The power of a name
Celebrating five years of Francis’ Pontificate

GIOVANNI MARIA VIAN

Five years ago, truly few had been able to foresee the Conclave’s election of the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, and fewer still had expected that name Benedict XVI’s Successor would choose following the first pontifical resignation in over six centuries. Yet that name was anticipated, as some electors had suggested and, as curiously appeared in the image – repeatedly broadcast on television during the Conclave – of a man clad in a habit, kneeling in the freezing rain falling on Saint Peter’s Square, around his neck a sign reading “Pope Francis”. That sign summed up the expectation, recurrent during the Middle Ages, of a radical renewal thanks to a papa angelicus.

In the Jewish and then Christian tradition, a name embraces much more than a preference or inclination, as appears in the Bible: the Lord changes that of Abraham, and Jesus does likewise with Peter to indicate a transformation of one’s life. The custom of taking a name different from one’s own was affirmed much later in some religious orders, as had happened in papal successions after the first centuries. However, no Pontiff had ever chosen to call himself Francis, a name of profane origin which, in medieval Latin, indicated that one came from France, but which became Christian par excellence because it recalled the Saint of Assisi (who was baptized “John”) and his radic- alness in the imitation of Christ. As the sixth year of his Pontificate begins, the power of that name – which Pope Bergoglio sought to explain to journalists three days after his election – is clear. A name which evokes the figure of Saint Francis for three reasons: attention and closeness to the poor – recommended to the new Pontiff by “a great friend” (the Brazilian Cardinal Cláudio Hummes who was beside him in the Sistine Chapel) when the votes had surpassed the necessary two thirds –, preaching peace, and care for creation. Three components of the Christian message which characterize the days of the first American Pope, who is also the first non-European Pontiff in nearly 13 centuries, as well as the first Jesuit.

Just before the Conclave, indicating the necessity for the Church to go out to the world’s real and metaphorical peripheries to proclaim the Gospel, the Archbishop of Buenos Aires illustrated an essentially missionary Pontificate, a blueprint which in just a few months’ time would be developed in the lengthy programmatic document Evangelii Gaudium. Joy despite the persecution and martyrdom of so many Christians, despite the growing imbalance between the world’s north and south, despite that “piecemeal” world war he so often condemns, despite the devastation of the planet to the detriment first and foremost of the poor described in Laudato Si’, an Encyclical embraced with interest and hope even by many people who seem not to recognize themselves in the Church. Just as well beyond the visible confines of the Church we hear the simple and impassioned words of a Christian who, bearing a great burden, asks us each day to pray for him.

At the Angelus
Courage to admit our weaknesses

Bishop emeritus of Mainz,
Cardinal Lehmann dies

Penitential celebration
A love with no bounds

ON CHRISTIAN SALVATION
‘Placuit Deo’

As Jesus prayed
At the General Audience a catechesis on the Lord’s Prayer

“When we pray the Our Father, we pray as Jesus prayed”. At the General Audience in Saint Peter’s Square on Wednesday, 14 March, Pope Francis continued his series of catecheses on the Holy Mass, this week focusing on the Lord’s Prayer, which, he reminded the faithful, Jesus taught us in response to his disciples asking, “Master, teach us to pray as you pray”. The Holy Father observed that, “consigned to us on the day of our Baptism, the ‘Our Father’ makes resonate within us those same sentiments that Christ Jesus bore within”. Indeed, he said, “when we pray the ‘Our Father’, we pray as Jesus prayed.”
Pope entrusts Via Crucis reflections to students

The Holy Father has assigned a group of young people the task of writing the meditations for this year’s Via Crucis at the Colosseum on Good Friday, 30 March. In a statement announcing the decision, Greg Burke, Director of the Holy See Press Office, said that the young people, students from a high school in Rome, will be led by the writer Andrea Monda, a religion teacher at their school.

