

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH*Unicuique suum Non praevalent*

Fiftieth year, number 16 (2493)

Vatican City

Friday, 21 April 2017



Chrism Mass

The graces of the Gospel

PAGE 4



Mass of the Lord's Supper

The work of slaves

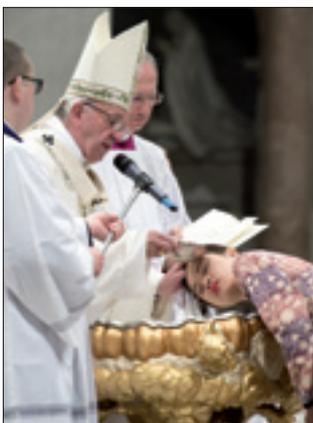
PAGE 5



Via Crucis at the Colosseum

Shedding of innocent blood

PAGE 9



Easter Vigil

A different dawn

PAGE 6

In his Urbi et Orbi Message the Pontiff recalls the dramatic situation in Syria

Peace to our days

And urges leaders of nations to have the courage to prevent conflicts

In the *Urbi et Orbi* Message on Sunday, 16 April, the Holy Father called for peace, in particular for Syria, the "entire Middle East beginning with the Holy Land, as well as in Iraq and Yemen", for Africa and Latin America and also for Europe's Ukraine. During his Message the Pontiff recalled "the complex and often dramatic situations of today's world", marked by wars and violence, and expressed hope that the Risen Lord may "grant the leaders of nations the courage they need to prevent the spread of conflicts and to put a halt to the arms trade".

This year, in which Easter is celebrated on the same day by Christians of all confessions, the Pope prayed that the Lord may "sustain the efforts of all those actively engaged in bringing comfort and relief to the civil population in beloved Syria". He then moved his attention to Africa, and asked that "the Good Shepherd remain close to the people of South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, who endure continuing hostilities, aggravated by the grave famine affecting certain parts of Africa".

Speaking about Latin America, Francis prayed that it may "be possible for bridges of dialogue to be built by continuing to fight the scourge of corruption and to seek viable and peaceful solutions to disputes, for progress and the strengthening of democratic institutions in complete respect for the rule of law".

The Pontiff also spoke about Europe, in particular Ukraine, "still beset by conflict and bloodshed", and called for "social harmony". Among the other contemporary ills, he recalled "old and new forms of slavery, inhuman labour, illegal trafficking, exploitation and discrim-



ination, and grave forms of addiction", and the sad scourge of children and young people, who are "deprived of their carefree innocence and exploited", and all those hurt by domestic violence.

The Holy Father ended with a prayer for peace: "May Jesus, who vanquished the darkness of sin and death, grant peace to our days".

Earlier that morning, Francis had delivered a homily in which he

shared the contents of a private telephone conversation he had had with a young man suffering from a serious illness. Francis attempted to explain to the young man that while God does not give explanations for the suffering in the world, He does offer the promise of the Resurrection.

PAGE 7

New saints to be proclaimed

Shepherd Children of Fatima to be canonized

On 13 May, during his trip to Portugal, Pope Francis will proclaim saints the two shepherd children of Fatima, Francisco and Giacinta Marto. The Pontiff will personally canonize the two children to whom, together with their cousin, Lucia dos Santos, the Virgin Mary appeared one hundred years ago in the Cova da Iria. The Pope approved the canonizations during the Ordinary Public Consistory in the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican on Thursday, 20 April.

Next month's celebration will be the third canonization presided by the Pontiff outside Rome, following those of Sri Lanka's first saint, Joseph Vaz, in Colombo on 14 January 2015 and of Junípero Serra in Washington, DC on 23 September of the same year.

In the Consistory of 20 April, Pope Francis and the Cardinals confirmed that besides the two Portuguese shep-



CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Inácio Saúre, IMC, as Archbishop of Nampula, Mozambique. Until now he has been Bishop of Tete, Mozambique (11 Apr.).

Archbishop Saúre, 57, was born in Balama, Mozambique. He was ordained a priest on 8 December 1998. He was ordained a bishop on 22 May 2011, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Tete (11 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Sandro Faedi, IMC, as Apostolic Administrator *sede vacante et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* of the Diocese of Tete (11 Apr.).

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Edward Ozorowski of Białystok, Poland (12 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Tadeusz Wojda, SAC, as Archbishop of Białystok, Poland. Until now he has served as Undersecretary at the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (12 Apr.).

Archbishop-elect Wojda, 60, was born in Kowala, Poland. He made his solemn vows for The Society of the Catholic Apostolate (Pallottines) and was ordained a priest on 8 May 1983. He holds a licence and a doctorate in missiology. On 1 January 1990 he started working for *Propaganda Fide* and in 1991 for the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. He has served as chaplain to the Community of Sisters of Saint Charles Borromeo in Rome and since 1996 as chaplain to the Centre of the Italian Red Cross for Motor Education of the Disabled.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Joseph Theodorus Suwatan, MSC, of Manado, Indonesia (12 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Benedictus Estephanus Rolly Untu, MSC, as Bishop of Manado. Until now he has served as Provincial Superior of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart for Indonesia (12 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Rolly Untu, 60, was born in Lembean, Indonesia. He made his perpetual vows for the Society of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart on 15 January 1983 and was ordained a priest on 29 June 1983. He holds a diploma in spirituality, and a licence in dogmatic theology. He has served in parish min-

istry and as: member of the MSC novitiate in Karangayar; substitute master at the said MSC Novitiate; formator at the MSC Scholasticate in Pineleng; teacher at the Major Seminary of Pineleng; member of the Presbyteral Council and of the College of Consulters in the Diocese of Manado; MSC vice-provincial for Indonesia; deputy director of the Higher School of Philosophy in Pineleng; assistant to the MSC Provincial Superior for Indonesia.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Roman Adam Marcinkowski, titular Bishop of Bulla regia, from his office as Auxiliary of Plock, Poland (13 Apr.).

The Holy Father has appointed Fr Peter Kohlgraf from the clergy of the Archdiocese of Cologne, Germany, as Bishop of Mainz, Germany. Until now he has been professor of pastoral theology at the Catholic High School in Mainz (18 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Kohlgraf, 50, was born in Cologne, Germany. He was ordained a priest on 18 June 1993. He holds a doctorate in theology. He has served in parish ministry and as: assistant at the Collegium Albertinum in Bonn; and for two years served as substitute for the chair of religious pedagogy at Münster University; later he taught religion at the Erzbischöfliches Gymnasium Marienberg in Neuss where he served as chaplain.

Schedule for the Holy Father's journey to Egypt

A "Pope of peace in Egypt of Peace" is the motto for the Pontiff's upcoming journey to the land of the Pharaohs. According to the official programme of the visit, Pope Francis will leave from Fiumicino airport on Friday afternoon, 28 April, arriving in Cairo at 2:00 PM. A welcome ceremony will take place at the Presidential Palace in Heliopolis followed by courtesy visits with the President of the Republic and with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar. Afterwards, Francis, along with Grand Imam Ahmed al Tayyeb, will address participants of the International Peace Conference. The Pontiff will then meet with civil authorities and the Pope of Alexandria, H.H. Tawadros II.

Saturday, 29 April, will be dedicated to meetings with the Catholic community. At 10:00 AM, Pope Francis will celebrate Mass, followed by lunch with Egypt's Bishops. In the early afternoon, he is scheduled to meet and pray with clergy, religious and seminarians before his 5:00 PM departure for Rome.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Martin John Amos of Davenport, USA (19 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed Msgr Thomas Robert Zinkula from the clergy of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, USA, as Bishop of Davenport. Until now he has been rector of the Saint Pius X Seminary in Dubuque (19 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Zinkula, 60, was born in Mount Vernon, USA. He holds a Bachelor's degree in mathematics, economics and business. He graduated in law from the University of Iowa in Iowa City and for several years worked as a civil lawyer. He subsequently entered the seminary where he later obtained a licence in canon law. He was ordained a priest on 26 May 1990. He has served in parish ministry and as: judge at the Archdiocesan Tribunal; judicial vicar; episcopal vicar for the Cedar Rapids Region; member of the Presbyteral Council and of the "Priest Personnel Board".

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Vilsom Basso, SCI, as Bishop of Imperatriz, Brazil. Until now he has been Bishop of Caxias do Maranhão, Brazil (19 Apr.).

