the need to reiterate the Church's positive outlook on sexuality, further education on an integral ecology, and the demand for specific pastoral ministry for migrant families.

Archbishop Mark Benedict Coleridge, the relator of English group C, highlighted the fact that "the Church does not inhabit a world out of time" and the need to address the facts of history with eyes of faith. The key issue for this group was to clarify that the family is based on the "the marriage of a man and a woman", and expressed the need to propose this "positive and luminous" reality to the world with a more "accessible" language.

Fr Dumortier, the relator of French group B, spoke of the family as a "school of humanity". The group also suggested magisterial participation on issues addressed by the Synod.

In favour of opting for a language

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

### Relators and moderators

The following is a list of the Synod Fathers who were elected as relators and moderators on Tuesday afternoon, 6 October, during the first session of 'circuli minores':

French Group A: Cardinal Cardinal Gérard Cyprien Lacroix, moderator; Archbishop Laurent Ulrich of Lille, relator;

French Group B: Cardinal Robert Sarah, moderator; Fr François-Xavier Dumortier, SJ, relator;

French Group C: Bishop Maurice Piat, C SSP, moderator; Archbishop Paul-André Durocher, relator;

English Group A: Cardinal George Pell, moderator; Archbishop Joseph Edward Kurtz, relator;

English Group B: Cardinal Vincent Gerard Nichols, moderator; Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, relator;

English Group C: Archbishop Eamon Martin, moderator; Archbishop Mark Benedict Coleridge, relator;

English Group D: Cardinal Thomas Christopher Collins, moderator; Archbishop Charles Chaput, OFM Cap, relator;

Italian Group A: Cardinal Francesco Montenegro, moderator; Fr Manuel Jesús Arroba Conde, CME, relator;

Italian Group B: Cardinal Edoardo Menichelli, moderator; Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, relator;

Italian Group C: Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco, moderator; Bishop Franco Giulio Brambilla, relator;

Spanish Group A: Cardinal Óscar Andrés Rodríguez Maradiaga, SDB, moderator; Cardinal José Luis Lacunza Maestrujuán, OAR, relator;

Spanish Group B: Cardinal Francisco Robles Ortega, moderator; Archbishop Baltazar Enrique Porras Cardozo, relator;

German Group: Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, OR, moderator; Archbishop Heiner Koch, relator.

At the Holy See Press Office

### Discerning the family vocation

In a briefing at the Holy See Press Office on Thursday afternoon, 8 October, director Fr Federico Lombardi indicated that the Pope, in his intervention on Tuesday, 6 October, invited trust in one another, in order to allow for complete loyalty to the Synod process. "We must not think about whether there may be plots or people seeking to manipulate", the Pope said. With regard to the general atmosphere of the meetings, Cardinal Edoardo Menichelli, the moderator of one of the two Italian language *circuli*, described that it "is a synod of people marshaling two years' work. There is open and fraternal discussion on all the material".

The composition of the commission for information of the Synod assembly was announced during the press conference. Archbishop Celli presides over the commission, whose members are Archbishop Palma, Archbishop González Nieves and Bishop Bessi Dogbo, with Fr Lombardi as secretary.

The Pope's appeal regarding the escalating violence in the Middle East and Africa

## Law and diplomacy resolve conflicts

*Prayer for reconciliation and peace in the Middle East. This was the Pope's appeal to the Synod Fathers gathered for the fourth general congregation on Friday morning, 9 October, in the New Synod Hall. At the same meeting, he also appealed to the international community to "use the instruments of international law and of diplomacy, to resolve ongoing conflicts".*

Dear Synod Fathers,  
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we resume the work of the general congregation this morning, I would like to invite you to dedicate midmorning prayer to the intention of reconciliation and peace in the Middle East. We are grievously struck and we follow with deep concern what is happening in Syria, Iraq, Jeru-

alem and the West Bank, where we are seeing an escalation of violence that involves innocent civilians and continues to fuel a humanitarian crisis of enormous proportions. War brings destruction and compounds the suffering of populations. Hope and progress come only from peaceful choices. Let us unite, therefore, in an intense and trusting prayer to the Lord, a prayer intended to be at the same time an expression of closeness to the brother Patriarchs and Bishops present here, who come from those regions, to their priests and faithful, as well as to those who live there.

At the same time I, along with the Synod, address an earnest appeal to the international community, that it find a way to efficiently aid the affected parties, to broaden its outlook beyond immediate interests and use the instruments of inter-



national law and of diplomacy, to resolve ongoing conflicts.

Lastly I would us to also extend our prayers to the areas of the African continent that are experiencing analogous situations of conflict. May Mary, Queen of Peace and loving Mother of her children, intercede for all.

The fifth and sixth general congregations

## In the school of honesty, justice and mercy

A runaway train was the image used by a Synod Father to describe the risk of passing by so many human realities without practicing the necessary act of mercy. The topic of mercy arose from many sides during the fifth and sixth general congregations that took place, respectively, on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, 9 and 10 October, in the presence of Pope Francis.

During Saturday's congregation, the 253 Synod Fathers present, under the presidency of Cardinal Napier, completed the second part of the *Instrumentum laboris*, and began the third topic: "The mission of the family today". Interventions were made by Cardinal Parolin, Cardinal Montenegro, Cardinal Rylko, Cardinal Thottunkal, Cardinal Blázquez Pérez, Archbishop Gómez, Archbishop Pontier, and Archbishop Takami. Then Archbishop Ioannis Spteris gave the homily, in which he emphasized the risk of considering holiness as the height of sacrifice, of external worship, instead of living it as loving obedience to God witnessed by the commandment of reciprocal love.

In the subsequent discussion, mercy was again a repeating theme. It is one which should be considered a work of salvation and not of perdition, because the greatest justice is encompassed within it. From here the Church was invited not to end up a prisoner of the stereotypical image of a "community that says 'no'". It was noted how significant it is that Jesus did not define the term mercy, but showed it in a practical way with his very life. On the other hand, there was also emphasis on the necessity of not correlating mercy with justice, mercy with truth. And here direct reference was made to the question of the indissolubility of marriage and to pastoral openness with regard to people who divorce and remarry civilly. The Church, it was said, cannot let herself be conditioned by sentiments of

false compassion for people, nor by erroneous models of thinking, even if they are pervasive in society.

From the many experiences presented during the interventions, there emerged a picture of the situation of families on the various continents, with their expectations, their difficulties and potential. In particular, emphasis was placed on the need for more spirituality, prayer and interiority. A possible response to the family crisis could come precisely from the Word of God, because before it the family fully discovers the meaning of marriage. For this reason, spouses must learn to let themselves be enlightened by the light of the Gospel without being influenced by the ideologies of the moment. Precisely to avoid being assimilated to prevailing models, it was repeated that the family is at the centre of the pastoral attention of the Church. With respect for roles, the Church entreats governments regarding the serious delays of family policies, also in the social systems considered the most advanced. Specifically, she calls public attention back to the necessity of a more equitable administration of goods and of the environment. She then invites a more serious reflection on

the urgency of certain regulatory amendments regarding the specific characteristics of personal and social bonds.

The discussion on the third part of the *Instrumentum laboris* was preceded by the testimony of Penelope and Ishwarlal Bajaj, a Hindu-Christian couple of the Diocese of Mumbai, India. They underscored how religious freedom opened the way to the fruitfulness of their marriage. Thereafter Cardinal Napier recalled that in this phase of the debate, attention would be focused on the relationship between the family and evangelization, the family and formation, and the family and ecclesial fellowship.

In the course of the interventions on Friday afternoon, 9 October, during the fifth general congregation, held in the presence of Pope Francis and under the presidency of Cardinal Damasceno Assis, the debate concentrated on the family as a school, a missionary force, a vocation, but also as the fullest expression of solidarity among the members that comprise it. In the presence of 249 Synod Fathers, 23 scheduled interventions were presented along with 18 open commentaries. Among those who took the floor

were Cardinal Tauran, Cardinal Tagle, Cardinal Müller, Cardinal Poli, Cardinal Martínez Sístach, Cardinal Nichols, Archbishop Chimoio, Archbishop Smith, Archbishop Paglia, Bishop Solmi, along with men religious, Nicolás Pachón and Janson.

Among the proposals that emerged from the discussion was that of celebrating a pre-synod for each continent, given the diversity of cultures, traditions, and political and geographical situations. It was also noted that the family is based on valid elements and values shared with other religious traditions. For this reason, the family is a privileged place to develop a fruitful dialogue. Moreover, in our most globalized, multicultural and multireligious societies, the contribution that the family can offer to understanding and integration is essential. Indeed, it is precisely Christian families that come into contact with people of other religions and, therefore, offer the first witness of the welcome of the Christian community. In this context, there was also consideration of the families forced to abandon their homes due to violence, seeking safety and better life opportunities.

It was emphasized that the family is not only the object of evangelization, but is also a place where one learns the values on which society must be founded. In particular, it is the school of honesty, integrity, mercy and justice. The effects of what happens in the family are reflected in everyday life. Thus, if a family breaks down, so too will society break down. The same holds true for the ability of the family to come to the aid of others who are suffering. This is why the family must be open to the outside and tend the wounds of other families. This openness is more necessary now than ever: and this is what many await from the Synod, calling for a decisive impetus to recognize



Seventh general congregation

## With the manner of Emmaus

On Saturday afternoon, 10 October, 20 scheduled interventions were made during the work of the seventh general congregation, followed by 11 open discussions. Cardinal Wilfred Fox Napier presided at the assembly, which opened and closed with prayers led by the Pope. There were 228 Synod Fathers participating. The witness of Asia Bibi and of the 21 Egyptians martyred in Libya were recalled during the discussion. There was also a series of specific proposals: first a moment of prayer that the people of Ukraine not feel abandoned, in the silence of the mass media, and that they not be simply the subject of political and diplomatic relations. From Africa the idea was proposed for an annual day of prayer and adoration for marriage and the family, perhaps on the day of the Feast of the Holy Family.

The burning issue of work also brought forth a proposal for an appeal to the many Christian entrepreneurs and business owners not to oblige their employees on feast days. It could also be an occasion to relaunch a reflection on the relationship between work and family life, without losing sight of the tragic situations of unemployment, precariousness, termination and layoffs that often lead to the lack of necessities not only for survival but also for the right to celebrate in an adequate way, without consequences especially for one's children.

Turning the gaze then to the figure of the priest, from the perspective of an emotional and psychological maturation and of a specific and permanent formation, it was also suggested that the theme of the next synod focus on the formation of presbyters.