VATICAN BULLETIN

AUDIENCES

Thursday, 8 March
Archbishop Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, SJ, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

Members of the Episcopal Conference of the Latin Bishops of the Arab Region (CELA), on a visit to ad limina Apostolorum:

Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, OFM, titular Archbishop of Verbe, Apostolic Administrator “ad nutum” of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem for Latins, with the Auxiliaries: Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, titular Bishop of Emmaus for Israel; Bishop William Hanna Shamali, titular Bishop of Layla for Jordan, and with: Fr Hanna Kaldani, Patriarchal Vicar for Israel; Fr Jerzy Kraj, OFM, Patriarchal Vicar for Cyprus; Fr Rafic Nahra, Patriarchal Vicar for Hebrew-speaking Catholics

Archbishop Jean Benjamin Sleiman, OCD, of Baghdad for Latins, Iraq

Bishop Giorgio Bertin, OFM, of Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti, Apostolic Administrator “ad nutum Sacerdotii Sedi” of Mogadishu

Bishop Camillo Ballin, MCCJ, titular Bishop of Ama for the Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates

Archbishop of Alep, Syria

Bishop Gabriel Abou Khazen, OFM, titular Bishop of the Archdiocese of Boro, Lebanon

Bishop Le Vert, 58, was born in Selochea, Bolivia. He holds a doctorate in theology. He was ordained a priest on 19 April 1994. He has served as dean and spiritual director of the Sacred Heart Seminary, chancellor and secretary of the curia of Bacolod. On his return from Rome he served in parish ministry and as: treasurer and contributing member of the Episcopal Conference of the Philippines; vice-president and then president of the diocesan commission for the clergy; rector of the Sacred Heart Seminary in Bacolod City.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Mário Lukunde of Menongue, Angola (12 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Jean-Marie Le Vert as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Bordeaux, France, assigning him the title of the Episcopal See of Briançon. Until now he has been Bishop emeritus of Quimper et Léon, France (9 Mar.).

Bishop of the Archdiocese of Bordeaux; master of novices; provincial of the Argentine Province of the Canons Regular of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (9 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of the Diocese of São Carlos, Brazil, Fr. Eduardo Malaspina from the clergy of Diocesan Vicar for pastoral ministry, vicar general of the diocese.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Le Vert, 58, born in Papeete, Tahiti. He was ordained a priest on 10 October 1987.

Bishop-elect Paredes Cruz, 56, was born in SERTA. He was ordained a priest on 1 February 1995 for the Congregation of the Canons Regular of the Lateran. He has served in parish ministry and as: member of the Presbyteral Council, of the College of Consultors, of the Council of the Episcopal Conference for Interreligious Dialogue.

Cardinal Gualtiero Bassetti, Archbishop of Arezzo-Cortona-Sansepolcro, Italy, President of the Italian Episcopal Conference (10 Mar.).

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Mario Lukunde of Menongue, Angola (12 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Le Vert, 58, was born in Papeete, Tahiti. He was ordained a priest on 10 October 1987.

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of SERTA. Until now he has been Bishop emeritus of Quimper et Léon, France (9 Mar.).

Bishop of the Archdiocese of Bordeaux, France, assigning him the title of the Episcopal See of Briançon. Until now he has been Bishop emeritus of Quimper et Léon, France (9 Mar.).

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**As Jesus prayed**

At the General Audience Francis speaks about the **Our Father** prayer

"When we pray the Our Father, we pray as Jesus prayed." Pope Francis reminded the faithful gathered in Saint Peter’s Square for the General Audience on Wednesday, 14 March, of the redemptive power of the Lord’s Prayer which "connects" us ever closer to our heavenly Father. Continuing his series of catechises dedicated to the Mass, the Pontiff focused his reflection on the liturgy of the Eucharist. The following is a translation of the Holy Father’s catechism, which he offered in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Good morning!

Let us continue with the Catechises on the Holy Mass. At the Last Supper, after Jesus took the bread and the cup of wine, and gave thanks to God, we know that "he broke the bread". In the Eucharistic Liturgy of the Mass, this action corresponds to the Fraction of Bread, preceded by the prayer that the Lord taught us, that is, by the "Our Father".

The following is a translation of the Pope’s greeting, which he delivered in Italian.

I thank you very much for your visit and for your words. I am pleased about this Joint Work with the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. It is a dialogue not only of ideas; it is a human dialogue, from person to person, that helps everyone to grow, to grow as people, in our journey in search of the absolute, of God. Thank you very much, thank you for your good will. Thank you for your visit and thank you for your invitation to visit Taiwan. I greatly appreciate all of this.

May the Lord bless you all, and pray for me.