Bishop Basso, 57, was born in Cinquentenário-Tuparendi, State of Rio Grande do Sul. He made his perpetual vows for the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on 25 February 1985 and was ordained a priest on 28 December 1985. He was appointed Bishop of Caxias do

Maranhão on 19 March 2010. He is also President of the Episcopal Pastoral Commission for Youth of the Episcopal Conference of Brazil.

Secretariat for Communications

The Holy Father has appointed as Consulters of the Secretariat for Communications the following:

Fr Ivan Maffei, Undersecretary of the Italian Episcopal Conference; Fr José María La Porte, Dean of the Faculty of Institutional Social Communication of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross; Fr Peter Gonsalves, SDB, Dean of the Faculty of Social Communication Sciences of the Pontifical Salesian University; Fr Eric Salobir, OP, Promoter General for social communications of the Order of Preachers; Fr James Martin, SJ, Jesuit Magazine America; Fr Jacqueline Azétop, SJ, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Pontifical Gregorian University; and Dr Paolo Peverini, lecturer in Semiotics at the LUISS "Guido Carli"; Dr Fernando Giménez Barrioacanal, president and delegate Counselor of Radio *Popular-Cadena COPE*; Dr Ann Carter, Rasky Baerlein Strategic Communications; Mr Graham Ellis, deputy director of BBC Radio; Dr Michael P. Warsaw, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of EWTN Global Catholic Network; Dr Dino Cataldo Dell'Accio, Chief ICT Auditor to the United Nations; and Dr Michael Paul Unland, executive director of the Catholic Media Council (CA.ME.CO.).

START OF MISSION

On 9 February, Archbishop Matthew Kurian Vayalunkal, titular Archbishop of Ratiaria, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio in the Solomon Islands, with the presentation of his Letters of Credence to H.E. Sir Frank Kabui, Governor General at Government House.

NECROLOGY

Bishop José Ramón Gurruchaga Ezama, SDB, Bishop emeritus of Lurín, Peru, at age 86 (11 Apr.)

Bishop Edward Francis, Bishop emeritus of Sivagangai, India, at age 86 (11 Apr.)

Bishop Georges Rol, Bishop emeritus of Angoulême, France, at age 90 (13 Apr.)

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH
Unicuique suum  Non praevalentibus

Vatican City
cd.english@ossrom.va
www.osservatoreromano.va

GIOVANNI MARIA VIAN
Editor-in-Chief

Giuseppe Fiorentino
Assistant Editor

Editorial office
via del Pellegrino, 00120 Vatican City
telephone +390669899300, fax +3906698983675

TIPOGRAFIA VATICANA EDITRICE
L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO
don Sergio Pellini S.D.B.
Director General
Photo Service
photo@ossrom.va www.photo.va
Advertising Agency
Il Sole 24 Ore S.p.A.
System Comunicazione Pubblicitaria
Via Monte Rosa 91, 20149 Milano
segreteria@dirizionesystem@ilsole24ore.com

Subscription rates: Italy - Vatican: € 28.00; Europe: € 100.00 - US\$ 148.00; Latin America, Africa, Asia: € 100.00 - US\$ 160.00 - £ 88.00; Oceania, North America: € 160.00 - US\$ 240.00 - £ 130.00. Management Office: phone +390669899480; fax +390669885664; e-mail subscriptions@ossrom.va. *For India:* The weekly English Edition of L'Osservatore Romano is published and distributed in India by Camel International Publishing House, Cotton Hill, Tiruvandur - 605 024, Kerala-India; phone: +9147572723; fax: +9147528189; 239224; e-mail: cip@indiasol.net.in; kooceema@camelpublications.com. *For North America:* L'Osservatore Romano (USPS 016-410) is published fifty times per year (weekly, except third week in August and last week in December) by Our Sunday Visitor, L'Osservatore Romano, English Edition, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46730. Periodicals Postage Pending at Huntington, IN, and additional mailing offices, USA - phone: 800-248-2440 ext.7; fax: 866-891-7390 - e-mail: ossales@ossrom.com. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Our Sunday Visitor, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46730

At the General Audience the Holy Father speaks of the Risen Christ, our hope

The nucleus of faith

Christianity is "not an ideology" nor a "philosophical system". The Pope reiterated this in the first General Audience after Easter on Wednesday morning, 19 August. "God is preparing an unexpected future for me and for all of us", he told the faithful gathered in Saint Peter's Square. The following is a translation of the Pope's catechesis, which he gave in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good Morning!

We are meeting today in the light of Easter which we have celebrated and we are continuing to celebrate in the Liturgy. For this reason, in our series of catecheses on Christian hope, I would like to speak to you today about the Risen Christ, our hope, as he is portrayed by Saint Paul in the First Letter to the Corinthians. (cf. 1 Cor 15).

The Apostle wants to solve a problem which was surely at the centre of discussions in the community of Corinth. The Resurrection is the last topic discussed in the Letter, but it is probably the first in order of importance. In fact, everything rests on this premise.

Speaking to his fellow Christians, Paul begins with an irrefutable fact that is not the result of the reflection of a knowledgeable man, but a fact, a simple fact which occurred in the lives of some people. Christianity started from here. It is not an ideology; it is not a philosophical system; rather it is a path of faith which begins with an event witnessed by Jesus' first disciples. Paul summarises it like this: Jesus died for our sins, he was buried, and on the third day He rose and appeared to Peter and to the twelve [apostles]. (cf. 1 Cor 15:3-5). This is the fact: He died, He was buried, He rose and He appeared. That is, Jesus is alive! This is the heart of the Christian message.

In announcing this event, which is the central nucleus of faith, Paul insists, above all, on the last element of the Easter mystery, that is, on the fact that Jesus is Risen. If in fact everything had ended with his death, we would have in Him, an example of supreme self-denial, but this would not be able to generate our faith. He was a hero! He died, but He is Risen because faith arises from the Resurrection. Accepting that Christ is dead and that He died crucified is not an act of faith. It is a historical fact. Believing he is Risen, on the other hand, is. Our faith begins on Easter morning. Paul makes a list of the people to whom the Risen Jesus appeared (cf. vv. 6-7). We have here a short summary of all the Easter narratives and of all the people who came into contact with the Risen One. At the top of the list are: Cephas, that is Peter,

the group of 12 [Apostles] and then "500 brethren" many of whom could still have borne witness. Then James is cited. The last on the list – as the least worthy of all – is himself. Paul says of himself: "as to one untimely born" (v 8).

Paul uses this expression because his personal history is dramatic. He was not an altar boy, but a persecutor of the Church, proud of his convictions. He felt he was a successful man with a very clear idea of what life was about and its duties. But, in this perfect picture, – everything was perfect for Paul, he knew everything – in this perfect view of life, one day something absolutely unexpected happens: the meeting with the Risen Jesus on the way to Damascus. There was not just a man who fell to the ground. There was a person seized by an event that would overturn the meaning of [his life]. And the persecutor becomes an apostle. Why? Because I saw Jesus alive! I saw the Risen Jesus Christ! This is the foundation of Paul's faith, as well as of the faith of the other apostles, as well as of the faith of the Church, as well as of our faith.

How beautiful it is to think that Christianity is essentially this! It is not so much our search for God – a search which in truth is tenuous –, but rather God's search for us. Jesus took us, grasped us, won us over, never more to leave us. Christianity is grace. It is surprise and, for this reason, it implies a heart that is capable of amazement. A closed heart, a rationalist heart is incapable of amazement and cannot understand what Christianity is because Christianity is grace, and grace can only be perceived, and furthermore, it happens in the amazement of the encounter.

So, even if we are sinners – we all are –, if our good intentions are only "on paper", or if on appraising our life we realize we have accumulated many failures..., on Easter morning, we can be like those people of whom the Gospel speaks: going to the Sep-



"The Resurrection", Neil McBride

ulchre of Christ, seeing the large overturned stone and thinking that God is preparing an unexpected future for them and for all of us; going to our sepulchre: we all have some of this inside us. To go there and see how God is capable of rising again from there. Here, there is happiness; there is joy and life, where everyone thought there was only sadness, defeat and darkness. God makes His most beautiful flowers grow in the midst of the most arid of stones.