Several interventions on this topic remarked that attention to the family reality, especially today, cannot be limited to structures that are routine and prefabricated or worse, improvised. One focal point should be courses of preparation to marriage, which are never superficial but enriched by the practical witness of Christian couples fully integrated in parish life, and not delegated solely to experts. There were many articulate statements regarding such courses. Additionally, it was proposed that marriage preparation be experienced as a novitiate *sui generis*, which could be likened to the catechumenal path of Christian initiation and which could begin with an actual liturgical act of blessing the engagement. However, pastoral creativity was called for, in the awareness that many frameworks that worked in the past are now obsolete.

A key word that came across in many of the contributions was "accompaniment", with explicit reference to Jesus' manner with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. There were then recommendations for the use of appropriate language, in order both to be clear and understandable, and to avoid hurting those who find themselves in complex situations, such as the children of separated parents. Other interventions called for trusting in a formed



and informed conscience, and not falling into the framework of permissible-forbidden, but instead in the manner of St Paul, who in the First Letter to the Corinthians speaks of the "food offered to idols".

The Church, it was restated, must keep her doors always open to welcome all, with the teaching of the father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. And while a lack of agreement on certain moral issues was observed, this must not amount to the exclusion of anyone, much less of those who do not fit into the traditional notion of the family. In this sense the nearing Jubilee of Mercy is an opportunity not to be missed.

In the general congregation there was also talk on the question of fertility and of natural birth control methods, as well as of abuse and violence, and discrimination against women. A series of statements, also focused on the direct experiences of individual Synod Fathers, presented particular situations, tied to the history and culture of specific and highly diverse regions, including: the protestant mindset of northern Europe, the persecution of Christians in predominantly Muslim countries, and issues regarding mixed marriages in Asia. Lastly considered

was the many delicate situations experienced in families, including the elderly, the sick and disabled. Speakers included Cardinal Stella, Cardinal Collins, Cardinal Gracias, Cardinal Schönborn, Patriarch Sedrak, Archbishop Pezzi, Archbishop Chaput, Archbishop Hoser,

Archbishop Arancedo, Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop Padrón Sánchez, Archbishop Ulrich, Archbishop Durocher, Archbishop Coleridge, Bishop Bastres Florence, Bishop Wątroba, Bishop Murry, Bishop Brunin, Bishop Simard, Bishop Vesco and Fr Rosa.

## Fifth and sixth general congregations

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

the missionary force of the family.

It was also pointed out that the Church herself is a family that must have the same attitudes regarding men and women in need of love: divorced people, de facto couples, polygamists, those who feel excluded. The Synod Fathers were invited to look with compassion on those who hunger for mercy.

Various Synod Fathers placed an accent on formation to marriage. There were also those who called for instituting a six-month "novitiate" for couples who want to marry in the Church, precisely so they may follow a programme of fellow-

ship in view of their plan for a common life. Something similar is already in place in a Tokyo parish, where married Christian couples support engaged couples for six months.

The Synod Fathers had begun their reflection on the second part of the *Instrumentum laboris* Friday morning, at the close of the fourth general congregation. Eleven interventions included, among others, those of Cardinal Vingt-Trois, Cardinal Rivera Carrera, Cardinal Scherer, Cardinal Wuerl, Archbishop Bessi Dogbo and Archbishop Palma. Among the topics addressed were: the indissolubility of marriage between man and woman, as an authentic vocation of the Church; the family, as missionary subject, leader of the new evangelization and privileged locus to experience the love of God who saves, a tangible sign of salvation and hope in a world marked by so many areas of darkness, crises and contradictions. During the interventions it was highlighted that when one speaks of vocation one is not always aware that marriage is one of the privileged ways of responding to the universal call to holiness; one needs to do so, however, in a way that this awareness grows, because spouses "cannot be content with a mediocre life".

Several times the Synod Fathers returned to discuss, on the one hand, the value of the indissolubility of marriage, and on the other, the importance of always having an attitude of patience and mercy toward those who do not share or who do not manage to fully live what is proclaimed by the Church. In short, one needs to have "courage, persistence, hope", but most of all mercy.

## Reports of circuli minores

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

of hope, showing "a Church that says 'yes'", Archbishop Porras Cardozo, the relator of Spanish group B, emphasized the importance of formation ("if faith is weak it is difficult to respond to the challenges") and of a transition "from an individual spirituality to that of communion".

A methodological point was offered by Archbishop Heiner Koch, the relator of German group A, who suggested taking cultural differences into account. He said that there must be a "differential analysis in order to contribute to an exchange in the universal Church". The goal, said Archbishop Durocher, the relator of French group C, should be to answer two questions: "What is the family?" and "What does the family do?". He pointed out the

need for a clear analysis, saying that "pastoral needs must be grounded in reality". This group called for vigilance and commitment with regard to widespread gender theory and to distortions of bioethical technologies.

Bishop Brambilla, the relator of Italian group C, gave the last of the interventions. By reiterating the importance of integrating the many perspectives that come from different parts of the world, he invited the Synod Fathers to always decipher the challenges of society and contemporary culture in a positive way, highlighting the positive points and not allowing them to be crushed by diagnoses that favour darkness.

At the end of the congregation, the Synod Fathers began speaking about the second part of *Instrumentum laboris*.

Reports from *circuli minores* presented on the second part of the working document at the eighth general congregation

## In the heart of the Synod

The second round of meetings of the *circuli minores* were held on Monday and Tuesday, 12 and 13 October, in the New Synod Hall, where the Synod Fathers examined the second part of the *Instrumentum laboris*, dedicated to the topic: "The discernment of the family vocation". Several Synod Fathers defined this part of the working document as the "heart of the Synod", because it means to illustrate what the Church says regarding the reality of the Christian family, its vocation and its mission. The results of work of the *circuli* were then presented in the eighth general congregation, which took place on Wednesday morning, 14 October.

As customary, Wednesday's assembly was opened with the prayer of the Third Hour, led by president delegate Cardinal André Vingt-Trois. There were 264 Synod Fathers present in the Hall; Pope Francis was not present as he was engaged with the General Audience in St Peter's Square. The homily was given by Ecuadorian Archbishop Luis Gerardo Cabrera Herrera, who described the family as a "favourable space to experience the glory of God". It is important, he said, to rediscover the family as "a school where we learn basic values".



The 13 relators spoke about the role of the family and, by virtue of the centrality of the topic, unanimously requested more biblical and magisterial references, as well as better organization and cohesion of the second part of the *Instrumentum laboris*, in order to guarantee the necessary clarity and incisiveness of the text.

Cardinal Piacenza, the relator for the Italian group B, underscored that the section serves precisely to communicate "the beauty of marriage in the face of the alarming predictions expressed in the widespread 'culture of the provisional'". Along with this was the suggestion to highlight the different forms of the vocation to love (marital, priestly, consecrated) and, with regard to language, to be careful in using the terms "nature" and "natural", which lead to misunderstandings in common usage. What is needed instead is an understandable and effective

approach so as to "help families enter into the mystery of the family of Nazareth". Also from this *circulus* came the call for a magisterial document to "order in an exhaustive way the complex and diversified doctrine on marriage and the family".

Speaking for Italian group C, Bishop Brambilla proposed as a guideline the importance that the Synod "return to the flowing well-spring of the message of Jesus", a message that starts from the "principle" of creation and is fulfilled in the Cross and Resurrection. Also noteworthy were the contributions of the Magisterium, which describe the features of the spousal covenant: "holiness, unity, fidelity, fruitfulness and generativity in education, in society and the world". Thus the role of families can be better defined, especially their role as evangelizer, and the manner that the Church must have toward them: "contagious closeness, and strong and exacting tenderness". It was said that the Christian community must accompany all phases of family life with particular commitment to the path of "initiating the young".

The topic of accompaniment also arose from the discussion of Italian group A, from which, relator Fr Arriba Conda explained, came the request to describe more explicitly the Synod's connection to the upcoming Jubilee of Mercy. The need to encourage paths of conversion was highlighted, underscoring the importance that God's grace has throughout one's whole life.

There were various contributions from English group D on the practicalities of everyday family life. The group's relator, Archbishop Chaput, said the group felt the need "to better understand the relationship between the newness of the Christian sacrament of matrimony". Regarding the topic of indissolubility, for example, it was suggested that it be treated as a positive value rather than as a burden. In daily life the family is called to be a witness through the life of prayer, sensitivity to environmental issues, and sharing in charity.

English group A stressed the importance "families attending Sunday Eucharist and other liturgical celebrations together", as well as "the use of para-liturgical prayers and rituals within the setting of the family". Archbishop Kurtz underlined that the common vocation is one of communion and mission, and that the source of everything is in Jesus.

The work of Spanish group A was illustrated by relator Cardinal Lacunza Maestrojuán. First of all the group requested a clear definition of "family", in the way of *Gaudium et Spes*. This *circulus*, too, referred to the concrete gaze on the life of families ("the Gospel becomes flesh through acceptance, forgiveness, encounter, otherwise Christianity is reduced to rhetoric or an ideology")



Georges Rouault (1871-1958), "Nazareth"

and to the gradual paths of acceptance of the grace of God. The group invited recognition that there are also positive values in other types of family.

This broad gaze also emerged from the report of Archbishop Ulrich of the French group A, who underlined that the Good News of the family is a source of hope for all, not only for Catholics. Once again, with regard to marriage, there was a suggestion that fidelity and indissolubility be spoken of as a gift and a call, rather than in simple legal terms of duty.

The Spanish group B focused on the missionary dimension of the family and on its identity as the image of trinitarian love. Archbishop Porras Cardozo, relator for the group, recommended that the final document give more attention to children and to the different realities found throughout the world.

Attention to different cultures, with the idea of specific catechetical programmes, was also highlighted by Bishop Coleridge on behalf of the English group C, which called for a better understanding of the difficulties of young people regarding marriage choices.

The German group expressed hope for a Church that accompanies families with personalized pastoral care and which, with prudence and wisdom, knows how to be merciful and comprehensive. The group's relator, Archbishop Heiner Koch, said that "mercy and truth, grace and

justice, are not in opposition because God is love and mercy is the way by which he makes us just".

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, the relator for English group B, recommended that the theme of "Divine Pedagogy" be strengthened. The group proposed that the pedagogy begin with Genesis, which references the union between man and woman, and is fulfilled in the life of Jesus. Speaking about family calls for a language that is "less legal" and which speaks "of marriage as a grace, a blessing, and a lifelong covenant of love". In other words, it should emphasize the "beautiful and positive qualities that sustain marriage and family life" and should always be a reminder that "all of us need God's mercy".

