The goal of food security

At the inaugural session of the 40th General Conference of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on Monday, 3 July, Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin announced that “on 16 October, for the occasion of World Food Day which this year calls for reflection on the theme ‘Change the future of migration’, Pope Francis will come here to FAO, accepting the invitation of the Director-General, José Graziano da Silva”. The event will be the Pontiff’s second visit to FAO, after that of 20 November 2014. Cardinal Parolin made the announcement after reading a Message sent by Pope Francis to address the General Conference. In his Message the Pontiff called for “a constant acknowledgment that the right of every person to be free of poverty and hunger depends on the duty of the entire human family to provide practical assistance to those in need”.

Ecumenical Delegation of the Patriarch of Constantinople

The prophetic sign of the one communion

On Tuesday morning, 27 June, for the occasion of the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Pope Francis received in audience a Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. In his address to the Delegation, which the Patriarch sends to Rome each year for the occasion, the Pontiff noted that “Peter and Paul, as disciples and apostles of Jesus Christ, served the Lord in very different ways. Yet in their diversity, both bore witness to the merciful love of God our Father ... even to the sacrifice of his own life”. Thus, Pope Francis said, “it is right to celebrate together their self-sacrifice for love of the Lord, for it is at the same time a commemoration of unity and diversity” as well as “a prophetic sign of the one ecclesial communion in which legitimate differences ought to coexist”.

His All-Holiness, Bartholomew I, Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch, sent a Message to the Pontiff through the Delegation. He noted in particular the persecution and violence faced by Christians even today, and observed that “religions can and should serve as bridges between people, as instruments of peace and mutual understanding and respect between human beings”. Indeed, he said, “we are convinced that our common witness before the numerous challenges of our contemporary world constitutes a positive testimony for the Church of Christ and for bringing us closer to unity”.

Cardinal Secretary of State Parolin announces the Pope’s visit to FAO on 16 October

Ordinary Public Consistory

Not as princes but as servants

Rome, 28 June 2017

The Supreme Pontiff Francis held, on Wednesday afternoon, 28 June, in the Vatican Basilica, the Ordinary Public Consistory for the creation of new cardinals, the imposition of the biretta, the consignment of the ring and the assignment of their Title.

The Holy Father arrived in the Basilica at 4:00 PM, proceeded through the central nave to the Altar of the Confession, where he said a prayer. Taking his place on the Cattedra, he received a welcome address from the Archbishop of Barcelona.

After pronouncing the initial prayer and after the proclamation of the Gospel, the Pope delivered his Allocution. He then read the formula for the creation of cardinals, declaring their names:

- Jean Zerbo, Archbishop of Bamako, Mali;
- Juan José Omella Omella, Archbishop of Barcelona, Spain;
- Anders Arborelius, O CD, Bishop of Stockholm, Sweden;
- Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhane-khoum, IVD, titular Bishop of Acque novae in Proconsulari, Vicar Apostolic of Pakse, Laos;
- Gregorio Rosa Chávez, titular Bishop of Mulli, Auxiliary of San Salvador, El Salvador.

The new Cardinals then received the red biretta, the cardinal’s ring, and were assigned their Title. The ceremony concluded with the Apostolic Blessing which the Holy Father imparted to all those present.
Archbishop-elect Saba, 48, was born in Olbia, Italy. He holds a licentiate in theology and patristic sciences and a doctorate in patristic sciences. He was ordained a priest on 23 October 1993. He has served in parish ministry and as director of the Diocesan Institute of Religious Sciences; founder and director of the Institute’s publishing project, a series on research and study of religion and society; associate lecturer of patristic theology at the Theology Faculty in Sardinia, rector of the Pontifical Regional Seminary of Sardinia.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Alfred A. Schlert as Bishop of Allentown, USA. Until now he has been diocesan administrator of Allentown (27 June).

Bishop-elect Schlert, 55, was born in Easton, Pennsylvania. He holds a degree in Canon Law. He was ordained a priest on 19 September 1977. He has served in parish ministry and as: lecturer, chaplain to the University Apostolate in Bethlehem; vice chancellor and private secretary to the Bishop; vicar general; Bishop’s delegate to the Executive Committee and to the Administrative Committee of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference; Vice President of the same conference.

Dr Joaquín Navarro-Valls, who served Pope John Paul II for more than 20 years as Director of the Holy See Press Office (1984 to 2006), died on Wednesday, 5 July, at the age of 80.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Paolo Mario Virgilio Atzé, OFM Conv., of Sassari, Italy (27 June).
Cardinal Secretary of State Parolin announces Pope’s visit to FAO on 16 October

The goal of food security

"On 16 October, for the occasion of World Food Day which this year calls for reflection on the theme ‘Change the future of migration’, Pope Francis will come here to FAO, accepting the invitation of the Director-General, José Graziano da Silva’. This announcement was made in Rome on Monday, 3 July, by Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin at the inaugural session of the 40th General Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

After greeting the heads of the Organization, the President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic, Paolo Gentiloni, the Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives, and all the speakers, Cardinal Parolin thanked them for the welcome he had received and then read the Message sent by Pope Francis to Conference participants. Afterwards the Cardinal announced that the Pontiff would visit FAO on 16 October. The following is the English text of the Papal Message.

Mr President,

I offer my respectful and cordial greetings to you, and to all the Representatives of the Member States of FAO, as you assemble for the Organization’s fortieth Conference.

My greeting also goes to the Director-General and to the leaders of the other International Organizations present at this meeting, which is called to provide appropriate responses to issues involving the agri-cultural and food production sector, on which the expectations of millions of people depend.

1. I regret that I cannot be present with you today, as has been an established tradition dating back to the beginning of FAO’s presence in Rome. I have therefore asked Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, to convey to you my message of encouragement and support, as well as my respect and esteem for the demanding task that you must carry out.