To be Christian means not starting from death, but rather, from God's love for us which has defeated our most bitter enemy. God is greater than nothingness, and a lit candle is enough to overcome the darkest of nights. Echoing the prophets, Paul cries, "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" (v. 55). We carry this cry in our heart in these days of Easter. And if they should ask the reason for the smile we give and our patient readiness to share, then we will be able to answer that Jesus is still here, that he continues to be alive among us, that Jesus is here, in the Square, with us: Alive and Risen.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, particularly the groups from England, Sweden, Switzerland, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Canada and the United States of America. I offer a particular greeting to the newly-ordained deacons from the Pontifical Irish College, together with families and friends. In the joy of the Risen Christ, I invoke upon you and your families the loving mercy of God our Father. May the Lord bless you all!

Lastly, I greet the *young people*, the *sick* and the *newlyweds*. Dear young people, especially you from the *Professione di fede* of the Dioceses of Milan and Cremona, may you experience fully the Easter message, bearing witness everywhere to the Risen Christ's gift of peace. Dear *sick people*, look constantly to the One who has overcome death and helps us to accept suffering as a privileged moment of redemption and salvation. Dear *newlyweds*, may you live your daily family experience in the awareness of the life giving presence of Jesus in your home.



At the Chrism Mass the Holy Father speaks to priests about the joy of sharing the 'good news'

We should never attempt to separate truth, mercy and joy

On Holy Thursday, 13 April, Pope Francis celebrated the Chrism Mass in Saint Peter's Basilica before some 2,000 priests who renewed their vows of ordination. The following is the English text of the Pope's homily which he delivered in Italian.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Lk 4:18). Jesus, anointed by the Spirit, brings *good news* to the poor. Everything he proclaims, and we priests too proclaim, is *good news*. News full of the joy of the Gospel – the joy of those anointed in their sins with the oil of forgiveness and anointed in their charisma with the oil of mission, in order to anoint others in turn.

Like Jesus, the priest makes the message joyful with his entire person. When he preaches – briefly, if possible! – he does so with the joy that touches people's hearts with that same word with which the Lord has touched his own heart in prayer. Like every other missionary disciple, the priest makes the message joyful by his whole being. For as we all know, it is in the little things that joy is best seen and shared: when by taking one small step, we make God's mercy overflow in situations of desolation; when we decide to pick up the phone and arrange to see someone; when we patiently allow others to take up our time.

The phrase "*good news*" might appear as just another way of saying "the Gospel". Yet those words point to something essential: the joy of the Gospel. The Gospel is good news

of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of Mary. The good news of the Annunciation inspired the Virgin Mother to sing her *Magnificat*. It filled the heart of Joseph, her spouse, with sacred silence, and it made John leap for joy in the womb of Elizabeth, his mother.

In today's Gospel, Jesus returns to Nazareth and the joy of the Spirit renews that Anointing in the little synagogue of that town: the Spirit descends and is poured out upon him, "anointing him with the oil of gladness" (cf. Ps 45:8).

Good news. A single word – Gospel – that, even as it is spoken, becomes truth, brimming with joy and mercy. We should never attempt to separate these three graces of the Gospel: its truth, which is non-negotiable; its mercy, which is unconditional and offered to all sinners; and its joy, which is personal and open to everyone. Truth, mercy and joy: these three go together.

The truth of the *good news* can never be merely abstract, incapable of taking concrete shape in people's lives because they feel more comfortable seeing it printed in books.

The mercy of the *good news* can never be a false commiseration, one that leaves sinners in their misery without holding out a hand to lift them up and help them take a step in the direction of change.

joys. I say "joys" in the plural, for they are many and varied, depending on how the Spirit chooses to communicate them, in every age, to every person and in every culture. They need to be poured into new



the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus" (*ibid.*, 1).

A second icon of the *good news* that I would like to share with you today is the jug with its wooden ladle that the Samaritan woman carried on her head in the midday sun (cf. Jn 4:5-30). It speaks to us of something crucial: the importance of concrete situations. The Lord, the Source of Living Water, had no means of drawing the water to quench his thirst. So the Samaritan woman drew the water with her jug, and with her ladle she sated the Lord's thirst. She sated it even more by concretely confessing her sins. By mercifully shaking the vessel of that Samaritan woman's soul, the Holy Spirit overflowed upon all the people of that small town, who asked the Lord to stay with them.

The Lord gave us another new vessel or wineskin full of this "inclusive concreteness" in that Samaritan soul who was Mother Teresa. He called to her and told her: "I am thirsty". He said: "My child, come, take me to the hovels of the poor. Come, be my light. I cannot do this alone. They do not know me, and that is why they do not love me. Bring me to them". Mother Teresa, starting with one concrete person, thanks to her smile and her way of touching their wounds, brought the *good news* to all. The way we touch wounds with our hands, our priestly way of caressing the sick and those who have lost hope. The priest must be a man of tender love. Concreteness and tenderness!

The third icon of the *good news* is the fathomless vessel of the Lord's pierced Heart: his utter meekness, humility and poverty which draw all people to himself. From him we have to learn that announcing a great joy to the poor can only be done in a respectful, humble, and even humbling, way. Concrete, tender and humble: in this way our evangelization will be joyful. Evangelization cannot be presumptuous, nor can the integrity of the truth be rigid, because truth became flesh, it became tenderness, it became a child, it became a man and, on the cross, it became sin (cf. 2 Cor 5:21). The Spirit proclaims and teaches "the whole truth" (cf. Jn 16:3), and he is not afraid to do this one sip at a time. The Spirit tells us in every situation what we need to say to our enemies (cf. Mt 10:19), and at those times he illumines our every small step forward. This meekness and integrity gives joy to the poor, revives sinners, and grants relief to those oppressed by the devil.

Dear priests, as we contemplate and drink from these three new wineskins, may the *good news* find in us that "contagious fullness" which Our Lady radiates with her whole being, the "inclusive concreteness" of the story of the Samaritan woman, and the "utter meekness" whereby the Holy Spirit ceaselessly wells up and flows forth from the pierced heart of Jesus our Lord.



because it is, in essence, a message of joy.

The *good news* is the precious pearl of which we read in the Gospel. It is not a thing but a mission. This is evident to anyone who has experienced the "delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 10).

The *good news* is born of Anointing. Jesus' first "great priestly anointing" took place, by the power

This message can never be gloomy or indifferent, for it expresses a joy that is completely personal. It is "the joy of the Father, who desires that none of his little ones be lost" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 237). It is the joy of Jesus, who sees that the poor have the good news preached to them, and that the little ones go out to preach the message in turn (*ibid.*, 5).

The joys of the Gospel are special

286), Our Lady of Prompt Succour, who, after conceiving in her immaculate womb the Word of life, goes out to visit and assist her cousin Elizabeth. Her "contagious fullness" helps us overcome the temptation of fear, the temptation to keep ourselves from being filled to the brim and even overflowing, the temptation to a faint-heartedness that holds us back from going forth to fill others with joy. This cannot be, for "the joy of the Gospel fills

On Holy Thursday with detainees at Paliano House of Detention

The work of slaves



Pope Francis celebrated Mass for inmates at Paliano House of Detention on the outskirts of Rome on the evening of Holy Thursday, 13 April. During the Mass of the Lord's Supper, Francis washed the feet of 12 detainees. The following is the translation of the Pope's off-the-cuff homily, which he delivered in Italian.

Jesus was having supper with them, the Last Supper, and as the Gospel says, he "knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father" (Jn 13:1). He knew he had been betrayed and that he would be handed over by Judas that very night. "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end" (*ibid.*). This is how God loves: to the end. He gives His life up for each one of us, and he is

proud of this and wants to do this because He has love"; "to love to the end". It is not easy because we are all sinners. We all have shortcomings, defects, many things. We all know how to love but we are not like God who loves without thinking of the consequences; to the end. And he gives an example. To show this, He who was the "boss", who was God, washed his disciples' feet. It was a custom of that time to wash feet before lunch and supper because there was no asphalt and people walked about in the dust. Therefore, one of the gestures to receive someone at home, also for a meal, was to wash their feet. This was done by slaves, those who were enslaved. But Jesus overturns this and does this Himself. Simon did not want him to do it, but Jesus explained that it was so, that he had come into the world to serve, to serve us, to make himself a slave for us, to give his life for us, to love until the end.

Today, as I was arriving, there were many people on the street who were hailing [my arrival]; "the Pope is coming, the boss. The head of the Church...". The head of the



Church is Jesus, no joking around! The Pope represents Jesus and I would like to do the same as He did. In this ceremony, the parish priest washes the feet of the faithful. There is a reversal of roles. The one who appears to be the greatest must do the work of the slave in order to sow love; to sow love among us. I do not say to you today to go and wash each other's feet. That would be a joke. But the symbol, the example yes: I would say that if you can offer some help, provide a service here in prison to your companion, do so.