Thus begins the Communion Rite, containing the praise and petition of the Eucharistic Prayer with the community’s recitation of the "Our Father". This is not one of many Christian prayers, but the prayer of the children of God. It is the great prayer that Jesus taught us. Indeed, consigned to us on the day of our Baptism, the "Our Father" makes resonate within us those same sentiments that Christ Jesus bore within. When we pray the "Our Father", we pray as Jesus prayed. It is the prayer that Jesus prayed, and he taught it to us; when the disciples said to him: "Master, teach us to pray as you pray". And this is how Jesus prayed. It is so beautiful to pray like Jesus! Formed by his divine teaching, we dare to turn to God calling him "Father", because we are reborn as his children through water and the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph 1:5). No one, truly, could call him "Abba" — "Father" — in a familiar way without having it created by God, without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as Saint Paul teaches (cf. Rom 8:15). We must consider: no one can call him "Father" without the inspiration of the Spirit. How often there are people who say "Our Father" but do not know what they are saying. Because yes, he is the Father, but when you say "Father", do you feel that he is Father, your Father, the Father of mankind, the Father of Jesus Christ? Do you have a relationship with this Father? When we pray the "Our Father", we connect with the Father who loves us, but it is the Spirit who gives us this connection, this feeling of being God’s children.

What better prayer than the one taught by Jesus could prepare us for sacramental Communion with him? Apart from in the Mass, the "Our Father" is prayed in the morning and at night, in the Prayers and in Vespers; in this way, the filial attitude toward God and that of fraternity with our neighbour help give Christian form to our days.

In the Lord’s Prayer — in the "Our Father" — we ask for our "daily bread", in which we see a particular reference to the Eucharistic Bread, which we need in order to live as children of God. We also implore "forgiveness of our trespasses". And in order to be worthy to receive God’s forgiveness we commit to forgiving those who have offended us. And this is not easy. Forgiving the people who have offended us is not easy; it is a grace that God grants us the grace to forgive those who have offended us. And this is not easy. Forgiveness is a grace of God and that of fraternity with our brothers and sisters.

Through our own efforts we are unable: to forgive is a grace of God. We also implore "forgive us as you have forgiven me". It is a grace. Through our own efforts we are unable: to forgive is a grace of the Holy Spirit. Thus, as we open our heart to God, the "Our Father" also prepares us for fraternal love. Lastly, we again ask God to "deliver us from the evil" which separates us from him and divides us from our brothers and sisters. Let us clearly understand that these requests are quite appropriate to prepare ourselves for Holy Communion (cf. General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 81).

Indeed, what we ask in the "Our Father" is extended by the prayer of the priest who, in the name of all, implores: "Deliver us Lord from every evil, and grant us peace in our day". He then receives a sort of seal in the Rite of Peace: what he first asks of Christ is that the gift of His peace (cf. Jn 14:27) — thus different from worldly peace and peace, according to His will; then, with the concrete gesture exchanged among us, we express "eccclesial communion and mutual charity before communicating in the Sacrament" (cf. GIRM, 82). In the Roman Rite the exchange of the sign of peace, placed from antiquity before Communion, is ordered to Eucharistic Communion. According to Saint Paul’s admonition, it is impossible to communicate with the one Bread that renders us one Body in Christ, without recognizing that we are reconciled by fraternal love (cf. 1 Cor 10:16; 11:22). Christ’s peace cannot take root in a heart incapable of experiencing fraternity and of restoring it after it has been wounded. Peace is granted by the Lord: he grants us the grace to forgive those who have offended us.

The gesture of peace is followed by the Fraction of Bread (cf. GIRM, 83; Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1393). Performed by Jesus during the Last Supper, the breaking of the Bread is the revelatory gesture that allowed the disciples to recognize him after his Resurrection. We remember the disciples of Emmaus who, in speaking of their encounter with the Risen One, recount "how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread" (cf. Lk 24:39-41).

The breaking of the Eucharistic Bread is accompanied by the invocation of the "Lamb of God", the figure which John the Baptist indicated in Jesus "who takes away the sins of the world" (Jn 1:29). The biblical image of the lamb speaks of redemption (cf. Ex 12:1-14, Is 53:7, 1 Pet 1:19, Rev 7:14). In the Eucharistic Bread, broken for the life of the world, the prayerful assembly recognizes the true Lamb of God, namely, Christ the Redeemer, and implores him: "Have mercy on us ... grant us peace".

"Have mercy on us", "grant us peace" are invocations that from the "Our Father" prayer to the Fraction of Bread, help us to prepare our soul to participate in the Eucharistic banquet, the source of communion with God and with our brothers and sisters.