The Holy See closely follows the work of the international community and wishes to assist its efforts to promote not mere progress or development goals in theory, but rather the actual elimination of hunger and malnutrition. All of us realize that the intention to provide everyone with his or her daily bread is not enough. Rather, there is a need to recognize that all have a right to it and they must therefore benefit from it. If the goals we continue to propose still remain distant, that is largely dependent on the lack of a culture of solidarity, which fails to make headway amid other international activities, which often remain bound only to the pragmatism of statistics or the desire for efficiency that lacks the idea of sharing.

The commitment of each country to increase its own level of nutrition, to improve agricultural activity and the living conditions of the rural population, is embodied in the encouragement of the agricultural sector, in increased production or in the promotion of an effective distribution of food supplies. Yet this is not enough. In effect, what those goals demand is a constant acknowledgment that the right of every person to be free of poverty and hunger depends on the duty of the entire human family to provide practical assistance to those in need.

Hence, when a country is incapable of offering adequate responses because its degree of development, conditions of poverty, climate changes or situations of insecurity do not permit this, FAO and the other intergovernmental institutions need to be able to intervene specifically and undertake an adequate solidarity action. Since the goods that God the Creator has entrusted to us are meant for all, there is an urgent need for solidarity to be the criterion inspiring all forms of cooperation in international relations.

2. A glance at the current world situation does not offer us a comforting picture. Yet we cannot remain merely preoccupied or, worse, resigned.

At a moment of evident difficulty must make us even more conscious that hunger and malnutrition are not only natural or structural phenomena in determined geographical areas, but the result of a more complex condition of underdevelopment caused by the indifference of many or the selfishness of a few. The wars, acts of terrorism and forced displacements that increasingly hinder or at least strongly condition even cooperative efforts are not inevitable, but rather the consequence of concrete decisions. We are dealing with a complex mechanism that mainly burdens the most vulnerable, who are not only excluded from the processes of production, but frequently obliged to leave their lands in search of refuge and hope. Likewise, decisions taken in full freedom and conscience determine the data relative to assistance given to poor countries. This continues to decrease daily, in spite of reiterated appeals in the face of ever more devastating crisis situations merging in different areas of the planet.

We need to be aware that in these cases the freedom of choice of each must take into account solidarity towards all, in relation to actual needs, and the fulfilment in good faith of commitments undertaken or proclaimed. In this regard, inspired also by the desire to encourage governments, I would like to make a symbolic contribution to the FAO programme that provides seeds to rural families in areas affected by the combined effects of conflicts and drought.

This gesture is offered in addition to the work that the Church continues to carry out, in accordance with her vocation to stand at the side of the earth’s poor and to accompany the effective commitment of all on their behalf.

This commitment is asked of us today by the 2030 Development Agenda, when it restates the idea that food security is a goal that can no longer be put off. Yet only an effort inspired by authentic solidarity will be capable of eliminating the great number of persons who are undernourished and deprived of the necessities of life. This is a very great challenge for FAO and for all the Institutions of the international community. It is also a challenge that the Church is committed to on the front lines.

It is my hope that the sessions of this Conference can give renewed impulse to the work of the Organization and provide the practical responses needed and desired by millions of our brothers and sisters. For they see in the activity of FAO not only a technical contribution to increase resources and to distribute the fruits of production, but also a concrete and even unique sign of fraternity that helps them to look to the future with confidence.

May Almighty God, who is rich in mercy, bless you and your service, and grant you the strength needed to contribute to the authentic progress of our human family.

From the Vatican, 3 July 2017

FRANCIS
At the Angelus on the feast of the city’s Patron Saints

For the Church and the people of Rome

After celebrating Mass on Thursday, 29 June, the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Pope Francis recited the Angelus with the faithful in Saint Peter’s Square. Addressing the crowd, he described the two Patron Saints of Rome as the two pillars on which the Church constructed her visible edifice. The following is a translation of the Holy Father’s reflection, which he shared in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Good Morning!
The Fathers of the Church loved to compare the Apostles Saints Peter and Paul to two pillars on which the Church constructed her visible edifice. Both of them sealed with their own blood their witness to Christ by preaching and serving the fledgling Christian community. This testimony is highlighted in the biblical readings of today’s liturgy, readings which explain the reason why their faith, which had been professed and proclaimed, was crowned with the supreme trial of martyrdom.

The Book of the Acts of the Apostles (cf. 12:3-11) recounts the events of the imprisonment and subsequent liberation of Peter. He had previously experienced aversion to the Gospel in Jerusalem, where he had been imprisoned by King Herod, “intending ... to bring him out to make him suffer, before the people” (cf. v. 4). But he was miraculously saved and so was able to continue his evangelizing mission, firstly in the Holy Land and then in Rome, putting all of his energy at the service of the Christian Community.

Paul too experienced hostility from which he was liberated by the Lord. Sent out by Jesus to proclaim the Gospel in difficult and in some cases hostile environments. Through their personal and ecclesial experiences, they both demonstrate and tell us today that the Lord is always by our side; he walks with us; he never abandons us. Especially at the moment of trial, God reaches out his hand, comes to our aid and frees us from enemy threats. But let us recall that our true enemy is sin and theParts are who drive us to it. When we reconcile ourselves to God especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, receiving the grace of forgiveness, we are liberated from the restraints of evil and unburdened of the weight of our failings. Thus, in this way, we can continue our journey as joyful proclaimers and witnesses of the Gospel, showing that we first received mercy.

Let us address to the Virgin Mary, Queen of the Apostles, our prayers which today are above all for the Church that lives in Rome and for this City, of which Peter and Paul are Patrons. May they obtain from her spiritual and material well-being. May the goodness and grace of the Lord support all the People of Rome so that all may live in fraternal harmony, making the Christian Faith shine, as witnessed with unrepentant ardour by the Apostle Saints Peter and Paul.

After greeting the Cardinals and Metropolitan Archbishops who had participated at Mass, the Pope addressed the faithful present:

Dear brothers and sisters, this morning here in the Square, I celebrated the Eucharist with the five Cardinals whom I created in yesterday’s Consistory, and I blessed the Palliums of the Metropolitan Archbishops appointed this year from different countries. I renew my greeting and my good wishes to them and to those who have accompanied them on this pilgrimage. I encourage them to joyfully carry out their mission at the service of the Gospel, in communion with the See of Rome. In the same celebration, I welcomed with affection the Members of the Delegation which came to Rome in the name of the Ecumenical Patriarch, my very dear brother Bartholomew. This presence is also a sign of the bonds that exist between our Churches.