Because this is love. This is the way to wash feet; it is being at the service of others. Once, the disciples were arguing amongst themselves as to who was the greatest, the most important one. And Jesus said: "Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves". And this is what He did. This is what God does with us. He serves us. He is the servant. All of us who are "poor things". Everyone! But he is great. He is good. And he loves us as we are. For this reason, let us think about God, about Jesus, during the ceremony. It is not a ceremony of folklore. It is a gesture to remember what Jesus gave. Following this, he took bread and he gave us His body. He took wine and he gave us His blood. This is how God's love is. Today, let us only think of God's love.

Holy Thursday

Forgiveness and redemption

The "joy of the Gospel" lay at the heart of Pope Francis' homily at the Chrism Mass in Saint Peter's Basilica on the morning of Holy Thursday, 13 April. It is at this Mass that the sacred oils used for the Sacraments and Ordinations are blessed each year.

In his homily, the Pontiff explored the three "icons" of the "Good News" of the Gospel: "the stone water jars at the wedding feast of Cana" (cf. Jn 2:6), "the jug with its wooden ladle that the Samaritan woman carried on her head in the midday sun" (cf. Jn 4:5-30), and "the fathomless vessel of the Lord's pierced Heart".

Later on Holy Thursday, the day in which the Church recalls the institution of the priesthood, and as in the past few years of his pontificate, Francis enjoyed lunch with a group of Rome parish priests. Ten diocesan and religious priests were invited to share the meal with the Pope at the home of Archbishop Angelo Becciu, Substitute of the Secretariat of State. During their friendly conversation with the Pope, the priests recounted their different pastoral experiences and the problems they encountered in their ministry. Pope Francis listened to them carefully and offered advice, recalling similar situations in which he had found himself in the past.

In the evening, Pope Francis made his way to a penitentiary in Paliano, some 75 km South of Rome, where he celebrated the Lord's Supper and washed the feet of 12 detainees, including three women and a man who is converting from Islam to Catholicism.

The Vatican said that among the detainees who participated in the ceremony of the Washing of the Feet, "two are sentenced to life imprisonment and all the others should finish their sentences between 2019 and 2073".

Some 70 prisoners are currently detained at the facility. Several took part in the liturgy, including four who served as altar servers. The detainees also prepared gifts for the Pope, including two dessert cakes, a handcrafted wooden cross and fresh vegetables from the prison garden.

In his homily, which he delivered off-the-cuff, Pope Francis recalled that, in Jesus' time, the practice of washing of the feet was a task allotted to slaves. But Jesus, he said, "overturns" this role: He "had come to the world to serve, to serve us, to make himself a slave for us, to give his life for us, to love until the end".

"I would like to do the same as He did", the Pope said. "In this ceremony, the parish priest washes the feet of the faithful. There is a reversal of roles, the one who appears to be the greatest must do the work of the slave in order to sow love".



Easter Vigil

A different dawn

The faces of the women who witnessed the Resurrection were the focus of Pope Francis' homily for the Easter Vigil he celebrated in Saint Peter's Basilica on Saturday evening, 15 April. "If we try to imagine this scene, we can see in the faces of those women... the faces of mothers and grandmothers, of children and young people who bear the grievous burden of injustice and brutality", he said. The following is the English text of the Pope's homily, which was delivered in Italian.

"After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb" (Mt 28:1). We can picture them as they went on their way... They walked like people going to a cemetery, with uncertainty and weary steps, like those who find it hard to believe that this is how it all ended. We can picture their faces, pale and fearful. And their question: can Love have truly died?

Unlike the disciples, the women are present – just as they had been present as the Master breathed his last on the cross, and then, with Joseph of Arimathea, as he was laid in the tomb. Two women who did not run away, who remained steadfast, who faced life as it is and who knew the bitter taste of injustice. We see them there, before the tomb, filled with grief but equally incapable of accepting that things must always end this way.



If we try to imagine this scene, we can see in the faces of those women any number of other faces: the faces of mothers and grandmothers, of children and young people who bear the grievous burden of injustice and brutality. In their faces we can see reflected all those who, walking the streets of our cities, feel the pain of dire poverty, the sorrow born of exploitation and human trafficking. We can also see the faces of those who are greeted with contempt because they are immigrants, deprived of country, house and family. We see faces whose eyes bespeak loneliness and abandonment, because their hands are creased with wrinkles. Their faces

mirror the faces of women, mothers, who weep as they see the lives of their children crushed by massive corruption that strips them of their rights and shatters their ties that stand in the way of change. In their grief, those two women reflect the faces of all those who, walking the streets of our cities, behold human dignity crucified.

The faces of those women mirror many other faces too, including perhaps yours and mine. Like them, we can feel driven to keep walking and not resign ourselves to the fact that things have to end this way. True, we carry within us a promise and the certainty of God's faithfulness. But our faces also bear the mark of wounds, of so many acts of infidelity, our own and those of others, of efforts made and battles lost. In our hearts, we know that things can be different but, almost without noticing it, we can grow accustomed to living with the tomb, living with frustration. Worse, we can even convince ourselves that this is the law of life, and blunt our consciences with forms of escape that only serve to dampen the hope that God has entrusted to us. So often we walk as those women did, poised between the desire of God and bleak resignation. Not only does the Master die, but our hope dies with him.

"And suddenly there was a great earthquake" (Mt 28:2). Unexpectedly, those women felt a powerful tremor, as something or someone made the earth shake beneath their feet. Once again, someone came to tell them: "Do not be afraid", but now adding: "He has been raised as he said!". This is the message that, generation after generation, this Holy Night passes on to us: "Do not be afraid, brothers and sisters; he is risen as he said!". Life, which death destroyed on the cross, now reawakens and pulsates anew (cf. ROMANO GUARDINI, *The Lord*, Chicago, 1954, p. 473). The heartbeat of the Risen Lord is granted us as a gift, a present, a new horizon. The beating heart of the Risen Lord is given to us, and we are asked to give it in turn as a transforming force, as the leaven of a new humanity. In the resurrection, Christ rolled back the stone of the tomb, but he wants also to break down all the walls that keep us locked in our sterile pessimism, in our carefully constructed ivory towers that isolate us from life, in our compulsive need for security and in our boundless ambition that can make us compromise the dignity of others.

When the High Priest and the religious leaders, in collusion with the Romans, believed that they could calculate everything, that the final word had been spoken and that it was up to them to apply it, God suddenly breaks in, upsets all the rules and offers new possibilities. God once more comes to meet us, to create and consolidate a new age, the age of mercy. This is the

promise present from the beginning. This is God's surprise for his faithful people. Rejoice! Hidden within your life is a seed of resurrection, an offer of life ready to be awakened.

That is what this night calls us to proclaim: the heartbeat of the Risen Lord. Christ is alive! That is what quickened the pace of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. That is what made them return in haste to tell the news (Mt 28:8). That is what made them lay aside their mournful gait and sad looks. They returned to the city to meet up with the others.

Now that, like the two women, we have visited the tomb, I ask you to go back with them to the city. Let us all retrace our steps and change the look on our faces. Let us go back with them to tell the news.... In all those places where the grave seems to have the final word, where death seems the only way out. Let us go back to proclaim, to share, to reveal that it is true: the Lord is alive! He is living and he wants to rise again in all those faces that have buried hope, buried dreams, buried dignity. If we cannot let the Spirit lead us on this road, then we are not Christians.

Let us go, then. Let us allow ourselves to be surprised by this new dawn and by the newness that Christ alone can give. May we allow his tenderness and his love to guide our steps. May we allow the beating of his heart to quicken our faintness of heart.

Holy Saturday evening

At 8:30 pm on the evening of Holy Saturday, 15 April, in Saint Peter's Basilica, Pope Francis celebrated the Easter Vigil Liturgy, evoking an image of the faces of the grief-stricken women who arrived at Christ's tomb only to find it empty. In the faces of these women, he said, "we can see reflected all those who, walking the streets of our cities, feel the pain of dire poverty, the sorrow born of exploitation and human trafficking... those who are greeted with contempt because they are immigrants".

The Holy Saturday ritual began in the atrium of Saint Peter's Basilica with the blessing of fire and preparation of the Paschal candle. The Pope then led the procession with the

lighted Paschal candle to the main altar, a particularly moving moment in the darkened Basilica as candles were lit from candle to candle amid the singing of the *Lumen Christi*. The singing of the *Exultet* followed. At the moment of the *Gloria*, all of the lights were turned on in the Basilica and the bells began to peal, ringing out at length.