Let us not forget the great prayer: the one that Jesus taught us, and which is the prayer that he taught to the Father. This prayer prepares us for Communion.

**Special Greetings**

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today’s Audience, particularly those from England, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, China, Indonesia and the United States of America. With prayerful good wishes that this Lent will be a time of grace and spiritual renewal for you and your families, I invoke upon all of you joy and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you all.

I offer a special thought to young people, the elderly, the sick and sufferers. Dear friends, Christ promised to always be with you and he manifests his presence in many ways. Each person has the responsible and courageous task of proclaiming and witnessing to His love which sustains us in every occasion of life. Therefore, never tire of entrusting yourselves to Christ and to spread his Gospel everywhere.
Cardinal Karl Lehmann, Bishop emeritus of Mainz and long-standing President of German Bishops’ Conference, dies

Cardinal Karl Lehmann, Bishop emeritus of Mainz, died early Sunday morning, 11 March, due to complications from a stroke and cerebral hemorrhage. He was 87 years old. After learning of Cardinal Lehmann’s passing, Pope Francis expressed his condolences to all the faithful of Mainz in a telegram addressed to Bishop Peter Kohler. The following is a brief biography, accompanied by a translation of the Holy Father’s telegram.

Karl Lehmann was born on 16 May 1930 in Sigmaringen, in the Archdiocese of Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. After graduating high school in his home town, he studied philosophy and theology at the Albert Ludwigs University of Freiburg. He studied philosophy at the Catholic University in Rome on 10 October 1957, by Cardinal Karl Rahner in the faculty of philosophy of the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. He earned a degree in theology in 1957 at the Gregorian, after which he resumed his work as assistant to Rahner in the faculty of Catholic theology at the Wilhelm-University of Münster, and later received a grant from Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft to pursue a qualification. The Archbishop of Freiburg exempted Fr Lehmann from pastoral office, allowing him to pursue an academic course and begin his thesis on the theme The hidden God and the centuries of Benediction. In 1958, Lehmann was appointed as chair of dogmatics in the faculty of theology at the University of Graz in Austria, the Catholic University of Innsbruck and the Universities of Innsbruck and Graz in Austria, the Catholic University of Washington, Saint Patrick’s College in Ireland and the Catholic University of Warsaw. Lehmann joined the European Academy for Sciences in 1957; he received the Karl Barth Award from the Union of Evangelical Churches in Germany (UEK), and the Romano Guardini Prize from the Catholic Academy in Bavaria. He was also the first Catholic to receive the Martin Luther Medal of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD).

In 1984, in view of his commitment to improving ecumenical relations, he became a member of the circle of representatives of the German Episcopal Conference and of the Council of the Evangelical Church of Germany. Then, from 1986-1998, he first became a member, and the president, of the Catholic delegation to the Lutheran-Roman Catholic ecumenical Dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Beyond Germany, he also continued to hold high level positions in the Church. From 1993-2003, he served as Vice President of the Council of European Bishops’ Conferences (CEC). In addition to participating in various Synods and having played the role of Extraordinary Secretary of the Special Assembly for Europe in 1991, he also served in the Roman Curia as a member of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, and of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, for Bishops, and for the Oriental Churches. He also received numerous prestigious honours, including the Grand Cross (Großes Verdienstkreuz mit Stern und Schleife) from the Federal Republic of Germany, and various ad honorem degrees, which included those from the Universities of Innsbruck and Graz in Austria, the Catholic University of Washington, Saint Patrick’s College in Ireland and the Catholic University of Warsaw. Lehmann was elected four times – in 1984, 1989, 1994 and 2000 – to the Presidency of the German Episcopal Conference, serving in that position for eight years. John Paul II created Lehmann Cardinal with the Title of San Leonardo di Cyangugu, Rwanda, at age 92 (10 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed as Apostolic Nuncio in Georgia Archbishop Josel Avelino Betancourt, titular Archbishop of Cittanova and Apostolic nuncio in Armenia (8 Mar.). The Holy Father appointed as Apostolic Nuncio in Suriname Archbishop Fortunatus Nwokwu, titular Archbishop of Aquaviva, Apostolic Nuncio in Trinidad and Tobago, Ambassador to Barbuda, Barbados, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Cooperate Republic of Guyana, Saint Lucia, Grenada, and The Bahamas, and Apostolic Delegate in the Antilles (9 Mar.).