These themes returned in the report of the French group C, which was presented by the group's relator, Archbishop Durocher. He explained that the family "evangelizes through its very being" which is founded in Jesus. The mission of the family is "to shine light on the power of God's mercy".

The series of reports was concluded by Fr Dumortier who, on behalf of French group B, renewed the request for a magisterial intervention, and emphasized that the Gospel of the family is not a burden but a "call to live in freedom and joy".

Discussion on the third part of the *Instrumentum laboris* began on Wednesday afternoon at the ninth general congregation.

## Cause for canonization of Fr Paul of Graymoor presented

Cardinal Timothy Dolan formally opened the cause for canonization of Servant of God Fr Paul of Graymoor on Tuesday, 22 September. Fr Paul Wattson (1863-1940), a champion of Christian unity and of helping the poor, co-founded the Society of the Atonement at Graymoor in 1898. The order was formed in the tradition of the Franciscans with the mission of promoting Christian unity and working with the poor. The Society became the first religious community, since the Reformation, to be received corporately into the Catholic Church. His many other works included: co-founding the

Catholic Near East Welfare Association; helping to launch the Catholic Medical Mission Board; starting the prayer for unity which grew to become the worldwide Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and dialogue with our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters; as well as actively raising funds for missions that serve the poor around the world. Today, the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement continue his work toward Christian unity on three continents.

There is no time frame for the completion of this project but ordinarily such investigations take a minimum of one or two years.

The following is the English text of Pope Francis' message for the 31st World Youth Day (WYD), which will take place in Kraków, Poland. It is the last of three papal messages dedicated to the Beatitudes, which will aid in preparing for the international gathering in 2016.



"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt 5:7)

Dear Young People,

We have come to the last stretch of our pilgrimage to Kraków, the place where we will celebrate the 31st World Youth Day next year in the month of July. We are being guided on this long and challenging path by Jesus' words taken from the Sermon on the Mount. We began this journey in 2014 by meditating together on the first Beatitude: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5:3). The theme for 2015 was: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Mt 5:8). During the year ahead, let us allow ourselves to be inspired by the words: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt 5:7).

### 1. The Jubilee of Mercy

With this theme, the Kraków 2016 WYD forms part of the Holy Year of Mercy and so becomes a Youth Jubilee at world level. It is not the first time that an international youth gathering has coincided with a Jubilee Year. Indeed, it was during the Holy Year of the Redemption (1983/1984) that St John Paul II first called on young people from around the world to come

*"Do not be afraid! God is waiting for you! God is a Father and he is always waiting for us! It is so wonderful to feel the merciful embrace of the Father in the sacrament of Reconciliation, to discover that the confessional is a place of mercy"*

together on Palm Sunday. Then, during the Great Jubilee of the year 2000, over two million young people from around 165 countries gathered in Rome for the 15th World Youth Day. I am sure that the Youth Jubilee in Kraków will be, as on those two previous occasions, one of the high points of this Holy Year!

Perhaps some of you are asking: what is this Jubilee Year that is celebrated in the Church? The scriptural text of Leviticus 5 can help us to understand the meaning of a "jubilee" for the people of Israel. Every 50 years they heard the sounding of a trumpet (*jobel*) calling them (*jobel*) to celebrate a holy year as a time of reconciliation (*jobel*) for everyone. During that time they had to renew their good relations with God, with their neighbours and with creation, all in a spirit of gratuitousness. This fostered, among other things, debt forgiveness, special help

for those who had fallen into poverty, improvement in interpersonal relations and the freeing of slaves.

Jesus Christ came to proclaim and bring about the Lord's everlasting time of grace. He brought good news to the poor, freedom to prisoners, sight to the blind and freedom to the oppressed (cf. Lk 4:18-19). In Jesus, and particularly in his Paschal Mystery, the deeper meaning of the jubilee is fully realized. When the Church proclaims a jubilee in the name of Christ, we are all invited to experience a wonderful time of grace. The Church must offer abundant signs of God's presence and closeness, and awaken in people's hearts the ability to look to the essentials. In particular, this Holy Year of Mercy is "a time for the Church to rediscover the meaning of the mission entrusted to her by the Lord on the day of Easter: to be a sign and an instrument of the Father's mercy" (*Homily at First Vespers of Divine Mercy Sunday*, 11 April 2015).

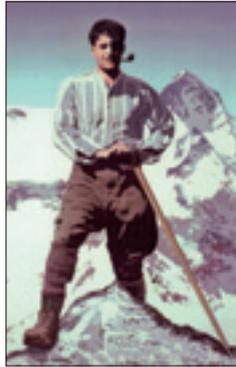
### 2. Merciful like the Father

The motto for this Extraordinary Jubilee is "Merciful like the Father" (cf. *Misericordiae Vultus*, 13). This fits in with the theme of the next WYD, so let us try to better understand the meaning of divine mercy.

The Old Testament uses various terms when it speaks about mercy. The most meaningful of these are *hesed* and *rahamim*. The first, when applied to God, expresses God's unfailing fidelity to the Covenant with his people whom he loves and forgives for ever. The second, *rahamim*, which literally means "entrails", can be translated as "heartfelt mercy". This particularly brings to mind the maternal womb and helps us understand that

God's love for his people is like that of a mother for her child. That is how it is presented by the prophet Isaiah: "Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you" (Is 49:15). Love of this kind involves making space for others within ourselves and being able to sympathize, suffer and rejoice with our neighbours.

The biblical concept of mercy also includes the tangible presence of love that is faithful, freely given and able to forgive. In the following passage from Hosea, we have a beautiful example of God's love, which the prophet compares to that of a father for his child: "When Israel was a child I loved him; out of Egypt I called my son. The more I called them, the farther they went from me... Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, who took them in my arms; I drew them with human cords, with bands of love; I fostered them like one who raises an infant to his knees... I stooped to feed my child" (Hos 11:1-4). Despite the



Pier Giorgio Frassati, a "young man who understood what it means to have a merciful heart that responds to those most in need"

child's wrong attitude that deserves punishment, a father's love is faithful. He always forgives his repentant children. We see here how forgiveness is always included in mercy. It is "not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality with which he reveals his love as that of a father or a mother, moved to the very depths out of love for their child... It gushes forth from the depths naturally, full of tenderness and compassion, indulgence and mercy" (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 6).

The New Testament speaks to us of divine mercy (*eleos*) as a synthesis of the work that Jesus came to accomplish in the world in the name of the Father (cf. Mt 9:13). Our Lord's mercy can be seen especially when he bends down to human misery and shows his compassion for those in need of understanding, healing and forgiveness. Everything in Jesus speaks of mercy. Indeed, he himself is mercy.

In Chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel we find the three parables of mercy: the lost sheep, the lost coin and the parable of the prodigal son. In these three parables we are struck by God's joy, the joy that God feels when he finds and forgives a sinner. Yes, it is God's joy to forgive! This sums up the whole of the Gospel. "Each of us, each one of us, is that little lost lamb, the coin that was mislaid; each one of us is that son who has squandered his freedom on false idols, illusions of happiness, and has lost everything. But God does not forget us; the Father never abandons us. He is a patient Father, always waiting for us! He respects our freedom, but he remains faithful forever. And when we come back to him, he welcomes us like children into his house, for he never ceases, not for one instant, to wait for us with love. And his heart rejoices over every child who returns. He is celebrating because he is joy. God has this joy, when one of us sin-

ners goes to him and asks his forgiveness" (*Angelus*, 15 September 2013).

God's mercy is very real and we are all called to experience it firsthand. When I was 17 years old, it happened one day that, as I was about to go out with friends, I decided to stop into a church first. I met a priest there who inspired great confidence, and I felt the desire to open my heart in Confession. That meeting changed my life! I discovered that when we open our hearts with humility and transparency, we can contemplate God's mercy in a very concrete way. I felt certain that, in the person of that priest, God was already waiting for me even before I took the step of entering that church. We keep looking for God, but God is there before us, always looking for us, and he finds us first. Maybe one of you feels something weighing on your heart. You are thinking: I did this, I did that... Do not be afraid! God is waiting for you! God is a Father and he is always waiting for us! It is so wonderful to feel the merciful embrace of the Father in the sacrament of Reconciliation, to discover that the confessional is a place of mercy, and to allow ourselves to be touched by the merciful love of the Lord who always forgives us!

You, dear young man, dear young woman, have you ever felt the gaze of everlasting love upon you, a gaze that looks beyond your sins, limitations and failings, and continues to have faith in you and to look upon your life with hope? Do you realize how precious you are to God, who has given you everything out of love? St Paul tells us that "God proves his love for us in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). Do we really understand the power of these words?

I know how much the WYD cross means to all of you. It was a gift from St John Paul II and has been with you at all your World Meetings since 1984. So many changes and real conversions have taken place in the lives of young people who have encountered this simple bare cross! Perhaps you have asked yourselves the question: what is the origin of the extraordinary power of the cross? Here is the answer: the cross is the most eloquent sign of



God's mercy! It tells us that the measure of God's love for humanity is to love without measure! Through the cross we can touch God's mercy and be touched by that mercy! Here I would recall the episode of the two thieves crucified beside Jesus. One of them is arrogant and does not admit that he is a sinner. He mocks the Lord. The other acknowledges that he has done wrong; he turns to the Lord saying: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom". Jesus looks at him with infinite mercy and replies: "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (cf. Lk 23:32, 39-43). With which of the two do we identify? Is it with the arrogant one who does not acknowledge his own mistakes? Or is it with the other, who accepts that he is in need of divine mercy and begs for it with all his heart? It is in the Lord, who gave his life for us on the cross, that we will always find that unconditional love which sees our lives as something good and always gives us the chance to start again.

### 3. The amazing joy of being instruments of God's mercy

The Word of God teaches us that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). That is why the fifth Beatitude declares that the merciful are blessed. We know that the Lord loved us first. But we will be truly blessed and happy only when we enter into the divine "logic" of gift and gracious love, when we discover that God has loved us infinitely in order to make us capable of loving like Him, without measure. St John says: "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love... In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another" (1 Jn 4:7-11).

After this very brief summary of how the Lord bestows his mercy upon us, I would like to give you some suggestions on how we can be instruments of this mercy for others.