The Liturgy of the Word was celebrated with readings in various

languages while the Psalms and the Gospel reading were sung in Latin. In the Liturgy of Baptism, the Pope administered the sacraments of Christian initiation to 10 neophytes from Albania, China, the Czech Republic, Italy, Malaysia, Malta, Spain, and the United States. The five men and five women, ranging from 12 to 50 years of age, received Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist during the celebration. A nine year old Italian boy, Gabriel Latyr Gallo, was also baptized.

The celebration concluded with the Marian antiphon *Regina Caeli* as the Pope passed to pray before the statue of Our Lady with the Child next to the main altar.



Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Happy Easter!

Today, throughout the world, the Church echoes once more the astonishing message of the first disciples: "Jesus is risen!" – "He is truly risen, as he said!".

The ancient feast of Passover, the commemoration of the liberation of the Hebrew people from slavery, here finds fulfillment. By his resurrection, Jesus

With the marks of the passion – the wounds of his merciful love – he draws us to follow him on his way, the way of life. Today too, he places upon his shoulders so many of our brothers and sisters crushed by evil in all its varied forms.

The Risen Shepherd goes in search of all those lost in the labyrinths of loneliness and marginalization. He comes to meet them through our brother-

Christ has set us free from the slavery of sin and death, and has opened before us the way to eternal life.

All of us, when we let ourselves be mastered by sin, lose the right way and end up straying like lost sheep. But God himself, our shepherd, has come in search of us. To save us, he lowered himself even to accepting death on the cross.

Today we can proclaim: "The Good Shepherd has risen, who laid down his life for his sheep, and willingly died for his flock, alleluia" (Roman Missal, IV Sunday of Easter, Communion antiphon).

In every age, the Risen Shepherd tirelessly seeks us, his brothers and sisters, wandering in the deserts of this world.

ers and sisters who treat them with respect and kindness, and help them to hear his voice, an unforgettable voice, a voice calling them back to friendship with God.

He takes upon himself all those victimized by old and new forms of slavery, inhuman labour, illegal trafficking, exploitation and discrimination, and grave forms of addiction. He takes upon himself children and adolescents deprived of their carefree innocence and exploited, and those deeply hurt by acts of violence that take place within the walls of their own home.

The Risen Shepherd walks beside all those forced to leave their homelands as a result of armed conflicts, terrorist attacks, famine and oppressive regimes. Everywhere he helps these forced migrants to encounter brothers and sisters, with whom they can share bread and hope on their journey.

In the complex and often dramatic situations of today's world, may the Risen Lord guide the steps of all those who work for justice and peace. May he grant the leaders of nations the courage they need to prevent the spread of conflicts and to put a halt to the arms trade.

Especially in these days, may he sustain the efforts of all those actively engaged in bringing comfort and relief to the civil population in beloved Syria, so greatly suffering from a war that continues to sow horror and death. Yesterday saw the latest vile attack on fleeing refugees, resulting in the death and injury of many. May he grant peace to the entire Middle East, beginning with the Holy Land, as well as in Iraq and Yemen.

May the Good Shepherd remain close to the people of South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, who endure continuing hostilities, aggravated by the grave famine affecting certain parts of Africa.

May the Risen Jesus sustain the efforts of all those who, especially in Latin America, are committed to ensuring the common good of societies marked at times by political and social tensions that in some cases have resulted in violence. May it be possible for bridges of dialogue to be built, by continuing to fight the scourge of corruption and to seek viable and peaceful solutions to disputes, for progress and the strengthening of democratic institutions in complete respect for the rule of law.

May the Good Shepherd come to the aid of Ukraine, still beset by conflict and bloodshed, to regain social harmony. May he accompany every effort to alleviate the tragic sufferings of those affected by the conflict.

The Risen Lord continues to shed his blessing upon the continent of Europe. May he grant hope to those experiencing moments of crisis and difficulty, especially due to high unemployment, particularly among young people.

Dear brothers and sisters, this year Christians of every confession celebrate Easter together. With one voice, in every part of the world, we proclaim the great message: "The Lord is truly risen, as he said!" May Jesus, who vanquished the darkness of sin and death, grant peace to our days.

Happy Easter!

Urbi et Orbi Easter Message

Peace to our days

"In the complex and often dramatic situations of today's world, may the Risen Lord guide the steps of all those who work for justice and peace. May he grant the leaders of nations the courage they need to prevent the spread of conflicts and to put a halt to the arms trade." This was Pope Francis' prayer in his "Urbi et Orbi" message on Easter Sunday, 16 April after the celebration of Mass on the steps of Saint Peter's Basilica. The following is the English text of the message which he delivered in Italian.

Christ has set us free from the slavery of sin and death, and has opened before us the way to eternal life.

All of us, when we let ourselves be mastered by sin, lose the right way and end up straying like lost sheep. But God himself, our shepherd, has come in search of us. To save us, he lowered himself even to accepting death on the cross.

Today we can proclaim: "The Good Shepherd has risen, who laid down his life for his sheep, and willingly died for his flock, alleluia" (Roman Missal, IV Sunday of Easter, Communion antiphon).

In every age, the Risen Shepherd tirelessly seeks us, his brothers and sisters, wandering in the deserts of this world.

ers and sisters who treat them with respect and kindness, and help them to hear his voice, an unforgettable voice, a voice calling them back to friendship with God.

He takes upon himself all those victimized by old and new forms of slavery, inhuman labour, illegal trafficking, exploitation and discrimination, and grave forms of addiction. He takes upon himself children and adolescents deprived of their carefree innocence and exploited, and those deeply hurt by acts of violence that take place within the walls of their own home.

The Risen Shepherd walks beside all those forced to leave their homelands as a result of armed conflicts, terrorist attacks, famine and oppressive regimes. Everywhere he helps these forced migrants to encounter brothers and sisters, with whom they can share bread and hope on their journey.

In the complex and often dramatic situations of today's world, may the Risen Lord guide the steps of all those who work for justice and peace. May he grant the leaders of nations the courage they need to prevent the spread of conflicts and to put a halt to the arms trade.

Especially in these days, may he sustain the efforts of all those actively engaged in bringing comfort and relief to the civil population in beloved Syria, so greatly suffering from a war that continues to sow horror and death. Yesterday saw the latest vile attack on fleeing refugees, resulting in the death and injury of many. May he grant peace to the entire Middle East, beginning with the Holy Land, as well as in Iraq and Yemen.

The mystery of the discarded stone

On Easter Sunday, Pope Francis broke with tradition by delivering an improvised homily centred on a phone call from the day before with a young engineer suffering from a serious illness. Francis said he attempted to explain to the young man that while God does not give explanations for the suffering in the world, He does offer the promise of the Resurrection, which the Pope insisted is no mere "fantasy". The following is a translation of the Pope's homily, which was delivered in Italian.

Today the Church repeats, sings, shouts: "Jesus is Risen!". But why is this? Peter, John, the women went to the Sepulchre and it was empty. He was not there. They went away with their hearts closed in sadness, the sadness of defeat: the Teacher, their Teacher, the One whom they loved so much had been put to death; He is dead. And there is no return from death. This is the defeat. This is the path of defeat, the path towards the sepulchre. But the Angel says to them, "He is not here, He is Risen".

It is the first announcement: "He is Risen". And then the confusion, the closed hearts, the apparitions. But the disciples stayed locked in the Upper Room the entire day because they were afraid that what happened to Jesus would happen to them. The Church does not cease to say before our losses, our

closed and fearful hearts: "Stop, the Lord is Risen". But if the Lord is Risen, why is it that these things happen? Why is it that there is so much adversity: illness, human trafficking, human slavery, war, destruction, mutilation, vengeance, hatred? Where is the Lord then?