I extend a cordial greeting to all of you, families, parish groups, associations and individual faithful from Italy and from many parts of the world, especially from Germany, England, Bolivia, Indonesia and Qatar. I greet the students of the Catholic Schools of Saltsir (France), Osijek (Croatia) and London.

My greeting today goes above all to you, faithful of Rome on the feast of the Patron Saints of this City! To all the faithful of Rome, a big round of applause! On this occasion, the Vatican “Pro Loco” has sponsored the traditional flower display arranged by various artists and volunteers from the Civil Service. Thank you for this initiative and for the beautiful floral presentations. And I would also like to recall the fireworks display that will take place in Piazza del Popolo this evening.

I wish all of you a happy celebration. And please do not forget to pray for me.

Enjoy your lunch. Arrivederci!

VATICAN BULLETIN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

The Holy Father appointed Fr. Pi- us Moon Chang-woo as Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Cheju, Korea. Until now he has been Headmaster of Shinsong Girls’ Middle School in Cheju (28 June).

Coadjutor Bishop-elect Moon Chang-woo, 54, was born in Cheju. He studied philosophy and theology and holds a Master’s in theology. He was ordained a priest on 10 February 1996. He has served in parish ministry and as director of the Diocesan Office for Youth and Education; director of the Diocesan Students’ Association; lecturer and Spiritual Father at the Catholic University of Gwangju; director of the Office for Catechesis and Migrants.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Catalino Claudio Giménez Medina, 53, of Caacupé, Paraguay (29 June).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Ricardo Jorge Valenzuela Ríos as Bishop of Caacupé. Until now he has been Bishop of Villarrica del Alto, Paraguay (29 June). He was ordained a priest on 5 August 1995. He has served in parish ministry and within his order as: provincial counsellor and treasurer, general counsellor; head of formation.

PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

The Holy Father appointed Professor Joachim von Braun as the President of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. Until now he has been Director of the Centre for Development Research (ZEF) and Ordinary Professor for Economic and Technological Change at the University of Bonn, Germany (31 June).

CONGREGATION FOR THE CAUSES OF SAINTS

The Holy Father appointed Cardinal Giuseppe Betori of the Archdiocese of Florence, Italy, as Member of the above mentioned Congregation (1 July).

NECROLOGY

Bishop Octavio Betancourt Arango, Bishop emeritus of Garzón, Colombia, at age 85 (18 June)

Archbishop John Raphael Quinn, Archbishop emeritus of San Francisco, USA, at age 88 (15 June)

“Saint Peter and Saint Paul”, El Greco (1590-1600)
At the Mass for the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul

The crucial question

At the Mass for the Solemnity of Rome’s Patron Saints, the Pope called on pastors and on the faithful to renew their choice of faith after the example of Saints Peter and Paul. The celebration took place on the Parvis of the Vatican Basilica on Thursday morning, 29 June. The following is the English text of the Holy Father’s homily.

The liturgy today offers us three words essential for the life of an apostle: confession, persecution and prayer.

Confession. Peter makes his confession of faith in the Gospel, when the Lord’s question turns from the general to the specific. At first, Jesus asks: “Who do men say that the Son of man is?” (Mt 16:15). The results of this “survey” show that Jesus is widely considered a prophet. Then the Master puts the decisive question to his disciples: “But you, who do you say that I am?” (v. 16). At this point, Peter alone replies: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (v. 16). To confess the faith means this: to acknowledge in Jesus the long-awaited Messiah, the living God, the Lord of our lives.

Today Jesus puts this crucial question to us, to each of us, and particularly to those of us who are pastors. It does not allow for a non-committal answer, because it brings into play our entire life. The question of life demands a response of life. For it counts little to know the articles of faith if we do not respond in our lives because it brings into play our consciences. The question of life does not allow us to remain on the sidelines.

Here I would especially emphasize something that the Apostle Paul says before, in his words, “being poured out as a lamb” (cf. 2 Tim 4:5). For him, to live was Christ (cf. Phil 1:21). Christ crucified (cf. 1 Cor 1:23), who gave his life for him (cf. Gal 2:20). As a faithful disciple, Paul thus followed the Master and offered his own life too. Apart from the cross, there is no Christ, but apart from the cross, there can be no Christian either. For “Christian virtue is not only a matter of doing good, but of tolerating evil as well” (Augustine, Xern. 46:13), even as Jesus did. Tolerating evil does not have to do simply with patience and resignation; it means imitating Jesus, carrying our burden, shouldering it for his sake and that of others. It means accepting the cross, pressing on in the confident knowledge that we are not alone: the crucified and risen Lord is at our side. So, with Paul, we can say that “we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken” (2 Cor 4:8-9). Tolerating evil means overcoming it with Jesus, and in Jesus’ own way, which is not the way of the world. This is why Paul, as we heard – considered himself a victim about to receive his crown (cf. 2 Tim 4:8). He writes: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (v. 7). The essence of his “good fight” was living for: he lived not for himself, but for Jesus and for others. He spent his life “running the race”, not holding back but giving his all. He tells us that there is only one thing that he “kept”: not his health, but his faith, his confession of Christ. Out of love, he experienced trials, humiliations and suffering, which are never to be sought but always accepted. In the mystery of suffering offered up in love, in this mystery, embodied in our own day by so many of our brothers and sisters who are persecuted, impoverished and infirm, the saving power of Jesus’ cross shines forth.

The third word is prayer.