I think of the example of Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati. He said, "Jesus pays me a visit every morning in Holy Communion, and I return the visit in the meagre way I know how, visiting the poor". Pier Giorgio was a young man who understood what it means to have a merciful heart that responds to those most in need. He gave them far more than material goods. He gave himself by giving his time, his words and his capacity to listen. He served the poor very quietly and unassumingly. He truly did what the Gospel tells us: "When you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret" (Mt 6:3-4). Imagine that, on the day before his death when he was gravely ill, he was giving directions on how his friends in need should be helped. At his funeral, his family and friends were stunned by the presence of so many poor people unknown to them. They had been befriended and helped by the young Pier Giorgio.

I always like to link the Gospel Beatitudes with Matthew 25, where Jesus presents us with the works of mercy and tells us that we will be judged on them. I ask you, then, to rediscover the corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, assist the sick, visit the imprisoned and bury the dead. Nor should we overlook the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, teach the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the sorrowful, forgive offences, patiently bear with troublesome people and pray to God for the living and the dead. As you can see, mercy does not just imply being a "good person" nor is it mere sentimentality. It is the measure of our authenticity as disciples of Jesus, and of our credibility as Christians in today's world.

*"Forgiveness is always included in mercy. It is not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality with which he reveals his love as that of a father or a mother, moved to the very depths out of love for their child"*

If you want me to be very specific, I would suggest that for the first seven months of 2016 you choose a corporal and a spiritual work of mercy to practice each month. Find inspiration in the prayer of St Faustina, a humble apostle of Divine Mercy in our times:

*"Help me, O Lord, that my eyes may be merciful, so that I will never be suspicious or judge by appearances, but always look for what is beautiful in my neighbours' souls and be of help to them; that my ears may be merciful, so that I will be attentive to my neighbours' needs, and not indifferent to their pains and complaints; that my tongue may be merciful, so that I will never speak badly of others, but have a word of comfort and forgiveness for all; that my hands may be merciful and full of good deeds; that my feet may be merciful, so that I will hasten to help my neighbour, despite my own fatigue and weariness; that my heart may be merciful, so that I myself will share in all the sufferings of my neighbour" (Diary, 163).*

The Divine Mercy message is a very specific life plan because it involves action. One of the most obvious works of



At World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro in 2013

mercy, and perhaps the most difficult to put into practice, is to forgive those who have offended us, who have done us wrong or whom we consider to be enemies. "At times how hard it seems to forgive! And yet pardon is the instrument placed into our fragile hands to attain serenity of heart. To let go of anger, wrath, violence, and revenge are necessary conditions to living joyfully" (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 9).

Dear young people, at the Shrine in Kraków dedicated to the merciful Jesus, where he is depicted in the image venerated by the people of God, Jesus is waiting for you. He has confidence in you and is counting on you! He has so many things to say to each of you... Do not be afraid to look into his eyes, full of infinite love for you. Open yourselves to his merciful gaze, so ready to forgive all your sins. A look from him can change your lives and heal the wounds of your souls. His eyes can quench the thirst that dwells deep in your young hearts, a thirst for love, for peace, for joy and for true happiness. Come to Him and do not be afraid! Come to him and say from the depths of your hearts: "Jesus, I trust in You!". Let yourselves be touched by his boundless mercy, so that in turn you may become apostles of mercy by your actions, words and prayers in our world, wounded by selfishness, hatred and so much despair.

Carry with you the flame of Christ's merciful love – as St John Paul II said – in every sphere of your daily life and to the very ends of the earth. In this mission, I am with you with my encouragement and prayers. I entrust all of you to Mary, Mother of Mercy, for this last stretch of the journey of spiritual preparation for the next WYD in Kraków. I bless all of you from my heart.

### 4. Kraków is expecting us!

Only a few months are left before we meet in Poland, Kraków, the city of St John Paul II and St Faustina Kowalska, is waiting for us with open arms and hearts. I believe that Divine Providence led us to the decision to celebrate the Youth Jubilee in that city which was home to those two great apostles of mercy in our times. John Paul II realized that this is the time of mercy. At the start of his pontificate, he wrote the encyclical *Dives in Misericordia*. In the Holy Year 2000 he canonized Sr Faustina and instituted the Feast of Di-

vine Mercy, which now takes place on the Second Sunday of Easter. In 2002 he personally inaugurated the Divine Mercy Shrine in Kraków and entrusted the world to Divine Mercy, in the desire that this message would reach all the peoples of the earth and fill their hearts with hope: "This spark needs to be lighted by the grace of God. This fire of mercy needs to be passed on to the world. In the mercy of God the world will find peace and mankind will find happiness!" (*Homily at the Dedication of the Divine Mercy Shrine in Kraków*, 17 August 2002).

Dear young people, at the Shrine in Kraków dedicated to the merciful Jesus, where he is depicted in the image venerated by the people of God, Jesus is waiting for you. He has confidence in you and is counting on you! He has so many things to say to each of you... Do not be afraid to look into his eyes, full of infinite love for you. Open yourselves to his merciful gaze, so ready to forgive all your sins. A look from him can change your lives and heal the wounds of your souls. His eyes can quench the thirst that dwells deep in your young hearts, a thirst for love, for peace, for joy and for true happiness. Come to Him and do not be afraid! Come to him and say from the depths of your hearts: "Jesus, I trust in You!". Let yourselves be touched by his boundless mercy, so that in turn you may become apostles of mercy by your actions, words and prayers in our world, wounded by selfishness, hatred and so much despair.

Carry with you the flame of Christ's merciful love – as St John Paul II said – in every sphere of your daily life and to the very ends of the earth. In this mission, I am with you with my encouragement and prayers. I entrust all of you to Mary, Mother of Mercy, for this last stretch of the journey of spiritual preparation for the next WYD in Kraków. I bless all of you from my heart.

From the Vatican, 15 August 2015  
Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

# Morning Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae

Thursday, 8 October

## Those with no name

The desperate "why" that is insistently directed to God by mankind is also seen in the many letters that Pope Francis receives every day. He shared this by telling the stories of a young mother with a family who is facing the difficulty of cancer, and of an elderly woman who mourns her son who was murdered by the mafia. They wrote to the Pope asking why the wicked seem to be happy while the righteous are always faced with difficulties. Pope Francis responded precisely to this serious question in the Mass he celebrated on Thursday morning in the Chapel of Santa Marta, assuring all that God never abandons those who trust in him.

His reflection was inspired by the words of Psalm 1 – "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord" – which is, precisely, "a response to the lamentations of many people, many 'whys' that we express to God". Those "many 'whys'" are actually expressed in the biblical passage from the book of Malachi (3:13-20) in today's Liturgy.

"The Lord", Pope Francis affirmed, "laments to these people, he too laments, saying: 'Your words have been stout against me'. Yet, 'says the Lord, you continue to say: 'How have we spoken against thee?'. You have said: 'It is vain to serve God. What is the good of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the Lord of hosts? Henceforth we deem the arrogant blessed; evildoers not only prosper but when they put God to the test they escape'".

"How often", the Pope said, "we see this reality in bad people; people who do evil and life seems fine for them: they are happy, they have everything they want, they are not lacking in anything". And this begs the question: "Why Lord?". Yes, the Pope said, "this is one of many 'whys': why is this insolent person, who does not care about God or others, this unjust and wicked per-



"Poor Lazarus and the rich man" (miniature from the 8th century)

son, why is everything fine in their life? Why do they have all that they want while those of us who want to do good have so many problems?".

In this regard, Pope Francis shared that just the day before he had received "a letter from a brave mom" who, at 40 years of age, with her husband and three children, is facing the difficulty of "a very bad kind" of tumour. The woman wrote to Pope Francis, asking: "Why is this happening to me?". Also, the Pope added that "a few weeks ago" he had received another letter in which "an elderly woman, who was left alone because her son had been murdered by the Mafia", also asked "why?", adding: "I pray". And again, in yet another letter: "I am raising children, I am moving forward with a family that loves God, so, why?".

"These 'whys'", the Pope affirmed, are asked by everyone. In particular we ask "why do the wicked seem to be so happy?". The Word of God provides an answer to these questions. The Pope recalled the words from the passage of Malachi: "The Lord heeded and heard them". Indeed, "the Lord hears us when we ask 'why', always". Again we read in today's passage from Malachi: "A book of remembrance was written before him of those who

feared the Lord and thought on his name'. They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, my special possession on the day when I act". Therefore, the Pope continued, "God remembers the righteous, through those who are suffering now, who are unable to explain their situations". Indeed, "God remembers those who trust in him, even while asking 'Why? Why? Why?'".

This is precisely the attitude that Psalm 1 outlines: "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, that yields its fruit in its season".

The Pope said that "at this time we do not see the fruits of these suffering people, these people carrying the cross", just as "on Good Friday and Holy Saturday the fruits of the crucified Son of God, the fruits of his suffering, were not yet visible". Psalm 1 says that "in all that he does, he prospers".

What does the same Psalm say about "the wicked, for whom we think everything is fine?". Pope Francis re-read the verse: "The wicked are not so, but are like chaff which the wind drives away.... For

the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish". In short, "you may be fine today, you may have everything, you do not care about God, you do not care about others, you exploit others: you are unjust, only thinking of yourself, not of others".

However, the Pope suggested, "there is one thing that Jesus said and it always comes to my mind: 'Tell me, what is your name?'. Yes, this people does not know their name, 'they have no name'. The Pope recalled the parable of Lazarus, "who had nothing to eat, and dogs licked his wounds". Meanwhile, "the rich man held banquets and enjoyed himself without looking at the needs of others". The Pope noted that "it is curious how this man's name is not mentioned", but instead "he is only identified with an adjective: a rich man". Indeed, "in the book of God's remembrance, the wicked have no name: he is wicked, he an exploiter". These are the people who "have no names but only adjectives".

Instead, the Pontiff pointed out, "all those who try to go the way of the Lord will be with his Son, who has a name: Jesus the Saviour, a name that is difficult to understand, despite the inexplicable evidence of the Cross and all that he suffered for us".

Pope Francis concluded by inviting those present to think over Psalm 1: "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked... But his delight is in the law of the Lord". In this way, "even when you are suffering, hope in the Lord". Just as "we have prayed in the Collect, ask the Lord to give you what your conscience 'does not dare to hope for'". Yes, "ask also for this: that the Lord give you more hope".

Friday, 9 October

## The well-mannered evil one

In his homily during the Mass on Friday morning in the Chapel of Santa Marta Pope Francis recommended discernment and vigilance in order to avoid the risk of "anaesthetizing one's conscience".