Yesterday I phoned a young man with a grave illness, an educated young man, an engineer, and while talking to him, to give him a sign of faith, I said: "There are no explanations for what is happening to you. Look at Jesus on the Cross. God did this to his Son, and there is no other explanation". And he answered: "Yes, but He asked His Son and the Son said 'yes'. I was not asked if I wanted this". This moves us. None of us is asked: "Are you happy with what is happening in the world? Are you willing to carry this cross further?". And the Cross goes forth and faith in Jesus comes down from it. Today, the Church continues to say: "Stop. Jesus is Risen". And this is not a fantasy. The Resurrection of Christ is not a celebration with many flowers. This is beautiful, but this is not it. It is something more. It is the mystery of the discarded stone which becomes the found-



CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

The cosmic cross that stands firm above the world

Suspended between heaven and water



On Good Friday afternoon, 14 April, in Saint Peter's Basilica, the Pope presided at the celebration of the Lord's Passion. After the proclamation of the Gospel of John (18:1-19,42), the Preacher of the Papal Household, Fr Cantalamessa, gave the homily. Published here is a translation by Marsha Daigle-Williamson of his reflection which was delivered in Italian.

water" (Jn 7:38) coming from the pierced heart of Christ. In Revelation the same disciple whom Jesus loved writes, "Between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain" (Rev 5:6). Slain, but standing, that is, pierced but resurrected and alive.

There exists now, within the Trinity and in the world, a human heart that beats not just metaphorically but physically. If Christ, in fact, has been raised from the dead, then his heart has also been raised from the dead; it is alive like the rest of his body, in a different dimension than before, a real dimension, even if it is mystical. If the Lamb is alive in

heaven, "slain, but standing", then his heart shares in that same state; it is a heart that is pierced but living – eternally pierced, precisely because he lives eternally.

There has been a phrase created to describe the depths of evil that can accumulate in the heart of humanity: "the heart of darkness". After the sacrifice of Christ, more intense than the heart of darkness, a heart of light beats in the world. Christ, in fact, in ascending into heaven, did not abandon the earth, just as he did not abandon the Trinity in becoming incarnate.

An antiphon in the Liturgy of the Hours says, "the plan of the Father" is now fulfilled in "making Christ the heart of the world". This explains the unshakable Christian optimism that led a medieval mystic to exclaim that it is to be expected that "there should be sin; but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing [sic] shall be well" (Julian of Norwich).

The Carthusian monks have adopted a coat of arms that appears at the entrance to their monastery, in their official documents, and in other settings. It consists of a globe of the earth surmounted by a cross with writing around it that says, "Stat crux dum volvitur orbis" ("The Cross stands firm as the world turns").

What does the cross represent in being this fixed point, this mainmast in the undulation of the world? It is the definitive and irreversible "no" of God to violence, injustice, hate, lies – to all that we call "evil", and at the same time it is equally the irreversible "yes" to love, truth, and goodness. "No" to sin, "yes" to the sin-

ner. It is what Jesus practiced all his life and that he now definitively consecrates with his death.

The reason for this differentiation is clear: sinners are creatures of God and preserve their dignity, despite all their aberrations; that is not the case for sin; it is a spurious reality that is added on, the result of one's passions and of "the devil's envy" (Wis 2:24). It is the same reason for which the Word, in becoming incarnate, assumed to himself everything human except for sin. The good thief to whom the dying Jesus promised paradise, is the living demonstration of all this. No one should give up hope; no one should say, like Cain, "My sin is too great to be forgiven" (Gen 4:13).

The cross, then, does not "stand" against the world but for the world: to give meaning to all the suffering that has been, that is, and that will be in human history. Jesus says to Nicodemus, "God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him" (Jn 3:17). The cross is the living proclamation that the final victory does not belong to the one who triumphs over others but to the one who triumphs over self; not to the one who causes suffering but to the one who is suffering.

"*Dum volvitur orbis*", as the world turns. Human history has seen many transitions from one era to another; we speak about the stone age, the bronze age, the iron age, the imperial age, the atomic age, the electronic age. But today there is something new. The idea of a transition is no longer sufficient to describe our current situation. Alongside the idea of a change, one must also place the idea of a dissolution. It has been said that we are now living in a "liquid society". There are no longer any fixed points, any undisputed values, any rock in the sea to which we can cling or with which we can collide. Everything is in flux.

The worst of the hypotheses the philosopher had foreseen as the effect of the death of God has come to pass, which the advent of the superman was supposed to prevent but did not prevent: "What did we do when we loosened this earth from its sun? Whither does it now move? Whither do we move? Away from all suns? Do we not dash on unceasingly? Backwards, sideways, in all directions? Is there still an above and below? Do we not stray, as through infinite nothingness?" (Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, aphorism 125).

It has been said that "killing God is the most horrible of suicides", and that is in part what we are seeing. It is not true that "where God is born, man dies" (Jean-Paul Sartre). Just

the opposite is true: where God dies, man dies.

A surrealist artist from the second half of the last century (Salvador Dalí) painted a crucifix that seems to be a prophecy of this situation. It depicts an immense, cosmic cross with an equally immense Christ seen from above with his head tilted downward. Below him, however, is not land but water. The Crucified One is not suspended between heaven and earth but between heaven and the liquid element of the earth.

This tragic image (there is also in the background a cloud that could allude to an atomic cloud) nevertheless contains a consoling certainty: there is hope even for a liquid society like ours! There is hope because above it "the cross of Christ stands". This is what the liturgy for Good Friday has us repeat every year with the words of the poet Venanzio Fortunato: "O *crux, ave spes unica*", "Hail, O Cross, our only hope".

Yes, God died, he died in his Son Christ Jesus; but he did not remain in the tomb, he was raised. "You crucified and killed Him", Peter shouts to the crowd on the day of Pentecost, "But God raised him up" (Act 2:23-24). He is the one who "died but is now alive for evermore" (Rev 1:18). The cross does not "stand" motionless in the midst of the world's upheavals as a reminder of a past event or a mere symbol; it is an ongoing reality that is living and operative.

We would make this liturgy of the Passion pointless, however, if we stopped, like the sociologists, at the analysis of the society in which we live. Christ did not come to explain things but to change human beings. The heart of darkness is not only that of some evil person hidden deep in the jungle, nor is it only that of the western society that produced it. It is in each one of us in varying degrees.

The Bible calls it a heart of stone: "I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone", God says through the prophet Ezekiel, "and give you a heart of flesh" (Ez 36:26). A heart of stone is a heart that is closed to God's will and to the suffering of brothers and sisters, a heart of someone who accumulates unlimited sums of money and remains indifferent to the desperation of the person who does not have a glass of water to give to his or her own child; it is also the heart of someone who lets himself or herself be completely dominated by impure passion and is ready to kill for that passion or to lead a double life. Not to keep our gaze turned only outward toward others, we can say that this also ac-

RANIERO CANTALAMESSA

We have listened to the story of the Passion of Christ. Apparently nothing more than the account of a violent death, and news of violent deaths are rarely missing in any evening news. Even in recent days there were many of them, including those of 38 Christians Copts in Egypt killed on Palm Sunday. These kinds of reports follow each other at such speed that we forget one day those of the day before. Why then are we here to recall the death of a man who lived 2000 years ago? The reason is that this death has changed forever the very face of death and given it a new meaning. Let us meditate for a while on it.

"When they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water" (Jn 19:33-34). At the beginning of his ministry, in response to those who asked him by what authority he chased the merchants from the temple, Jesus answered, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn 2:19). John comments on this occasion, "he spoke of the temple of his body" (Jn 2:21), and now the same Evangelist testifies that blood and water flowed from the side of this "destroyed" temple. It is a clear allusion to the prophecy in Ezekiel about a future temple of God, with water flowing from its side that was at first a stream and then a navigable river, and every form of life flourished around it (see Ezek 47:1ff).

But let us enter more deeply into the source of the "rivers of living

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

At the Colosseum

Shame for the shedding of innocent blood

Pope Francis spoke about the devastation and injustices existing in the world in his prayer on Good Friday evening, 14 April at the Colosseum in Rome where he presided at the Via Crucis before some 20,000 faithful. The following is a translation of the Pope's address which he delivered in Italian.

O Christ! Abandoned and betrayed even by your own and sold for next to nothing.

O Christ! Judged by sinners, handed over by those in Authority.

O Christ! Suffering in the flesh, crowned with thorns and clothed in purple. O

Ashamed of all the times that we Bishops, priests, consecrated men and women have been a cause of scandal and wound to your body, the Church; for having forgotten our first love, our initial enthusiasm and total availability, letting our hearts and our consecration rust.