The life of an apostle, which flows from confession and becomes self-offering, is one of constant prayer. Prayer is the water needed to nurture hope and increase fidelity. Prayer makes us feel loved and it enables us to love in turn. It makes us press forward in moments of darkness because it brings God’s light. In the Church, it is prayer that sustains us and helps us to overcome difficulties. We see this too in the first reading: “Peter was kept in prison; but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the Church” (Acts 12:5). A Church that prays is watched over and cared for by the Lord. When we pray, we entrust our lives to him and to his loving care. Prayer is the power and strength that unites and sustains us, the remedy for the isolation and self-sufficiency that lead to spiritual death. The Spirit of life does not breathe unless we pray, without prayer, the interior prisons that hold us captive cannot be unlocked.

May the blessed Apostles obtain for us a heart like theirs, wearied yet at peace, thanks to prayer. Wearied, because constantly asking, knocking and interceding, weighed down by so many people and situations needing to be handed over to the Lord, yet also at peace, because the Holy Spirit brings consolation and strength when we pray. How urgent it is for the Church to have teachers of prayer, but even more so for us to be men and women of prayer, whose entire life is prayer!

The Lord answers our prayers. He is faithful to the love we have professed for him, and he stands beside us at times of trial. He accompanied the journey of the Apostles, and he will do the same for you, dear brother Cardinals, gathered here in the charity of the Apostles who confessed their faith by the shedding of their blood. He will remain close to you too, dear brother Archbishops who, in receiving the pallium, will be strengthened to spend your lives for the flock, imitating the Good Shepherd who bears you on his shoulders. May the same Lord, who longs to see his flock gathered together, also bless and protect the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, together with my dear brother Bartholomew, who has sent them here as a sign of our apostolic communion.
The prophetic sign of the one community

To the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul

Established on the witness of martyrs

The following is the English text of the message sent through the Delegation to the Patriarch of Constantinople, expressing the self-sacrifice for the unity of all his disciples...
Dear Brothers,

I am pleased to receive you on the occasion of your General Chapter. I thank the Superior General for his kind words, and through you, I greet all your confrères present in fifteen countries on four continents.

As spiritual sons of Bogdan Janski, the apostle of Polish émigrés in France in the nineteenth century, you were founded in order to testify that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is at the basis of the Christian life, to proclaim the need for personal resurrection, and to support the community in its mission of service to the Kingdom of God. In close connection to the charism of the Institute, you have chosen as the theme of this Chapter: Witnesses of the Presence of the Risen Lord: from Community to the World. I would like to reflect with you on three particular phrases.

1. Witnesses of the Presence of the Risen Lord: in a word, missionaries, apostles of the Living One. In this regard, I would propose to you as an icon Mary Magdalene, the apostle to the apostles. On Easter morn, having encountered the risen Jesus, she proclaimed him to the other disciples. She sought Jesus dead and found him alive. This is the joyful Good News she brought to the others: Christ is alive and he has the power to conquer death and bestow eternal life.

This brings us to a first reflection. Nostalgia for a past that was rich in vocations and impressive achievements must not prevent you from seeing that Jesus Christ is alive and is Lord. A second reflection is this. Mary Magdalene and the other women who went to the tomb that morning (cf. Lk 24:1-8) were women “on the move”: they abandoned their “nest” and set out; they took a risk. The Spirit is calling you too, Brothers of the Resurrection, to be men who set out, to be an Institute “on the move” towards every human periphery, wherever the light of the Gospel needs to be brought. The Spirit is calling you to be seekers of the face of God wherever it is to be found: not in the tombs — “Why do you look for the living among the dead?” (v. 3) — but where it lives: in the community and in mission.

a. From Community to the World.

Like the disciples of Emmaus, allow the Risen One to walk at your side, both as individuals and in community, especially along the path of disappointment and abandonment (cf. Lk 24:13 ff.). This encounter will make you run once more, filled with joy and without delay, to the community, and from the community to the entire world, in order to tell others that “The Lord is risen indeed!” (v. 34).

Those who believe in the Risen One have the courage to “go forth” and bring to others the Good News of the resurrection, embracing the risks of testimony, even as the Apostles did. How many people are waiting for this joyful proclamation! It is not right for us to deprive them of it. If the resurrection of Christ is to be our greatest certainty and our most precious treasure, how can we not run to proclaim it to others?

A concrete way of showing this is fraternal life in community. It entails accepting the brothers the Lord has given us: not those whom we choose, but those whom the Lord gives us. As the Apostle Paul tells us, now that Christ has risen from the dead, we can no longer look at others from a human point of view (cf. 2 Cor 5:16). We view them and we accept them as a gift from the Lord. Others are a gift not to be taken for granted or looked down upon, but a gift to be received with respect, because in our brothers, especially if they are weak and frail, Christ comes to meet us.

I urge you to be builders of evangelical communities and not merely their “consumers”. I ask you to make fraternal life in community your primary form of evangelization. May communities be open to mission and flee every form of self-absorption, which leads to death. Do not let problems — for problems will always be there — overwhelm you. Instead, cultivate the mysticism of encounter and, together with the brothers the Lord has given you, as you dwell “in the light of the loving relationship of the three divine Persons”, seek ways and means to move forward (cf. Apostolic Letter To All Consecrated People, 21 November 2014, 1, 2). In a society that tends to reduce everything to flat uniformity, where injustice gives rise to divisions and hostility, in a world torn and aggressive, ensure that the witness of fraternal life and community will never be lacking.

b. Prophets of joy and of Easter hope.

The Risen Lord poured upon his disciples two forms of consolation: interior joy and the light of the paschal mystery. The joy of recognizing the presence of the Risen Jesus draws you into his Person and his will: for this very reason, it leads to mission. The light of the paschal mystery brings new hope, a “trustworthy hope”, as Pope Benedict XVI has said (Spero Salvi, 4). Risen in order to enable others to rise, set free in order to bring freedom to others, born to new life in order to bring new life to birth in everyone who crosses our path: this is your vocation and mission as Brothers of the Resurrection.

“Why do you look for the living among the dead?” (Lk 24:5). May these words continually resound in your hearts. They will help you to overcome moments of sadness and will open before you horizons of joy and hope. They will enable you to shatter tombstones, and give you the strength to proclaim the Good News in this culture so often marked by death. If we have the courage to descend to our personal and community tombs, we will see how Jesus can make us rise from them. This will enable us to rediscover the joy, the happiness and the passion of those moments when we first made of our lives a gift to God and other.