Bishop emeritus of Mainz and long-standing President of German Bishops’ Conference

Sadly I have learned the news of the death of His Eminence Cardinal Karl Lehmann. I express to you, and to the faithful of the Diocese of Mainz my heartfelt condolences, assuring my prayers for the dear departed Cardinal whom the Lord has called to Himself after grave illness and suffering. In his extensive career as theologian and Bishop, as well as President of the German Episcopal Conference, he contributed to shaping the life of the Church and of society. He always had at heart openness to the issues and challenges of the time, and offered responses and directions beginning from Christ’s message, in order to accompany people along their journey, seeking what unites beyond the confines of confessions, convictions and States. May Jesus, the Good Shepherd always be a faithful servant of the Lord and fullness of life in His heavenly kingdom. I impart to you and to those who mourn and prayerfully heartfelt Apostolic Blessing.

FRANCIS

VATICAN BULLETIN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

START OF MISSION

On 17 January, Archbishop Piero Poppo, titular Archbishop of Taormina, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio in Indonesia with the presentation of his Letters of Credence to H.E. Mr Joko Widodo, President of the Republic. On 25 January, Archbishop James Patrick Green, titular Archbishop of Altoino, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio in Norway with the presentation of his Letters of Credence to King Harald v.

LENTERN SERMON

On Friday morning, 9 March, in the presence of the Holy Father, Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap., Preacher of the Papal Household, delivered the third Lenten Sermon in the Vatican’s Redemptoris Mater Chapel.

NECROLOGY

Bishop Jean-Guy Hamelin, Bishop emeritus of Rouyn-Noranda, Canada, at age 92 (1 Mar.).

Bishop Werner Radspieler, titular Bishop of Thugga and Auxiliary Bishop emeritus of Bamberg, Germany, at age 79 (7 Mar.).

Archbishop Elias Yanes Álvarez, Archbishop emeritus of Zaragoza, Spain, at age 90 (5 Mar.).

Bishop Roch Peineault, titular Bishop of Seguerral and Auxiliary Bishop emeritus of Chicoutimi, Canada, at age 90 (30 Mar.).

Bishop Jean Damascene Bimenyimana of Cyangugu, Rwanda, at age 64 (17 Mar.).
God’s love is an infinite love, one that knows no bounds. It is free of all those obstacles that we, for our part, tend to set in front of others, out of fear that they may strip us of our freedom. This was Pope Francis’ focus during the penitential celebration on Friday afternoon, 9 March, at which he presided in Saint Peter’s Basilica. The following is the English text of his homily.

What great joy and consolation are offered us by the words of Saint John that we just heard: God so loves us that he has made us his children, and, when we see him face-to-face, we shall discover all the more the greatness of his love (cf. Jn 3:16). Not only that. The love of God is always greater than anything we can imagine; it even reaches beyond any sin with which our conscience may charge us. His is an infinite love, one that knows no bounds. It is free of all those obstacles that we, for our part, tend to set in front of others, out of fear that they may strip us of our freedom.

We know that the state of sin distances us from God. But in fact, sin is the way that we distance ourselves from him. Yet that does not mean that God distances himself from us. The state of weakness and confusion that results from sin is one more reason for God to remain close to us. The certainty of this should accompany us throughout our lives. The words of the Apostle are a reassuring confirmation that our hearts should trust, always and unhesitatingly, in the Father’s love: “No matter what our hearts may charge us with, God is greater than our hearts” (v. 20).

His grace is constantly at work in us, to strengthen our hope that his love will never be lacking, in spite of any sin we may have committed by rejecting his presence in our lives. It is this hope that makes us realize at times that our life has lost its direction, as Peter did in the Gospel account that we heard. “And immediately the cock crowed. And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, ‘Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times’. And he went out and wept bitterly” (Mt 26:74-75). The evangelist is extremely sober. The crowing of the cock startles a man who is bewildered; he then recalls the words of Jesus, and at last the curtain is lifted. Peter begins to glimpse through his tears that God is revealed in Christ, who is buffeted and insulted, whom he himself has denied, yet who now goes off to die for him. Peter, who wanted to die for Jesus, now realizes that he must let Jesus die for him. Peter wanted to teach the Master, he wanted to go before him. Instead, it is Jesus who goes off to die for Peter. Peter had not understood this; he didn’t want to understand it. Peter is now confronted with the Lord’s charity. Finally he understands that the Lord loves him and asks him to let himself be loved. Peter realizes that he had always refused to let himself be loved. He had always refused to let himself be saved by Jesus alone, and so he did not want Jesus to love him completely.