So much shame Lord, but our hearts also feel nostalgia for the confident hope that you will not treat us according to our merits but solely according to the abundance of Your mercy; that our betrayal does not diminish the immensity of your love; your maternal and paternal heart does not forget us because of the hardness of our own;

The certain hope that our names are etched on your heart and that we are set in the pupil of your eyes;

The hope that your Cross may transform our hardened hearts into hearts of flesh that are able to dream, to forgive and to love; that it may transform this dark night of your Cross into the brilliant dawn of your Resurrection;

The hope that your faithfulness is not based on our own;

The hope that the hosts of men and women who are faithful to your Cross may continue to abide in fidel-

ity, just as yeast gives flavour and as light reveals new horizons in the body of our wounded humanity;

The hope that your Church will seek to be the voice that cries in the wilderness of hu-



Christ! Mocked and mercilessly nailed to the Cross.

O Christ! Rent by the lance that pierced your heart.

O Christ! Dead and buried, you who are the God of life and of existence.

O Christ! Our only Saviour, we turn to you this year too with eyes lowered in shame and hearts filled with hope:

Ashamed of all the scenes of devastation, destruction and drowning that have become a normal part of our lives;

Ashamed of the innocent blood shed daily of women, children, migrants and people persecuted because of the colour of their skin or their ethnic and social diversity or because of their faith in You;

Ashamed of the too many times that, like Judas and Peter, we have sold you and betrayed you and left you alone to die for our sins, fleeing like cowards from our responsibilities;

Ashamed of our silence before injustices; for our reticence in giving and greed in grabbing and conquering; for our high pitched defence of our interests and timid defence of other's; for our alacrity in following the path of evil and apathy when it comes to following the path of good;

manity in order to prepare the way for your triumphant return, when you will come to judge the living and the dead;

The hope that good will be victorious despite its apparent defeat!

O Lord Jesus! Son of God, innocent victim of our ransom, before your royal banner, before the mystery of your death and glory, before your [executioner's] scaffold, we kneel in shame and hope and we ask that you bathe us in the blood and water that flowed from your lacerated heart; to forgive our sins and our faults;

We ask you to remember our brethren crushed by violence, indifference and war;

We ask you to break the chains that keep us imprisoned in our selfishness, our willful blindness and, in the vanity of our worldly calculations.

O Christ! We ask you to teach us never to be ashamed of your Cross, not to exploit it but to honour and worship it, because with it You have shown us the horror of our sins, the greatness of your love, the injustice of our decisions and the power of your mercy. Amen.

Suspended between heaven and water

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

tually describes our hearts as ministers for God and as practicing Christians if we still live fundamentally "for ourselves" and not "for the Lord".

It is written that at the moment of Christ's death, "The curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised" (Matt 27:51). These signs are generally given an apocalyptic explanation as if it is the symbolic language needed to describe the eschatological event. But these signs also have a parenetic significance: they indicate what should happen in the heart of a person who reads and meditates on the Passion of Christ. In a liturgy like today's,

St Leo the Great said to the faithful, "The earth – our earthly nature – should tremble at the suffering of its Redeemer. The rocks – the hearts of unbelievers – should burst asunder. The dead, imprisoned in the tombs of their mortality, should come forth, the massive stones now ripped apart" ("Sermon 66," 3; *PL* 54, 366).

The heart of flesh, promised by God through the prophets, is now present in the world: it is the heart of Christ pierced on the cross, the heart we venerate as the "Sacred Heart". In receiving the Eucharist we firmly believe his very heart comes to beat inside of us as well. As we are about to gaze upon the cross, let us say from the bottom of our hearts, like the tax collector in the temple, "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" and then we too, like he did, will return home "justified" (Lk 18:13-14).

Ecumenical cooperation in action in Jerusalem's Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre

Restoring reconciliation

PHILIPPA HITCHEN

First time visitors to the Holy Land often describe the experience like 'discovering a fifth Gospel', as each stone and every street name brings vividly to life the events of the Old and New Testaments. The old city of Jerusalem is at the heart of that experience, where Christians follow in the footsteps of Jesus, retracing the events of Holy Week and Easter, as they walk the Via Dolorosa, or Way of the Cross, to the place of his crucifixion, burial and Resurrection.

Pilgrims come from all parts of the globe and all different Christian traditions, yet the huge crowds cause major challenges for the upkeep of the holy places. For years the Edicule, or ornate chapel inside the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre housing Jesus' tomb, has been badly in need of repair, damaged by the number of pilgrims, pollution, and the high levels of humidity.

Last May an intensive restoration programme began under the supervision of a team of experts from the National Technical University of Athens, with a budget estimated at 3.5 million dollars. The three main Christian denominations, the Greek Orthodox, the Armenians and the Catholic Churches (through the Franciscan Custody) charged by the 'Status Quo' agreement with maintaining the holy sites, oversaw the work and contributed to the funding, together with the Greek government, the Palestinian Authority, the Jordanian royal family, the World Monuments Fund and other private donors.

Archimandrite Aristovoulos, principle cantor for the Greek Orthodox Church in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, said the attitude of the Churches was an important factor in the success of the project. He noted they provided hospitality and support for the technical teams, as well as inspired trust by making sure their financial reports were scrupulously "clean and clear".

The Vatican also donated one million dollars to the ongoing project



and to the restoration of the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem. That money will be a major contribution to the next phase of work in the Holy Sepulchre, expected to cost around 6 million dollars. It will include the lifting of the floor around the Edicule to reset the pipes and shore up the foundations of the shrine against possible earthquake damage.

On 22 March the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I and leaders of all the Churches in Jerusalem came together for a rededication of the newly restored tomb, finally freed from its metal supports that were erected by the British back in 1947 to stop the building from subsiding. Standing alongside the Greek Orthodox, Armenians and Catholics, were leaders of the Coptic, Syrian and Ethiopian Churches, as well as representatives of the Anglican, Lutheran and other Protestant communities in the Holy Land.

Archbishop Giuseppe Lazzarotto, the Vatican delegate in Jerusalem, paid tribute to the "witness of faith, dialogue and respect" of the different Churches charged with maintaining the shrine, while Greek Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III de-

scribed the newly restored chapel as "a gift, not just to the Holy Land, but to the whole world". The rededication came ahead of Easter celebrations which fell on the same day this year for Christians of both Western and Eastern traditions.

For a pilgrimage site that was often in the news in past years for brawls that broke out between priests or monks, arguing over who was in charge of which parts of the shrine, the rededication was a remarkably positive story of successful ecumenical cooperation.

For Belgian Missionary of Africa Father Frans Bouwen, who follows

Restoration work in Holy Sepulchre has contributed to strengthening dialogue among the three main Christian denominations in Jerusalem

closely the relationships between the Churches, the public liturgy was a visible sign of the slow but significant progress made over the past half century. Though tour guides like to play up the tensions (and point out a ladder, high up on the facade, denoting Armenian possession of that part of the building), Fr Frans said, the reality is that relations have improved and representatives of the 12 main communities now meet regularly, discuss common problems and issue joint statements.

Fr Frans, who studied in Rome with the future Patriarch Bartholomew, has been living in Jerusalem for almost 50 years. He works closely with the Vatican's Council for Christian Unity as a member of the joint international commissions for dialogue with both the Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. He recalled how, following centuries of alienation and open hostility, the atmosphere started changing with the visit of Pope Paul VI to Jerusalem in 1964. As well as embracing Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras and lifting their mutual excommunications, Fr Frans highlighted the importance of the Pope's encounter with the Patriarch of Jeru-

salem Benedictos, "because for the first time the Greek Patriarchate felt recognized", and able to start developing relationships with other Churches.

The worsening political tensions of the 1990s also forced the Churches to recognize the need for a more united front to work for peace and reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis. At the height of the intifada, Fr Frans said, the heads of Churches "felt the need to consult and see what they could say and do together". Reflecting on the most recent papal visit to the Holy Land, Fr Frans said Pope Francis' 2014 trip had a profound impact. He noted that shortly afterwards the current Greek Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos "spoke about dialogue as he never did before". While there is still a lot of fear and prejudice,

he added, "personal meetings are able to change a lot". It may have taken decades for the Churches to agree on the restoration of the Edicule, but the first stage of the work was completed in a record ten months' time, with three teams of experts working around the clock and the shrine remaining open for prayer during the whole period.

Similarly, at the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, it took centuries for the Churches to agree to cooperate on a restoration project, but they are now working together on all aspects of administration, including fund raising and financial management.

Recalling the words of Pope Francis during a historic visit to Rome's Anglican parish of All Saints recently, Fr Frans Bouwen reiterated that ecumenical dialogue "cannot be done in a laboratory" but must be done "walking together along the way". Relationships remain complex and it's unrealistic to expect overnight miracles in the Holy Land, he said, but "little by little things change here". We try to follow the Pope's example, he said, so "we'll continue walking together towards unity".