He referred to the passage in Luke (11:15-26), in which the Evangelist "combines several things that Jesus likely said" at various times, and then "describes Jesus' response to those who accused him of casting out demons through the power of the prince of demons". Describing the context in which the scene takes place, the Pope recalled that "Jesus was among the people, doing good, preaching and the people listened to him and said that he spoke with authority". But, the Pope noted, there was also "another group of people, people who did not like him and always tried to interpret" his words and his behaviour in a different way, in a false manner against him. What were their reasons? The Pope listed several: "for some it was out of envy, for others it was due to strict doctrine, and for others it was out of fear that the Romans would come and massacre them".

## Second plenary assembly of the Pontifical Commission

### For the protection of minors

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors began its second plenary assembly with a Mass celebrated by Pope Francis in Santa Marta. The meetings were held in Rome from 9 to 11 October and focused on hearing and discussing progress reports presented by the working groups formed in the February 2015 plenary assembly. These groups cover key areas of the mission entrusted to the Commission by the Holy Father, for the purpose of advising him, his collaborators and the local church on the following issues: guidelines for the safeguarding and protection of minors; healing and care for victims, survivors and their families; formation of candidates to the priesthood and to religious life, and education of Church leadership; education of families and communities; theology and spirituality; canonical and civil norms.

The particular focus of these working groups included research into the assessment and ongoing formation of candidates to the priesthood and religious life; the use of forensic assessments regarding people accused of a crime; creating liturgical support materials for the pastoral care of victims, survivors and com-

munities. The Commission does not address individual cases, does not exercise oversight, and is not a decision-making body.

Since its establishment, the Commission has been invited by Church leaders to place the inter-disciplinary expertise of its members at the service of the Church in various parts of the world. Commission members have taken part in workshops, conferences and seminars on the protection of minors in Ireland, the U.K., France, New Zealand, the Pacific Islands and recently in the Philippines, where 76 bishops attended. Next month, Commission members will also address all of the bishops of Central America. There has been very positive feedback from participation in these initiatives. The Commission's contribution has been seen as a resource for the Church throughout the world, as Bishops' Conferences continue to develop sound and culturally effective guidelines that reflect the local reality.

The Commission plans to hold its next plenary assembly in February 2016.

At the Angelus the Pope advises surrendering to the love of Jesus

## The Lord's gaze

*A call to let oneself be "conquered by Jesus' loving gaze" was expressed by Pope Francis to the faithful who gathered to recite the Angelus on Sunday, 11 October, in St Peter's Square. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's address, which was given in Italian.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning!

Today's Gospel, taken from Mark, Chapter 10, is divided into three scenes, punctuated by three gazes of Jesus.

The first scene presents the encounter between the Teacher and a fellow who – according to the parallel passage of Matthew – is identified as a "young man". The encounter of Jesus with a young man. This man runs up to Jesus, kneels and calls him "Good Teacher". Then he asks: "what must I do to inherit eternal life", in other words, happiness (v. 17). "Eternal life" is not only the afterlife, but is a full life, fulfilled, without limitations. What must we do to achieve it? Jesus' answer restates the commandments that refer to loving one's neighbours. In this regard the young man has nothing to reproach; but clearly, observing the precepts is not enough. It does not satisfy his desire for fulfillment. Jesus perceives this desire that the young man bears in his heart; for this reason his response is expressed in an *intense gaze* filled with tenderness and love. The Gospel thus says: "[Jesus] looking upon him loved him" (v. 21). He realized he was a good young man... But Jesus also understood his interlocutor's weakness, and of-

fers him a practical proposal: to give all his possessions to the poor and follow Him. That young man's heart, however, was divided between two masters: God and money, and he went away sorrowful. This shows that faith and attachment to riches cannot coexist. Thus, in the end, the young man's initial enthusiasm is dampened in the unhappiness of a *sunken sequela*.

In the second scene the Evangelist frames the eyes of Jesus, and this time it is a *pensive gaze*, one of caution: "[Jesus] looked around and said to his disciples: 'How hard it will be for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!'" (v. 23). To the astonishment of the disciples, who ask him: "Then who can be saved?" (v. 26), Jesus responds with a *encouraging gaze* – it is the third gaze – and says: salvation, yes, "with men it is impossible, but not with God!" (v. 27). If we trust in the Lord, we can overcome all obstacles that impede us from following him on the path of faith. Trust in the Lord. He will give us strength, he gives us salvation, he accompanies us on the way.

And thus we arrive at the third scene, that of Jesus' solemn declaration: Truly, I say to you those who leave all to follow me shall have eternal life in the age to come and a hundredfold now in this time (cf. vv. 29-30). This "hundredfold" is comprised of things first possessed and then left, but which shall be restored and multiplied *ad infinitum*. In divesting oneself of possessions, one receives in exchange the comfort of true good; freed from the slavery of things, one earns the freedom of

servicing out of love; in renouncing possessions, one acquires the joy of giving. As Jesus said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (cf. Acts 20:35).

The young man did not allow himself to be conquered by Jesus' loving gaze, and thus was not able to change. Only by accepting with humble gratitude the love of the Lord do we free ourselves from the seduction of idols and the blindness of our illusions. Money, pleasure, success dazzle but then disappoint: they promise life but procure death. The Lord asks us to detach ourselves from these false riches in order to enter into true life, the full, authentic, luminous life. I ask you, young people, young men and young women, who are here now in the Square: "Have you felt Jesus' gaze upon you? Do you prefer to leave this Square with the joy that Jesus gives us or with the sadness of heart that worldliness offers us?"

May the Virgin Mary help us to open our heart to Jesus' love, to Jesus' gaze, the only One who can satiate our thirst for happiness.

*After the Angelus, the Pontiff expressed his "profound sadness" for Saturday's "terrible massacre" in Ankara, and he invoked greater environmental care in order to prevent natural disasters.*

Yesterday with profound sadness we received the news of the terrible massacre that occurred in Ankara, Turkey. Sorrow for the many dead.



"The Head of Christ" by Rembrandt (1628)

Sorrow for the wounded. Sorrow because the attackers struck defenceless people who were demonstrating for peace. While I pray for that dear country, I ask the Lord to welcome the souls of the deceased and to comfort the suffering and family members.

Let us pray together in silence, everyone together.

Dear brothers and sisters, Tuesday, 13 October, is the annual International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction. Sadly it must be acknowledged that the effects of such disasters are often aggravated by the lack of care for the environment on the part of mankind. I join with all those who in a forward-looking way are committed to care for our common home, to promote a global and local culture of disaster reduction and of greater resilience to them, balancing new knowledge with the traditional, and with special attention to the most vulnerable populations.

I wish all of you a happy Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci!*

## At Santa Marta

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

In short they had "many reasons" for trying "to undermine Jesus' authority over the people", and they even used "slander, as in this specific case". The Pope repeated their words from today's Gospel: "He casts out demons by Beelzebub. He is possessed. He works magic and is a sorcerer. They continually put him to the test". Essentially, "they set a snare before him, to see if he would fall".

Here the Pope made reference to the first of the two topics: discernment. By modernizing the story, as customary, Francis shed light upon how much "the evil spirit does" even "with us". That is: "he always tries to deceive, to lead us and make us choose the wrong path". And that is why "discernment is necessary". Moreover, "if the evil spirit did these things to Jesus, what would he not do to us?", the Pope asked. From here, he drew the call to "know how to discern situations: this is of God and this is not of God; this comes from the Holy Spirit, and this comes from the evil one".

For Pope Francis "the main message derived from this Gospel pas-

sage is that of discernment. A Christian cannot be calm, assuming that everything is fine. He must discern things and really look at where they come from, what their root is", continuously asking himself: "Where does this come from? What is the origin of this opinion, these phenomena", where do these things come from?

Furthermore, Jesus seems to give some "advice, and this is the second topic: vigilance". Once again, the Pope repeated part of the passage from Luke's Gospel. "When a strong, fully armed man guards his own palace, his goods are in peace; but when one stronger than he assails him and overcomes him, he takes away his armour in which he trusted, and divides his spoil". Therefore, Pope Francis said "vigilance is necessary, because the enemy may come". He then added that "this enemy is not so dangerous, because one can discover him immediately and defend oneself. But the other, the other is very dangerous". In fact, Jesus continues: "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man" – when he is driven out – "he passes through waterless places seek-

ing rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'. Francis stressed that "temptations will always return", and that "the evil spirit never tires. He was cast out, but patiently waits to return. When he returns he is pleased to find the house swept and put in order. Then he goes and brings seven other spirits, more evil than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first".

"Why is it worse?" asked the Pope. Because, he said, "first he is aware of the evil spirit that is inside, that it is the devil who torments and commands him... Instead, the Pope observed, "in the second case the evil one is hidden, he comes with his very polite friends, knocks on the door, asks permission, enters and lives with that man, in his daily life, and little by little gives him instructions". In this way "the man ends up destroyed by the well-mannered method the devil uses, by the way the devil convinces him to do things, with relativism: 'But it is not ... but it is not much ... no, relax, be calm...'"

Therefore the Pope warned against the "grave evil" of "numbing one's conscience", of anaesthetizing it. "When the evil spirit is able to anaesthetize the conscience", the Pope said, "we can say that this is his real victory: he becomes master of that conscience". The Pope explained that it is of very little help to say as some do: "This happens everywhere! Everyone has problems, we are all sinners!". Because in that 'everyone' there is the 'no one'. Everyone, but not me". And in this way you end up living out "this worldliness that is the daughter of the evil spirit".

To practice vigilance, the Pope concluded, "the Church advises us to always use an examination of conscience: What happened in my heart today, and why? Did this well-mannered demon and his friends try to come to my house?". The same goes for discernment: "Where are these words, lessons and teachings coming from? Who is saying this?". In short, we must ask the Lord for the twofold grace of discernment and vigilance "in order to prevent the one who deceives, seduces and fascinates, from entering".

The Holy Father emphasizes that many lack basic necessities

# The injustice of hunger

*"In a world rich in food resources... there are too many who lack the basic necessities for survival; and this is not only in poor countries, but is increasingly so in rich and developed societies". Pope Francis stressed this point in an audience with volunteers of the Fondazione Banco Alimentare [Food Bank Foundation] in the Paul VI Hall on Saturday morning, 3 October, the occasion of the Association's 25th anniversary. The following is a translation of the Pope's address which was given in Italian.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning!