Dear brothers, I conclude by repeating something I have often said to consecrated persons, especially during the Year of Consecrated Life: remember the past with gratitude, live the present with passion, and embrace the future with hope. A grateful memory of the past: not archaeology, because charism is always a welcoming of living water, not a bottle of distilled water. A passion for maintaining ever alive and young our first love, who is Jesus. Hope, in the knowledge that Jesus is with us and guides our steps, even as he guided the steps of our founders.

May Mary, who in a singular way experienced and continues to experience the mystery of her Son’s Resurrection, watch over your journey with a Mother’s love. I give all of you my blessing. And I ask you, please, not to forget to pray for me. Thank you!
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Good morning!

Today's liturgy presents to us the last lines of the missionary discourse in Chapter 10 of the Gospel of Matthew (cf. 10:37-42), by which Jesus instructs the 12 Apostles at the moment in which, for the first time, he sends them on mission to the villages of Galilee and Judea. In this final part, Jesus underscores two essential aspects for the life of a missionary disciple: the first, that his bond with Jesus is stronger than any other bond; the second, that the missionary brings not himself, but Jesus, and through Him the love of the heavenly Father. These two aspects are contrasted, because the more Jesus is at the centre of the heart and of the life of a disciple, the more this disciple is "transparent" to His presence. The two go hand in hand.

"He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me..." (v. 37). Jesus says. A father's affection, a mother's tenderness, the gentle friendship among brothers and sisters, all this, even while being very good and valid, cannot be placed before Christ. Not because we want them to be heartless and ungrateful, but rather, on the contrary, because the condition of a disciple demands a priority relationship with the teacher. Any disciple, whether a layman or laywoman, a priest or a bishop, an all-absorbing relationship. Perhaps the first question that we must ask a Christian is: "Do you meet with Jesus? Do you pray to Jesus?". The relationship. One could almost paraphrase the Book of Genesis: Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave to Jesus and the two shall become one (cf. Gen 2:24).

Those who allow themselves to be drawn into this bond of love and of life with the Lord Jesus become his representatives, his "ambassadors", above all in the way of being, of living. To the point that Jesus himself, in sending his disciples on mission, says to them: "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me" (Mt 10:40). It is important that the people be able to perceive that for that disciple Jesus is truly "the Lord"; He is truly the centre of his or her life, the everything of life.

It does not matter then if, as for every human being, he or she has limitations and even makes mistakes — as long as he or she has the humility to recognize them; the important thing is that they not have a duplicitous heart. If this is dangerous. I am a Christian, I am a disciple of Jesus, I am a priest, I am a bishop, but I have a duplicitous heart. No, this is not okay. One must not have a duplicitous heart, but a simple, cohesive heart; one must not keep one foot in two shoes, but he honest with oneself and with others. Duplicity is not Christian. This is why Jesus prays to the Father so that the disciples may not fall prey to the worldly spirit. You are either with Jesus, with the spirit of Jesus, or you are with the spirit of the world.

Here our experience as priests teaches us something very beautiful, something very important: it is precisely this welcoming of the holy, faithful People of God; it is precisely that "cup of cold water" (v. 43) that the Lord speaks of today in the Gospel, given with affectionate faith, which helps you to be a good priest! There is a reciprocity in mission too: if you leave everything for Jesus, the people recognize the Lord in you, but at the same time it helps you to convert each day to him, so as to renew and purify yourself from compromises and to overcome temptations. The closer a priest is to the People of God, the closer he will feel to Jesus, and the closer a priest is to Jesus, the closer will he feel to the People of God.

The Virgin Mary felt in the first person what it means to love Jesus by separating herself from him, giving new meaning to familial ties, beginning with faith in him. With her maternal intercession, may she help us to be free and happy missionaries of the Gospel.

After reciting the Angelus, the Holy Father added:

Dear brothers and sisters, Venezuela's Independence Day falls on 5 July. I assure my prayers for this beloved nation and I express my closeness to the families who have lost their children in the street protests. I make this appeal that the violence be ended and a peaceful and democratic solution to the crisis be found. May our Lady of Coronoto intercede for Venezuela! Let us all pray to Our Lady of Coronoto for Venezuela: "Hail Mary...".

I address my greeting to all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims!

I greet in particular the faithful from Belfast and the young people from Schattendorf, Switzerland, who have recently received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

I greet the various parish groups and the associations, as well as participants in the motorcycle pilgrimage from Cardito, Naples.

I wish everyone a happy Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. Arrivederci!
Morning Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae

the Book of Tobit, a narrative that, I would say, is a normal story, just like the stories of many people”, the Pope explained. “Above all, it is the story of two people: of Tobit, the father of Tobias, and of Sarah”. It is “the story of a father-in-law and a daughter-in-law, a story which makes us reflect”. And “it would be lovely” the Pope suggested, “if each of us were to take up this Book of Tobit today or this weekend; it is short and can be read in very little time; a quarter of an hour — today or this weekend; it’s short and can be read in very little time; a quarter of an hour —

In [the lives of] these two people — Tobit and Sarah, father-in-law and daughter-in-law — there are awful moments, beautiful moments, as in all of life”, the Pope explained. Above all, “there are unpleasant moments: Tobit is persecuted, he is mocked, he is insulted”. He is even “insulted by his own wife”, Anna, who clearly “was not a bad woman, she worked hard to keep the household going because he was blind; he had gone blind”. It is “an unpleasant moment which cannot be explained”, the Pope continued. And thus both Anna and Sarah were suffering, because “she too had been insulted” and, even though she was still very young, she nevertheless wanted to kill herself. “Both of them, in those terrible moments, asked to die; and Tobit, too, had done the same when he noticed that all had become “black, dark, gloomy”.