The 'Edicule' in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre

A special 'thanks' from the Pope

After his *Urbi et Orbi* message and blessing, the Pontiff expressed his Easter wishes to all those present and thanked Dutch nursery workers for their floral arrangements which embellished Saint Peter's Square. The following is a translation of the Pope's words which were delivered in Italian

Dear brothers and sisters,

I offer Happy Easter wishes to all those who have come here from Italy and from different countries, and to all those who are joining us through various means of communication. May the Easter announcement of the Risen Christ rekindle the hopes of your families and your communities, in particular those of the new generations who are the future of the Church and of humanity.

A special thank you to those who donated and arranged the floral decorations, which again this year come from the Netherlands.

May you feel the presence of the Risen Christ every day and share with others the joy and hope that He gives to us. Please do not forget to pray for me. Happy holidays and *Arrivederci!*



The mystery of the discarded stone

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

ation of our existence. Christ is Risen. This is what it means.

In this throwaway culture where what is not needed is just used and disposed of, where what is not needed is thrown away, that stone – Jesus – the source of life, is discarded. And with faith in the Risen Christ, we too, pebbles on this earth of pain, tragedy, acquire meaning amid so many calamities. The sense to look beyond, the sense to say: "Look, there is no wall; there is a horizon, there is life, there is joy, there is the cross with this ambivalence. Look ahead, do not close within yourself. You pebble, acquire meaning in life because you are a pebble near that rock, that stone which the evil of sin discarded". What does the Church tell us today before so many tragedies? Simply this: the discarded stone is not really discarded. The pebbles which believe and stick to that stone are not discarded. They have meaning and it is with this sentiment that the Church repeats from the bottom of Her heart: "Christ is Risen".

Let us think for a while, each of us, think about the daily problems, the illnesses we have been through or of one that a relative has; let us think about wars, human tragedies and with simplicity, with a humble voice, without flowers, alone, before God, before us, let us say, "I do not know how this is, but I am certain that Christ is Risen and I have put a wager on it". Brothers and sisters, this is what I wanted to say to you. Go home today repeating in your hearts: "Christ is Risen".

On the 90th birthday of Benedict XVI

The Catholic Bishops of India have expressed their closeness and best wishes to Pope emeritus Benedict XVI on the occasion of his 90th birthday on 16 April. In a statement, the Secretary General of India's Catholic Bishops Conference, Bishop Theodore Macarenhas, SFX, said:

"This great intellectual giant, one of the Church's most erudite and knowledgeable theologians, began his tenure as Pope with these words: 'I too hope in this short reign to be a man of peace'. And by the time he had resigned in February 2013, the first Pope to do so in modern times, the great man had enthralled the Church and the World with his simplicity, humility and his ardent efforts for peace in the world.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) wishes Benedict God's abundant and choicest blessings. We acknowledge with gratitude his immense contribution to the Universal Church through his teaching and his example. He influenced the people across barriers of nationalities, regions, languages and cultures through inspirational appeals, pleading regularly for prayers and restoration of the faith and peace in the world. His gentleness and affability touched the hearts of men and women everywhere. The Catholic Church in India thanks him for his leadership and exemplary life and for his

service to the Church. He always lived what he preached.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference requests all people of good will to remember our Emeritus Pontiff in their special prayers on 16th April...".



A Bavarian style celebration for Joseph Ratzinger

On Wednesday afternoon, 12 April, Pope Francis went to the *Mater Ecclesiae* Monastery in the Vatican Gardens, to extend, as he does every year, his Easter greetings to Benedict XVI. On this occasion, the visit had an extra meaning: best wishes for Benedict's 90th birthday on 16 April. On Monday, the day following his birthday on Easter, Pope Benedict XVI was treated to a festive gathering of friends and family, which was celebrated in true Bavarian style with mugs of beer and pretzels in the gardens outside the *Mater Ecclesiae*.

Present for the celebrations were Msgr Georg Ratzinger, Benedict's 93 year old brother; Archbishop Georg Gänswein; his Secretary, Birgit Wansing, and consecrated lay members of *Memores Domini* who assist the Pope emeritus. Leading the delegation and bearing gifts from the Pope's homeland in southern Germany was the Prime Minister of Bavaria, Hon. Horst Seehofer, who was accompanied by a group of Bavarian musicians in traditional costumes. At the conclusion of the gathering, before imparting his blessing to all those present, Benedict XVI expressed his heartfelt appreciation for the birthday party: "Thank you for letting me return to my beautiful homeland".

At the Regina Caeli on Easter Monday

Men and women of resurrection



"We will be men and women of resurrection, men and women of life if, in the midst of the events that afflict the world – there are many of them today – , in the midst of worldliness which distances us from God, we will know how to offer gestures of solidarity ... and welcome". The Holy Father stressed this at the Regina Caeli on Easter Monday, 17 April, in Saint Peter's Square. The following is a translation of the Pope's reflection, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good Morning!

On this festive Monday known as "Monday of the Angel", the Liturgy resounds the announcement of the Resurrection proclaimed yesterday: "Christ is Risen, Hallelujah!". In today's Gospel passage, we can hear the echo of the words the Angel addressed to the women who had hastened to the sepulchre: "Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen" (Mt 28:7). We feel as if this invitation is also directed to us; to "hasten" and to "go" announce to the men

and women of our times this message of joy and hope, of certain hope, because from the dawn of the third day, Jesus who was crucified, is raised. Death no longer has the last word. Life does! This is our certainty. The sepulchre does not have the last word; it is not death, it is life! This is why we repeat "Christ is Risen", many times. Because in Him, the sepulchre was overcome. Life was born.

In light of this event which constitutes the true and real news of history and the cosmos, we are called to be new men and women in accordance with the Spirit, *confirming the value of life*. There is life! This is already the beginning of rebirth! We will be men and women of resurrection, men and women of life, if in the midst of the events that afflict the world – there are many of them today – , in the midst of worldliness which distances us from God, we will know how to offer gestures of solidarity and gestures of welcome, strengthening the universal desire for peace and the hope for an environment free from degradation. These are

common and human signs, which if supported and kept alive by faith in the Risen Lord, acquire a power that is well beyond our abilities. And this is so because Christ is alive and working in history through his Holy Spirit: He redeems our shortcomings and reaches each human heart and gives back hope to whomever is oppressed and suffering.

May the Virgin Mary, silent witness of the death and Resurrection of her Son Jesus, help us to be clear signs of the Risen Christ amid the affairs of the world, so that those who suffer tribulation and difficulties do not fall victim to pessimism, defeat, and resignation, but find in us many brothers and sisters who offer them support and solace. May our Mother help us to believe firmly in the Resurrection of Jesus: Jesus is Risen; He is alive here among us and this is a worthy mystery of salvation with the ability to transform hearts and life. May She intercede especially for the persecuted and oppressed Christian communities which, in many parts of the world today, are called to a more difficult and courageous testimony.

And now in the light and joy of Easter, let us turn to Her with the prayer which will replace the Angelus for the next 50 days leading to Pentecost.

Regina Caeli...

After the Regina Caeli the Pope greeted the various groups present.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the Easter atmosphere which marks this day, I warmly greet all of you, families, parish groups, associations and single pilgrims from Italy and from various parts of the world.

I wish that each of you may live in serenity these days of the Octave of Easter, which extends the joy of Christ's Resurrection. Seize every good opportunity to be witnesses of the peace of the Risen Lord.

Happy and Holy Easter to all of you! Please do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch. *Arrivederci!*

New saints to be proclaimed

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

herd children from Fatima, three other young people will soon be proclaimed saints: Blessed Cristobal, Blessed Antonio and Blessed Juan – also known as the "Child Martyrs of Tlaxcala" – who were among the first native converts in Mexico. They were killed in the early 16th century for refusing to renounce the faith. Brazil's first martyrs, the "Martyrs of Natal" will also be canonized, including: Blessed Andre de Soveral, a Jesuit priest; Blessed Ambrosio

Francisco Ferro, a diocesan priest; Blessed Mateus Moreira, a layman; and 27 others. They were killed in 1645 in a wave of anti-Catholic persecution. Two other priests will also be canonized: Blessed Faustino Miguez, a 19th century Spanish priest and a member of the Piarist Fathers, and Blessed Angelo da Aciri, an Italian Capuchin priest who was born Luca Antonio Falcone and beatified by Pope Leo XII in 1825. The Holy Father has set the 15th of October as the date for the Canonization.