I am happy to meet with you, all of you, associations and individuals that collaborate in this significant "network of charity" called the *Fondazione Banco Alimentare*. I also greet those who are following this meeting from St Peter's Square. For 25 years you have been committed, as volunteers, on the front line of poverty. In particular, your concern is that of opposing the waste of food, collecting it and distributing it to families in difficulty and to indigent persons. I thank you for what you do and I encourage you to continue on this path.

Hunger today is a matter of truly "scandalous" dimensions, which threaten the life and dignity of many people – men, women, children and the elderly. Every day we must address this injustice, – I would go even further – this sin, in a world rich in food resources, thanks also to enormous technological progress, there are too many who lack the basic necessities for survival; and this is true not only in poor countries, but is increasingly so in rich and developed societies. The situation is aggravated by the increase in migratory flows, which bring to Europe thousands of refugees, fleeing from their countries and in need of everything. Jesus' words resound in face of such an immeasurable problem: "I was hungry and you gave me food" (Mt 25:35). We see in the Gospel that, when the Lord realizes that the crowds that have come to listen to him are hungry, he does not ignore the problem, nor does he give a good discourse on the fight against poverty, rather he does something that leaves everyone astonished; he takes the little that the disciples had brought with them, blesses it and multiplies the loaves and fishes, so much so that at the end "they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over" (Mt 14:20).

We cannot work a miracle as Jesus did; however, we can do something in face of the hunger emergency, something humble, but which also has the force of a miracle. First of all, we should learn more about humanity, to recognize the humanity in every person, who is in need of everything. Perhaps Danilo Fossati, entrepreneur of the food sector and founder of the Food Bank, was thinking of this, when he confided to Don Giussani his uneasiness in face of the destruction of

products that were still edible, on seeing how many in Italy suffered from hunger. Don Giussani was moved and said: "Seldom have I come across a powerful person who would choose to give without asking anything in return, and never have I known a man who gave without wanting to stand out.... The Bank was his work, never publicly, always inconspicuously, he followed it from its beginning".

Your initiative, which is celebrating 25 years, is rooted in the hearts of these two men, who were not indifferent to the cry of the poor. And they understood that something had to change in people's mentality, that the walls of individualism and of selfishness had to be brought down. Continue this work with confidence, generating the culture of encounter and sharing. Your contribution might certainly seem to be a drop in the sea of need, but in reality it is precious! Together with you, others are working, and this churns the river that nourishes the hope of millions of people.

It is Jesus himself who invites us to make room in our hearts for the

urgency to "feed the hungry", and the Church has made it one of the corporal works of mercy. To share what we have with those who lack the means to satisfy such a primary need, educates us in that charity that is an overflowing gift of passion for the life of the poor that the Lord makes us meet.

In sharing the necessity of daily bread, you meet hundreds of people every day. Do not forget that they are people, not numbers, each one with his burden of pain that at times seems impossible to bear. By always keeping this in mind, you will be able to look them in the face, to look them in the eye, to shake their hand, to see the flesh of Christ in them and also help them to win back their dignity and get back on their feet. I encourage you to be brothers and friends to the poor, and to make them feel that they are important in the eyes of God. May the difficulties that you surely meet

not discourage you; rather, may they induce you to increasingly support one another, striving in active charity.

May Our Lady, Mother of Charity, protect you and accompany you with my blessing. And I ask you to pray for me, please. Thank you!

Let us pray, all together, to Our Lady. I would like to recommend something to you: in praying to Our Lady and in receiving the blessing, think of a person, of two or three that we know, who are hungry and in need of daily bread. Let us think not of ourselves, but pray to Our Lady for them. May the Lord bless them.

[Hail Mary... Blessing]



Mass with the Gendarme Corps in the Chapel of the Vatican Governorate

## Two methods

*"The humbler your service is, the more it will benefit society". Pope Francis said this during the Mass he celebrated on Saturday, 3 October, in the Chapel of the Vatican Governorate in honour of the patron of the Gendarme Corps, St Michael the Archangel. The following is a translation of the Pope's homily, which was given in Italian.*

The First Reading, taken from the Book of Revelation, begins with a strong word: "War broke out in Heaven". And then it explains how this war was. It is the final war, the last war, the war of the end. It is the war between the Angels of God commanded by St Michael against

Satan, the ancient serpent, the devil. This is the final one and everything ends there, only the Lord's eternal peace remains with all his children who were faithful. However, throughout history this war has been waged every day, every day: it is waged in the heart of men and women, in the hearts of Christians and of non-Christians.... It is the war between good and evil, where we must choose what we want, good or evil. But the strategy of war, the methods of war of these two enemies are totally opposite.

In the initial prayer, in the Collect, we asked for the grace to be defended by the Archangel Michael against the "snares" of the demon, of the devil. And *snares* are one of the strategies of the devil. He is a sower of snares. A seed of life, a seed of unity never falls from his hands – snares always snares: it is his method, to sow snares. Let us pray to the Lord to safeguard us from this.

Then, in the First Reading, we heard about another strategy, another way of waging war, Satan who seduces. He is a seducer; he is one that sows snares and is a seducer, and he seduces with fascination, with demonic fascination, leading one to believe everything. He sells skillfully with this fascination, he sells well, but in the end he pays poorly! It is his method. We think of the first time that this lord appears in the Gospel; it is in a dialogue with Jesus. Jesus was praying and fasting for 40 days in the desert, and at the end he was rather tired and hungry. And

[Satan] comes; he moves slowly as a serpent, and makes three proposals to Jesus: "If you are God, the Son of God, there are stones there, if you are hungry, turn them into bread"; "If you are the Son of God, why are you so tired? Come with me to the terrace of the Temple and throw yourself down, and people will see this miracle and without effort you will be recognized as the Son of God"; the devil tries to seduce Him and, in the end, as he had not succeeded in seducing Him, he makes the last proposal: "Let's speak clearly, I will give you all the power of the world, but you must adore me. Let's make a deal".

These are the three steps of the strategy of the ancient serpent, of the demon: first, to have things, in this case bread, riches, riches that lead one gradually to corruption, and this issue of corruption is not a fairy tale! It is everywhere. Corruption is everywhere: for two pence many people sell their soul, sell their happiness, sell their life, sell everything. That is the first step: money, riches. Then, when they have it, they feel important. The second step: vanity. What the devil said to Jesus: "Let's go on the terrace of the Temple, throw yourself down, and make a great spectacle!" – to live for vanity. The third step: power, pride, arrogance: "I will give you all the power of the world; you will be the one who commands".

This also always happens to us all in small things: we are too at



In an audience with Comboni missionaries, Pope Francis reflects on their name

## Your identity

*To express mercy and gentleness to the marginalized of our time. This summarizes the charism of the Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus, who were meeting for their General Chapter. The Pope expressed words of gratitude to the participants whom he received in audience in the Clementine Hall on Thursday morning, 1 October. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's address, which was given in Italian.*

Dear Brothers,

I cordially greet you, starting with the Superior General. This meeting is taking place in the context of your General Chapter and it gives me the opportunity to express to you and to the entire Institute the Church's gratitude for your generous service to the Gospel.

Your title is, and you are, Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus. I would like to reflect with you on these words that make up your name and your identity.

*Missionaries.* You are servants and messengers of the Gospel, especially to those who do not know the Gospel or who have forgotten it. At the origin of your mission is a gift, the free initiative of God's love which gives you a double calling: to be with him and to go out to preach (cf. Mk 3:14). All this is based on a personal relationship with Christ, rooted in Baptism, and, for some, strengthened by ordination, so that, together with the Apostle Paul, we might say: "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). This living with Christ determines our actions and our whole being; and it lives and is nourished especially through prayer, through remaining with the Lord, in



adoration, through speaking with him heart to heart.

It is in this space of prayer that one finds the true "treasure" (Lk 12:34) to give to our brothers through proclamation. The missionary makes himself a servant of the God-who-speaks, the God who wants to speak to the men and women of today, as Jesus spoke to those of his time and won the hearts of people who came from every quarter to hear him (cf. Mk 1:45), and were astonished at hearing his teaching (cf. Mk 6:2). This relationship between the mission *ad gentes* and the Word of God does not fall so much under the category of "doing" as under that of "being". The mission, in order to be authentic, must refer to and have at its centre Christ's grace which flows from the Cross: through believing in him one can transmit the Word of God that enlivens, supports and makes a missionary's commitment flourish. For

this reason, dear brothers, we must always nourish ourselves with the Word of God, in order to echo it faithfully; to welcome it with the joy of the Spirit, internalize it and make it become the flesh of our flesh as Mary did (cf. Lk 2:19). In the Word of God there is the wisdom that comes from above, allowing one to find ways of expression, attitudes and tools to face the changing challenges of humanity.

As *Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus*, you contribute to the Church's mission with joy, bearing witness to the charism of St Daniel Comboni, which has its key in the merciful love of Christ's heart for helpless men. This Heart is the source of mercy that saves and generates hope. Therefore, as men consecrated to God for the mission, you are called to imitate Jesus in his gentleness and mercy, to live your service with a humble heart, by taking care of the most abandoned of our times. Never stop asking the Sacred Heart for the gentleness that, as the daughter of Charity, is patient, bears all things, hopes all things, and endures all things (1 Cor 13:4-7). This is the gentleness of Jesus' gaze when he looked at Peter on the night of Holy Thursday (cf. Lk 22:61), or when he invited Thomas, the disbeliever, to place his hand on his pierced Heart (cf. Jn 20:27). It is there, from that Heart, that you will learn the gentleness you need in your apostolic action in order to face even the most difficult and hostile situations.

That Heart that has loved mankind so much impels you to go to the peripheries of society to bear witness to the perseverance of patient and steadfast love. May contemplation of Jesus' wounded Heart always renew a passion within you for the people of our time, which is expressed with freely given love through commitment to solidarity, especially towards the underprivileged and those who are weakest. This is how you can continue to promote justice and peace, and the respect and dignity of each person.

Dear brothers, I hope that this profound reflection on the themes of the Chapter, to which you are dedicating these days, will illuminate the path of your Institute in the coming years, helping you to discover ever more deeply your great heritage of spirituality and missionary work. In this way, with confidence, may you continue your appreciated collaboration in the Church's mission. May the example of so many confreres, who offered their lives for the cause of the Gospel, who were ready even to give the supreme witness of their blood, be an incentive and encouragement to you. Indeed, it is known that the history of the Comboni Institute has been marked by an unbroken chain of martyrs, up to our day. They are the fertile seed in the spreading of the Kingdom, and the protectors of your apostolic commitment.