“All of us”, affirmed Pope Francis, “have gone through terrible, intense moments: not as intense as this, but we know what it feels like in a dark moment, in a moment of suffering, in a moment of difficulty”. But “Sarah thinks: ‘If I hang myself, will I not cause my parents to suffer?’; and she stops and prays”. Meanwhile, the Pontiff continued, “Tobit says: ‘this is my life, let us continue on’, and he prays”. This is precisely “the attitude which saves in terrible situations: prayer”, the Pope explained. And also “patience, because they are both patient with their own pain”. Tobit and Sarah are also encouraged by “the hope that God hears us and these horrible moments pass”. And thus, “in moments of sadness”, whether “few or many; in moments of despair, surely not by the deepest despair, which should be faced with prayer, patience and hope. He suggested the parallel stories of the two biblical characters of Tobit and Sarah — the father-in-law and the daughter-in-law presented in the Book of Tobit — can serve as a personal examination of conscience.

“The Bible is the Word of God, and God speaks to us when we read and meditate upon the Bible”, Pope Francis said at the beginning of his reflection. He noted that “these days, until tomorrow, the liturgy has us reflect on Holy Father observed. In fact, their story “as we have heard, ends well”. Certainly “it is not the happy ending of novels, no”. However, this is “a lovely moment: after their suffering, the Lord comes close to them and saves them”. Therefore, the Pope continued, “there are beautiful, authentic moments, like this one: not those moments with counterfeit beauty, that are all artificial, a fireworks display, for this is not the beauty of the soul”. And “what do these two do in the beautiful moments? They thank God, opening their heart in a prayer of thanks.”

Tobit and Sarah’s attitude inspired Pope Francis to propose a personal examination of conscience. “I ask myself, and I ask you to reflect on this question: do I, in the terrible moments and in the beautiful moments, know how to discern what is happening in my soul? Do I understand what is happening? In the awful moments, do I know that this is the cross and that there isn’t an explanation and it can also appear to be a curse? Precisely “in these moments”, the Pope continued, “do I manage to pray, to have patience and to have at least a little hope?”. And also “in the beautiful moment, do I allow joy to enter my heart, that joy which is from God, that urges me to thank God, or do I fall into vanity and do I believe that all of life is like this? Today is this way and tomorrow will be a different way, no?”. It is a fact, the Holy Father maintained, that “our life journeys between bad times and times of weakness, but the Lord is always there”. The Pope then continued with an examination of conscience: “Do I know how to discern the Lord’s presence, to turn to him in prayer? And then in praise, in the beautiful moments, the prayer of joy, to thank him for what has happened?”

In conclusion, the Pope renewed his earlier recommendation to read the story of Tobit and Sarah “this weekend”, to take the Bible in hand and find the Book of Tobit. “This story teaches us how to behave on life’s journey, with many beautiful moments and with many terrible moments, and it also teaches us to discern”. In fact, Sarah “made a decision: ‘it is better that I don’t hang myself because this would cause great suffering to my parents’”. In the same way, “Tobit and Sarah realized that one must wait, in prayer, in hope for the salvation of the Lord”. Pope Francis concluded with the following advice: “as we read this book this weekend, let us ask for the grace to be able to discern what is happening in the bad situations of our life; to keep growing in the beautiful moments, and to not be tricked by vanity”.

Monday, 12 June
Beatiudes in reverse

If we simply leave the door of our heart “a bit ajar”, “God manages to enter”, saving us from joining the ranks of the “unmerciful”. This is the invitation of the Holy Father and who practice the Beatitudes “in reverse”. During Mass at Santa Marta on Monday, 12 June, Pope Francis shared this idea and warned against the temptation of “self-referential narcissism”, the very opposite of that Christian “otherness” which is both “a gift and a service”.

Referring to the day’s first reading from the Second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians (11:1-7), the Holy Father immediately noted that within just 19 lines of text, “Saint Paul speaks eight times of comfort, of allowing ourselves to be comforted so that we may comfort others”. The word ‘comfort’, thus, “within eight times within 19 lines; it’s too strong; he is trying to tell us something”. Therefore, Pope Francis took this as “an opportunity, an occasion to reflect on comfort”, to ask “what is the comfort which Paul speaks about?”. The Pontiff noted that “first of all, we must see that comforting is not autonomous; it is not something closed in itself”.

In fact, he said, the “experience of comforting, which is a spiritual experience, always needs ‘otherness’ in order to be complete; no one can comfort himself, no one”. And “however, one tries to do so, ends up looking at himself in the mirror: he looks in the mirror, seeking to mask himself, to appear” a certain way. “He is comforted by these closed things that prevent him from growing, and the air which he breathes is the air of self-referential narcissism”. However, this is a “mask” of comfort which does not allow growth, it is not comfort because it is closed; it lacks ‘otherness’, that sharing with an ‘other’.

In the Gospel we find many people like this”, Pope Francis explained. “For example, the doctors of the law are full of their own sufficiency”. They are “comforting others in ‘their comfort’ in quotation marks”. The Pope made explicit reference to the rich man “who lived from one party to the next, and thus, made explicit reference to the rich man ‘their comfort’ in quotation marks”. The Pope felt “he was comforted”. However, this type of attitude is best expressed by the words of the prayer of the Pharisees and lawyers before the altar: “God, I thank thee that I am not like other men”. In other words, he “was looking at himself in the mirror, looking at his soul ‘masked’ with ideologies, and he was thanking the Lord”. Jesus himself “shows us the possibility of the existence of these people who will never attain fullness with this lifestyle but at best will arrive at being ‘puffed-up’, in other words, vanity”.

For “comfort” to be real comfort, to be Christian, it needs ‘otherness’, an ‘other’. This, Pope Francis explained, is because “true comfort is received”. For this reason “Paul began with that blessing: ‘Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort’. And it is precisely the Lord; it is God who comforts us; it is God who gives us this gift: to us with our heart open, he comes and gives it to us”. This is “the ‘otherness’ which allows true comfort to grow; and the true comfort of the soul also spreads into another ‘otherness’ so that we may comfort others”. Therefore, that “comfort is a state of passage from the gift received to the service rendered”, and thus, “true comforting has this twofold ‘otherness’; it is both a gift and a service”.

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Remembering seafarers on Sea Sunday

“It is estimated that at least 90% of everything in our homes is brought by sea and yet the lives of the seafarers who bring them is a mystery to most”. Fr Colum Kelly, a Chaplain at the major British east coast Port of Immingham, explains that this is one of the primary reasons behind Sea Sunday 2017, being celebrated on 9 July in parishes across the globe. The annual celebration, he points out, raises awareness about the “invisible” world of shipping. "And seafarers are the invisible workforce in that place.”

The Church’s ministry to seafarers, the Apostleship of the Sea (AOS), includes an international network known in the maritime world as Stella Maris, working in more than 250 ports around the world, and Fr Colum is one of the many priests who serve in them.

Through the AOS network, the Church actively supports the well-being of the world’s seafarers and of those whose livelihood depends on our seas and oceans.

While Pope Francis often speaks of the dignity that employment affords every man and woman, workers in the maritime sector are often subjected to terrible injustices, to natural and man-made dangers and to piracy.

For Fr Colum, the celebration of Sea Sunday offers an opportunity to "encourage the people of our parishes to reflect on the importance of seafarers who bring us so much of what we have in our homes and to support us in our efforts to make the maritime world a kinder and fairer place.”

Among its many activities, AOS advocates on behalf of seafarers so that their rights will be recognized and defended in such international charters as the 2006 International Labour Organization’s Maritime Labour Convention and the International Maritime Organization’s conventions regulating the sector. "Many international instruments set minimum requirements for seafarers to work on a ship, and contain provisions on conditions of employment, hours of work and rest, accommodation, recreational facilities, food, health protection, medical care and social security protection. They include provisions for determining compliance and enforcement. Asked to what extent have these charters been respected in the industry, Fr. Colum replies, "Indeed there are many charters and conventions aimed at the protection of seafarers and their rights. Most of the ships we visit comply with these conventions, but unfortunately we do come across instances where ship owners and companies are in breach of these regulations. There are ‘instances of lack of food on board, unpaid wages, excessive working hours, contractual infringements where a nine-month contract can be dragged out to keep the seafarer on board, often for the convenience of the shipping company. Enforcement can only happen when we discover the problems, but seafarers are too often frightened to complain for fear of being dismissed and subsequently blacklisted.”

Fishers, particularly when self-employed, often fail to enjoy the social protections offered by the fishing industry or local governments. A community of fishermen in Lébanon, for example, may have no meaningful access to health care nor to retirement funds and thus lack long-term security for themselves and their families.

"There are many horror stories emanating from the fishing world”, Fr Colum admits. "Fishers do not have the same protection from maritime conventions, so the AOS is acutely aware of the need to do all it can to help in this deregulated world. Human trafficking has become a major problem in this industry and the Catholic Church has joined with government and law enforcement agencies around the world to set up theSanta Marta Group, which is an alliance of international police chiefs and bishops from around the world working together with civil society in a process endorsed by Pope Francis, to eradicate human trafficking and modern day slavery. The Pope describes trafficking as ‘an open wound on the body of contemporary society’.

The AOS has charitable offices across the globe, mostly located in ports, to assist fishers and mariners in whatever way they can. They offer a place for seafarers to go ashore, to rest, use the Internet or make a phone call, but also a place to seek spiritual comfort. Funds raised on Sea Sunday go to help these initiatives and much more. The AOS employs dedicated teams of chaplains around the world to welcome the stranger, that is the seafarer”, Fr Colum stresses. "The Sea Sunday collection is the only annual occasion where we can call on the Catholic community to support the charity and ensure that chaplains and volunteers have the resources to carry out this great mission of the Church. The joy with which AOS chaplains are greeted on board is testament to the way our work is appreciated. We bring the smiles of welcome and the communication resources crew members need to contact their loved ones while they are in port. We bring warm clothing to those taken by surprise in the cold winters in our ports. In fact our ministry, one of outreach to the stranger, fulfills all the demands of the great commission in the Gospel”, he adds.

Not only are our seafarers away from their families for long periods”, Fr Colum notes, "but they are also absent from their church. Crews have little chance to participate in the practice of their faith, so provision of sacraments is an important element in our ministry. Mass on board a ship is always a joyful celebration for a crew who never know when the next opportunity will arise”.

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Thus, the Holy Father reiterated, “if I allow the Lord’s comfort to enter as a gift, it is because I need to be comforted: I am needy”. However, there are also those who “have a closed heart: they are unhappy because the gift of comfort cannot enter and cannot be given to others”. They do not follow the Beatitudes and “they feel rich in spirit, or rather, self-sufficient”. These are the people “who have no need to weep because they feel they are just, those violent ones who do not know what meekness is: those who are unjust, who live off injustice and create injustice; the unmerciful or rather those without mercy – those who never forgive and who never have the need to forgive because they do not feel the need to be forgiven; those unclean of heart; those workers of war, not of peace; and those who are never criticized or persecuted for fighting for justice, because they do not care about the injustices done to other people: these people are closed”.

Therefore, considering these ‘beatitudes in reverse’, the Holy Father suggested that it would be “good for us to think how my heart is: is it open? Do I know how to receive the gift of comfort, do I ask it of the Lord, and then turn it to others as a gift of the Lord and as my service’? And thus, with these thoughts throughout the day, go back and thank the Lord who is so good and is always trying to comfort us”. Let us remember that God “only asks that the door of our hearts be open, at least a bit, so that he can then manage to find a way to enter”. 
In the sign of fraternity

The five new Cardinals created in the Consistory received the blessings of both Francis and Benedict XVI. Following the Rite celebrated in the Vatican Basilica, the Bishop of Rome accompanied the new Cardinals to the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery to meet with the Pope emeritus. In the courtyard, Francis was welcomed by Archbishop Georg Gänswein, Prefect of the Papal Household, while his predecessor awaited them in the chapel. Once inside, after a warm embrace with his successor, Benedict XVI greeted the new Cardinals, speaking with each one individually. Afterwards, at Francis’ invitation, the Pope emeritus led the prayer. Following the moment of prayer, they imparted their blessing and posed for photographs with the five Cardinals.