I invoke Mary's protection upon you, and upon all Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus, as she is Mother of the Church and the Mother of missionaries. And before imparting the Blessing, I would like to say something that is not written here, but it is something that I feel: I always, always, have had a great admiration for you, for the work that you do, for the risks that you face.... I have always felt this great admiration. Thank you.

## At Mass with the Gendarme Corps

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

tached to riches, we are pleased when we are praised, like the peacock. And many people become ridiculous, so many people. Vanity makes one become ridiculous. Now, in the end, when one has power, one thinks one is God, and this is the great sin.

This is our struggle, and therefore today let us ask the Lord that, through the intercession of the Archangel Michael, we may be protected from the snares, the fascination, the seductions of this ancient serpent called Satan.

In your work, you have a somewhat difficult task, because there is always opposition and you must put things right and you often need to avoid offenses or crimes. Pray often so that, with the intercession of St Michael the Archangel, the Lord may safeguard you from giving in to every temptation, from every temptation to corruption for money, for riches, from vanity and arrogance. And,

like Jesus, the more humble, the more humble your service is, the more fruitful and the more useful it will be for us all.

The humility of Jesus and, how do we see Jesus' humility – and I shall end saying this, so as not to be too long – how do we see Jesus' humility? If we take the account of the temptation of Jesus, we never find his own words. Jesus does not answer with his own words; he answers in the words of Scripture, all three times. This is what he teaches us. One cannot dialogue with the devil, and this helps so much when temptation comes: I will not speak to you; only through the Word of the Lord.

May the Lord help us in this daily struggle, but not for ourselves; the struggle is for the service, because you are men and women on duty; whose duty it is to render a service to society, a service to others, a service to make goodness grow in the world.

Two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the birth of Gregory XVI

## The life of a monk

September 18th marked the 250th anniversary of the birth of Bartolomeo Alberto Cappellari, the future Gregory XVI. For the occasion, Bishop Giuseppe Andrich of Belluno-Feltre celebrated Mass during which he remembered the distinguishing element of the life of the Pontiff who always lived "a life of a monk". Gregory XVI, the Bishop said, "fought the good battle for the faith. He promoted the religious dimension in consecrated life to all Christians. He worked for the missions spreading a good profession of faith before many witnesses".

In the past the Church celebrated both the 100th and 150th anniversary of the death of the Pontiff, who died in 1846. On the first occasion Paolo Dalla Torre, a scholar of Gregory XVI's pontificate, affirmed that "with the passage of time the greatness of



the Pope from Belluno has become increasingly clear". In 1996 Giorgio Maggioni, who studied the Pontiff's discussion with Tsar Nicholas I of Russia, held a conference on the Pontiff.

To participants of the International Symposium on the Pastoral Care of the Street

# Human beings, not numbers

*Speaking to the participants of the International Symposium on the Pastoral Care of the Street, organized by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, the Pontiff recalled that women and children who are forced to live on the street or make a living on the street, "are not numbers, or 'packets' to be traded". They are, he said, "human beings, each with his or her own name and face, each with a God-given identity". The following is the English text of the Pope's words at the Symposium on Thursday, 17 September.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning.

I offer you a warm welcome at the conclusion of the International Symposium on the Pastoral Care of the Street, organized by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. I thank Cardinal Vegliò for his kind words, and in a particular way I thank him and his staff for their work in this sector. These days of study and reflection have sought to prepare a plan of action in response to the phenomenon of children and women – and their families – who spend their lives for the most part on the street. I greatly appreciate your commitment to care for and promote the dignity of these women and children, and I encourage you to persevere in your work with confidence and apostolic zeal.

The often sad realities which you encounter are the result of indifference, poverty, domestic and social

violence, and human trafficking. They involve the pain of marital separations and the birth of children out of wedlock, frequently doomed to a life of "vagrancy". Street children and street women are not numbers, or "packets" to be traded; they are human beings, each with his or her own name and face, each with a God-given identity. They are God's children like us, just like us, with the same rights.

No child chooses to live on the street. Sadly, even in our modern, globalized world, any number of children continue to be robbed of their childhood, their rights and their future. The lack of legal protection and adequate structures only aggravates their state of deprivation: they have no real family or access to education or health care. Every child abandoned or forced to live on the street, at the mercy of criminal organizations, is a cry rising up to God, who created man and woman



in his own image. It is an indictment of a social system which we have criticized for decades, but which we struggle to change in conformity with criteria of justice.

It is troubling to see the increasing number of young girls and women forced to earn a living on the street by selling their own bodies, victims of exploitation by criminal organizations and at times by parents and family members. This is a shameful reality in our societies, which boast of being modern and possessed of high levels of culture and development. Widespread corruption and unrestrained greed are robbing the innocent and the vulnerable of the possibility of a dignified life, abetting the crime of trafficking and other injustices which they have to endure. No one can remain unmoved before the pressing need to safeguard the dignity of women, threatened by cultural and economic factors!

I ask you, please: do not be disheartened by the difficulties and the challenges which you encounter in your dedicated work, nourished as it is by your faith in Christ, who showed, even to death on the cross, the preferential love of God our Father for the weak and the outcast. The Church cannot remain silent, nor can her institutions turn a blind eye to the baneful reality of street children and street women. The Christian community in the various countries needs to be involved at all levels in working to eliminate any cause which forces a child or a woman to live on the street or to earn a livelihood on the street. We can never refrain from bringing to all, and especially to the most vulnerable and underprivileged, the goodness and the tenderness of God our merciful Father. Mercy is the supreme act by which God comes to meet us; it is the way which opens our hearts to the hope of an everlasting love.

Dear brothers and sisters, I offer prayerful good wishes for the success of your efforts, in your various countries, to offer pastoral and spir-

itual care, and liberation, to those who are most frail and exploited; I likewise pray for the fruitfulness of your mission to advance and protect their personhood and dignity. I entrust you and your service to Mary, Mother of Mercy. May the sweetness of her gaze accompany the efforts and the firm purpose of all those who care for street children and street women. Upon each of you I wholeheartedly invoke the Lord's blessing.

And now I invite you to pray to Our Lady and ask her to caress these children who live on the street, these women... they suffer so much. The caress of Our Lady: we are in need of motherhood. Let us pray to Our Lady. [*Hail Mary*]

Phyllis Tickle dies

## Known for her 'portable pastors'

Phyllis Tickle died on 23 September in Millington, Tennessee, at the age of 81. The American essayist is the author of numerous popular texts on religion and theology. She loved to call her books on religion "portable pastors". Among her most prominent books are: *The Divine Hours* (2003) and *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why* (2008). A member of and Eucharistic minister in the Episcopal Church, a mother of seven children, Tickle was an esteemed commentator on religious topics in various periodicals, such as *Newsweek*, *TIME*, *The New York Times*, and *USA Today*. Her essay *Greed: The Seven Deadly Sins* (2006) made waves. In it, she follows the evolution of greed down the centuries, through a striking comparison between works of art and novels.

US Bishops on assisted suicide in California

## A deeply flawed action

California's legalization of assisted suicide, which recently took place when Jerry Brown, the Governor of state, signed the bill into law, has been defined by U.S. Bishops as "a great tragedy for human life". In a letter dated 6 October, adding to the firm stance of local bishops, Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston and chairman of the committee on Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, expressed his grief over this "deeply flawed action".



The law, which will enter into effect in the coming months, will allow terminally ill adults who are in full possession of their mental faculties to choose voluntary death through lethal drugs. The law requires the prior approval of two doctors and for just as many witnesses to be present – of which only one can be a relative – at the time the lethal substance is administered. According to O'Malley, "Governor Brown said he signed this law because it should not be a crime for a dying person in pain to end his life". However, the Cardinal stressed, "suicide itself is a tragedy, not a crime. The crime is for people in authority such as physicians to facilitate the deliberate deaths of other, more vulnerable people. That crime will now

be permitted in California".

Cardinal O'Malley also said this legislation will create "confusion", because "seriously ill patients suffering from depression and suicidal feelings will receive lethal drugs, instead of genuine care to help alleviate that suffering".

The result, he said, is that "where such 'assistance' is legal, most people taking the lethal drugs do so not because of pain but because they feel they are helpless and a 'burden' on others. The state of California in effect is now confirming this judgement. A government that legalizes assisted suicide sends the terrible message Pope Francis has so eloquently warned us against, that there is such a thing as disposable people."

Fight corruption and use money for solidarity

# Unity gives strength

*"Promote the use of money for solidarity and for society, in the style of a true cooperative, where capital does not command over men, but men over capital". Pope Francis said this on Saturday, 12 September, in the Paul VI Hall, in his address to the members of the Cooperative Credit Bank (BCC) of Rome on the 60th anniversary of its founding. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's address which was delivered in Italian.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning and welcome,

I greet and thank the President, the members of the Administrative Council, members of the cooperative, staff and the numerous relatives present. Last February I met with the representatives of the "Conf-Cooperative" and of "Federbanks"; today I am meeting you on the 60th anniversary of the foundation of your Cooperative Credit Bank.

The reason for these meetings is because the Church is well aware of the value of cooperatives. At the origin of many of them were priests, committed lay faithful and communities imbued with the spirit of Christian solidarity. This "Movement" has never been exhausted. In the social teaching of the Church there are frequent references to cooperatives. In the Encyclical *Laudato*

*Si'* too, I stressed their value in the field of renewable energy and in agriculture (cf. nn. 179-180).

I would like to speak about some points of encouragement, which I addressed to the whole Confederation in February. I will recall them briefly.

First: continue to be an engine that develops the weakest part of the local communities and of civil society, especially keeping in mind the unemployed young people and aiming to set up new cooperative enterprises.

Second: take the lead in proposing and in carrying out new welfare solutions, beginning with the field of health care.

Third: pay attention to the relationship between the economy and social justice, keeping at the centre the dignity and value of the person. The person must always be at the centre, not the god of money.

Fourth: facilitate and encourage family life, and propose cooperative and mutual solutions for the management of common goods, which cannot become the property of a few or the object of speculation.

Fifth: promote the use of money for solidarity and for society, in the style of a true cooperative, where capital does not command over men, but men over capital.

Sixth: the result of all this, will make the economy of honesty grow – the economy of honesty at a time in which the air of corruption is everywhere. You are asked not only to be honest – this is normal – but to spread and root honesty in the whole environment, and to fight corruption.

Seventh: finally, play an active role in globalization, in order to globalize solidarity.

Every cooperative is called to apply these norms to its own specific mission. You are a credit cooperative and the largest Cooperative Credit Bank in Italy. It can happen that a cooperative becomes a great enterprise, but this is not the most important challenge. The most important challenge is to grow continuing to be a true cooperative, in fact, becoming even more so. It is a real challenge! This means fostering the active participation of the members – to work together and to work for others.

Naturally, a healthy and prudent management is always to the benefit of all. Banking is a sensitive profession, which calls for great rigour. However, a cooperative bank should do something more: seek to humanize the economy, to link efficiency with solidarity.

And there is another important word in the Social Doctrine, the word: "subsidiarity". As Cooperative Credit Banks you put subsidiarity into practice when you addressed the difficulties of the crisis with your means, joining forces and not at the expense of others. This is subsidiarity: not to weigh on institutions and, therefore, on the country when problems can be addressed with one's own strength, with responsibility. Therefore, it is important that you go forward on the path of integration of the Cooperative Credit Banks in Italy. Not only because, as it is said, unity gives strength, but because it is necessary to think big, to widen the horizon.

I was told about the important resources that you have allocated to



charity and mutual aid. This is typical of good Cooperatives. I encourage you also to pay attention to how the income is produced, ever careful to keep people, young people and families always at the centre.

At the beginning of the Rural Savings Banks, it was hoped that the Credit Cooperative could stimulate other initiatives of cooperation. This spirit remains valid. The BCC can be the nucleus around which a great network is built to establish enterprises that create employment; there are so many [people] without work ... enterprises that give jobs to support families, that promote micro-credit and other ways of humanizing the economy and, above all, that give every man and every woman the opportunity to have dignity, the dignity that work gives!

I encourage you to take part actively and generously in the life of the whole Cooperative Movement. You are the BCC of Rome, but I know that your range of action extends to Lazio and also to the Abruzzo Region. In all this territory you can exercise with fidelity and creativity the mission of the Cooperative Credit. I hope you will exercise it with consistency and with the joy that comes from working for the common good. May the Lord bless you and Our Lady go with you. And, please, do not forget to pray for me.



Wisnu Sasongko, "Zacchaeus gives his riches" (2005)

A statue of Wojtyła inaugurated in Luxembourg

## Immigration and integration

A long history of devotion to John Paul II crowned by a dream – later a reality – nurtured for years: a bust in bronze, the greatest monument to the Polish Pope in Luxembourg, in honour of his visit 30 years ago. It was erected through the determination of Adriano Gentilotti, so as to seal a friendship that had begun in 1990. This piece, which was recently inaugurated in the city of Esch-Sur-Alzette by the Archbishop of Luxembourg, Jean Claude Hollerich, represents "the honour befitting a Pontiff who truly did so much for the poor and the weak", Gentilotti emphasized, especially in these meaningful times. It entails a history of immigration and integration, which creates hope in this era marked by the drama of migrants.

Born in 1937, Adriano left Cantiano, Italy at the age of 20, to join his father who was a miner in Marcinelle and who, by working the preceding shift, had escaped the disaster that instead befell his co-workers, who

were buried. Since that time, Gentilotti has lived in Esch-Sur-Alzette, but has never forgotten Cantiano, where he returns each year. In 2007 the Luxembourg postal service issued a stamp illustrating Gentilotti together with John Paul II in 1990. Two years later he brought 25 of these stamps as a gift to Benedict XVI. Gentilotti dedicated part of his life to social commitments: proof is in the fundraising network that he wove between Luxembourg and Poland, where he lived in the 1980s. This commitment has earned him the gratitude of many: even that of Karol Wojtyła, who in 1990 granted him an audience at Castel Gandolfo in order to meet him in person. "I left Cantiano the evening before by car – Gentilotti recalls – and slept in it for fear of being late. I asked a bar for its hospitality in order to change my clothes and I arrived at the Pontiff's office promptly at 9:00 on 13 September". (Gabriele Nicolò)

Lutherans in Rome

## Francis is our bishop

"For us Lutherans in Rome, he is our bishop. Not in a juridical way but in a symbolic way". Jens-Martin Kruse, pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Community of Rome, said this about Pope Francis on Thursday, 1 September. The Pontiff will visit the Lutheran Church on 15 November. "We want to have a great celebration of faith with him", the pastor told the SIR news agency.

From *Laudato Si'* to the conference in Paris

## Ecological conversion

LUIS ANTONIO G. TAGLE

We know that the climate negotiations in Paris in December 2015 could well be the last effective opportunity to negotiate an agreement to keep the humanly induced rise in global temperature below 1.5 degrees centigrade. But Pope Francis goes beyond this by saying that “the establishment of a legal framework which can set clear boundaries and ensure the protection of ecosystems has become indispensable” (n. 53). Our earnest desire and hope is for a fair and binding global agreement on climate change that has the needs

### At the United Nations

Presented here are excerpts of the keynote speech delivered on 26 September to the UN General Assembly in New York by the Archbishop of Manila and President of *Caritas Internationalis*. The address was entitled: “Challenged for a transformative change and integral ecology. A reading of the encyclical *Laudato Si'* in the context of Climate Negotiations”.

of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people at its heart.

The Long-Term Goal to stay below 1.5 degrees is crucial if we truly care for our common home and the poor. This goal has to be matched by action now, before and beyond 2020. It should have mechanisms which allow us to monitor and elevate the level of accomplishment through review cycles, rather than being content with low levels of achievement. It also means moving away from economic models exclusively based on fossil fuel extraction and consumption, to sustainable, affordable and inclusive energy systems and economies which ensure participation, equality and equity at all levels. We need new models of development that would not harm the climate further and would lift people out of poverty. Poor communities need to be consulted about the development that they desire and that would be beneficial to them. Central to all of this is ending the fossil fuel era, phasing out fossil fuel emissions, and phasing in 100% renewables with sustainable energy accessible to all.

From the perspective of integral ecology where our concern for the environment goes hand-in-hand with preferential love of the poor and the search for common good, tackling climate change directly touches the eradication of poverty, hunger and malnutrition. Integral ecology demands a human rights-based approach in the Paris agreement. In particular, to ensure the right of every person to have access to adequate food at all times, we hope for an agreement that recognizes the primacy of food security for all.

An ecological debt is owed by the global north to the global south, due to the disproportionate use of natural resources by certain countries over long periods of time re-

sulting in the economic imbalances and inequalities that we see today. This debt which is also inter-generational must be recognized and settled by those who possess more power to effect change by cutting gas emissions and by providing climate finance. At least 50% of public finance should go towards helping developing countries meet their adaptation needs. Without these reparations it is not fair to ask the poor countries who are most severely affected by climate change to do more.

Although we as Catholics should be hopeful, we are not naïve. Political processes, though necessary, are inadequate in solving problems related to creation. Pope Francis calls all of us to “ecological conversion”. Everyone therefore has a role to play. With God's grace we must free ourselves of what is negative, wasteful and violent and enter into dialogue with our global family. This requires a process of global communication and listening in truth, a global examination of conscience, a global recognition of failures and guilt, and a global resolve to fight the harm already done. We

need to see our human vocation to live with and for the family of creation as stewards and not owners. This requires that we be energetic, driven and creative but never domineering and abusive. Pope Francis challenges us to review our values and lifestyles. He calls for a culture of global solidarity, where those who historically have consumed more may restrain themselves so that by living simply, others may have the means to simply live. We need to recover gratitude, generosity, caring, nurturing and sharing as antidotes to unbridled accumulation and indi-



Max Ernst “The Entire City” (1935)

vidualism. As we witness the horrific flow to Europe of people fleeing from war and oppression, we also see that healing power of solidarity in the warm welcome and generous support from people across the globe. As Pope Francis wrote in *Laudato Si'*, “we are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental” (n. 139).

We have laid down the challenge to world leaders and decision makers. I call upon all of you in this room, attending this historic 70th General Assembly of the United Nations to use whatever influence or authority you may possess to arrive at decisions that will set humanity on a different path. You are all gifted communicators with access to those who could effect change. As Pope Francis stated: “Reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most” (n. 169). True statecraft is manifest when, in difficult times, we uphold high principles and think of the long-term common good (cf. n. 178). I know and trust that in this room, in this conference centre, in

this city there are people with conscience and courage to lead humanity in a new direction. Pope Francis asks: “What would induce anyone, at this stage, to hold on to power only to be remembered for their inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so?” (n. 57). If leaders of nations work together decisively in addressing the global climate crisis, their respective nations would come out stronger and better served. Caring for our common home could tear down ideological barriers separating nations and replace them with bridges of mutual concern.

COP21 could be the start of a long term shift in how to tackle climate change. The Catholic Church stands with those who are committed. But after the negotiation in Paris (COP21), we will face the need for urgent action. How will the political momentum generated in Paris lead to a profound transformation for us all? As members of the human family, we must act on our own ecological conversion. The message of the encyclical must permeate society from the poorest people who suffer unjustly to the elite who have enormous power to bring about global change and yet often shy away from this responsibility.

Russian edition of the Pope's encyclical

### A frontier for ecumenical commitment

An occasion for ecumenical dialogue and for discussion between Catholics and Orthodox on protecting creation which – now, more than ever – presents itself as an opportunity for joint action in the Russian Federation and all over the world. *Laudato Si'* was described this way at the launch of the Russian edition of the Pope's encyclical in Moscow on 6 October. A large crowd gathered at the presentation in the Spirit Library, and according to AsiaNews, the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Ivan Jurković; Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, along with Fr Igor Kovalevsky

and the Russian Orthodox theologian, Fr Vladimir Shmalij, were present.

Archbishop Jurković introduced the meeting, underlining the importance of recognizing that ecology “cannot be treated seriously when separated from its spiritual dimension”. In this way, he expressed his wish that Pope Francis' appeal to men and women of goodwill as well as politicians and scientists, bring about concrete action regarding the care of our planet. This task is indeed solid ground for ecumenical encounter and collaboration. The encyclical, Fr Kovalevsky underlined, has “a universal message, addressed to all, beyond religion”. He explained that the document “is not intended as a scientific text”, and the Pope “does not give ready answers, but instead he tries to awaken society to dialogue on how we want to build the future of our planet”. In this way, “the Church very clearly shows us our responsibility: man is the master of Creation”, Kovalevsky said, “and this creation is his responsibility”.

Fr Shmalij also expressed his appreciation, citing, however, several differences from the Orthodox perspective. Nevertheless he acknowledged the ecumenical aspect of the document, calling it “revolutionary”, especially due to the fact that it quotes non-Catholic sources, such as Patriarch Bartholomew.



Tourists in Red Square, St Petersburg