Earlier, in Saint Peter’s Basilica, the new Cardinals had renewed their Profession of Faith and, in the ritual formula that was pronounced by Cardinal Omella Omella, their sworn fidelity and obedience to the Pontiff and to his successors. This was followed by the imposition of the zucchetto and the cardinal’s biretta, with the consignment of the ring by Francis. One at a time, according to the order of creation, the new Cardinals climbed to the Altar of the Consistory to receive the insignias of the dignity of Cardinal and the Assignment of Title, signifying their participation in the pastoral care of the Bishop of Rome’s diocese: to Cardinal Rino Fisichella, Prefect of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, the title of San Silvestro in Capite; to Cardinal Giuseppe Bertello, the title of San Silvestro in Capite; to Cardinal Armande Balvo, the title of San Silvestro in Capite; and to Cardinal Rosa Chávez the title of Santissimo Sacramento a Tor de’ Schiavi. At the conclusion of the celebration, the five exchanged an embrace of peace with Francis, a fraternal gesture that they then shared with the Cardinal confreres who had participated in the Rite. Among them were Cardinal Sodano, Dean of the College of Cardinals; Cardinal Re, the Vice Dean; and Secretary of State Cardinal Parolin. Also in attendance were the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, along with Archbishop Becciu, Substitute of the Secretariat of State; Archbishop Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States; Msgr Borja, Assessor; and Msgr Bettencourt, Head of Protocol. Many bishops and prelates of the Roman Curia were also present, including Archbishop Zampini and Msgr Sapienza, Regent of the Prefecture of the Papal Household. All were also present at the Mass following the day. The Rite was accompanied by the Sistine Chapel Choir, directed by Msgr Marini, Master of Pontifical Liturgical Celebrations.

At the end, as Maestro Pombella directed the Schola in playing Salve Regina, Pope Francis paused at the statue of Saint Peter, caressed and kissed its foot well worn by the devotions of pilgrims.

Francis celebrated Mass the following morning in Saint Peter’s Square on the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul. Thus, both prior to Mass before the Confession of Peter and afterwards in the Square, his embraces with Archbishop Job of Telmessos, Representative of the Patriarch of Constantinople, were significant gestures of reconciliation.

The 99 palliums that the Pontiff consigned to the Metropolitan Archbishops appointed during the year were also rich in significance, a sign of unity and fidelity. Pope Francis wished to have the new Metropolitan Archbishops at his side along with the five new Cardinals. This was so even though, according to the new practice introduced two years ago, precisely to underscore the bond with each particular Church, the actual imposition of the pallium will take place in the original dioceses of the new Metropolitans at the hands of the Apostolic Nuncio. It will be likewise for the seven Archbishops who were unable to come to Rome.

With a gesture of fraternity, Francis individually greeted each of the Cardinal concelebrants. Among them, in addition to the Deacon and the Secretary of State, were Protodeacon Cardinal Martino, who introduced the Metropolitans to Pope Francis, and Cardinal Tobin, who received the pallium from the Pontiff.

The celebration took place in Saint Peter’s Square, where tapestries depicting Saint Joseph, Saint Michael the Archangel, and the Pontiff’s coat of arms embellished the loggias of the Basilica’s facade, together with the Crucifix adorning the curtain over the central door. A statue of the Madonna and Child and a sculpture of Saints Peter and Paul were placed beside the altar. Francis entered the Basilica through the “Porta della Preghiera”, where he met Archbishop Job. After descending to the Tomb of Saint Peter, they entered Saint Peter’s Square together.

The Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarch was accompanied by Cardinal Koch, Bishop Farrell and Msgr Palmieri, respectively President, Secretary and Undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The Tölzer Knabenchor (Tölzer Boys Choir) from Germany and the Saint John the Evangelist Church Choir from the USA, together with the Sistine Chapel Choir, provided the musical accompaniment.

At the Ordinary Public Consistory

Not as princes but as servants

He speaks to them frankly and, above all, he goes before them. He walks ahead of them.

Along the way, the disciples themselves are distracted by concerns that have nothing to do with the “direction” taken by Jesus, with his will, which is completely one with that of the Father. So it is that, as we heard, the two brothers James and John think of how great it would be to take their seats at the right and at the left of the King of Israel (cf. Mt 19:28). They are not facing reality! They think they see, but they don’t. They think they know, but they don’t. They think they understand better than the others, but they don’t.

For the reality is completely different. It is what Jesus sees and what directs his steps.

The reality is the cross. It is the sin of the world that he came to take upon himself, and to uproot from the world of men and women. It is the innocent who suffer and die as victims of war and terrorism; the forms of enslavement that continue to violate human dignity even in the age of human rights; the refugee camps which at times seem more like a hell than a purgatory; the systematic disarming of all that is no longer useful, people included.

This is what Jesus sees as he walks towards Jerusalem. During his public ministry he made known the Father’s tender love by offering all who were opposing him the pallium of the Church. Now he realizes that the moment has come to press on to the very end, to eliminate evil at its root. And so, he walks resolutely towards the cross.

We too, brothers and sisters, are journeying with Jesus along this path. I speak above all to you, dear new Cardinals. Jesus “is walking ahead of you”, and he asks you to follow him resolutely on his way. He calls you to look at reality, not to let yourselves be distracted by other interests or prospects. He has not called you to become “princes” of the Church, to “sit at his right or at his left”. He calls you to serve like him and with him. To serve the Father and your brothers and sisters. He calls you to follow him, as he did the sin of the world and its effects on today’s humanity. Follow him, and walk ahead of the holy people of God, with your gaze fixed on the Lord’s Cross and Resurrection.

And now, with faith and through the intercession of the Virgin Mother, let us ask the Holy Spirit to bridge every gap between our hearts and the heart of Christ, so that our lives may be completely at the service of God and our all brothers and sisters.