How truly difficult it is to let ourselves be loved! We would always like a part of us to be freed of the debt of gratitude, while in reality we are completely indebted, because God loved us first and, with love, he saves us completely.

Let us now ask the Lord for the grace to know the greatness of his love, which wipes away our every sin.

Let us allow ourselves to be purified by love, in order to recognize true love!

On Tuesday, 6 March, the Holy Father received in audience Cardinal Angelo Amato, SDB, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. During the audience, the Supreme Pontiff authorized the Congregation to promulgate the Decrees concerning:

the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Paul VI (Giovanni Battista Montini), Supreme Pontiff, born in Concesio, Italy on 26 May 1820 and died there on 2 May 1978;

the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Oscar Arnulfo Romero Galdámez, Archbishop of San Salvador, martyr, born in Ciudad Barrios, El Salvador on 15 August 1931 and killed in San Salvador, El Salvador on 24 March 1980;

the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Francesco Spinelli, diocesan priest, Founder of the Institute of the Institute of the Sisters Adorers of the Blessed Sacrament, born in Milan, Italy on 14 April 1853 and died in Rivolta d’Adda, Italy on 6 February 1919;

the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Vincenzo Romano, diocesan priest, born on 3 June 1755 in Torre del Greco, Italy and died there on 20 December 1871;

the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Maria Katharina Kasper, Foundress of the Institute of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, born on 26 May 1820 in Dernbach, Germany and died there on 2 February 1888;

the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Maria Schiapparoli, laywoman, born on 14 July 1869 in Parma, Italy and died in Perugia, Italy on 30 November 1959;

the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Maria Felicia Guggiari Echeverria, professed nun of the Order of the Discalced Carmelites, born in Villanueva, Paraguay on 12 January 1955 and died in Asunción, Paraguay on 28 April 1999;

the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Maria Felicia of Jesus of the Blessed Sacrament (in the world: María Felicia Guggiari Echeverría), professed nun of the Order of the Discalced Carmelites, born in Villanueva, Paraguay on 12 January 1955 and died in Asunción, Paraguay on 28 April 1999;

the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Maria Antonella Bordoni, laywoman, born in Bologna, Italy on 2 May 1928 and died in Milan, Italy on 16 January 1987;

the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Maria Felicia of Jesus of the Blessed Sacrament, born in Arezzo, Italy on 13 November 1882 and died in Bologna, Italy on 17 August 1884;
Catholics. Neither Christians nor even precious message of Divine Mercy. Council had been opened and closed Kowalska, the Polish Saint of Divine deep despair because it is silent and squalor and that God will never thrives, that lethal virus that rejects none of them, especially the for all of life’s miseries. The Saviour convey her most essential message: Catholic Church was unable to It indicated a treatment but also and “revolution of tenderness”. was a perfect symbol for the heart of the Church: women, both religious and accustomed to complaining about the smog in the big of the heart and spirit? It was all the Rosary and prayer card, a spiritual that little package that looked like a form of spiritual nourishment for all. Public opinion continued to have account, in order to make understood once again that looking at the peripheries means of the US-Mexico border, another place consumed by the tragedy of the world. Then came the journeys to the US- trafficking in the Philippines, to the mothers incarcerated in among the poor. Since then the papal suitcase has traveled from his heart. ‘Francis’ is born. Another head: “the poor, the poor”. Straight away another word rises the poor”. A whisper from the Brazilian. God, speaking. There is no turning back. Centre stage. Bergoglio’s serene minutes. Until today.

Mercy

Five key words of Pope Francis

LUCIFEA SCARAFFIA

The Pope who came from the ends of the earth immediately brought to Rome, to the Vatican, the periphery as seen through his eyes. The viewpoints from which he saw the task that he was to assume, the lifestyle expected of a Pope, was never to be was the perfect setup for the treatment that the new Pope prescribed for the Catholic Church. On the package label was a phrase so often repeated by Francis: “revolution of tenderness”. It indicated a treatment but also and above all a diagnosis: that of a Catholic Church was unable to convey her most essential message: the compassion and mercy of Christ for all of His creatures. The question rejects none of them, especially the most beaten, the most unpardonable, that invisible cellular zone where the true and true of human conscience shines, that lethal virus that contentions means two things: that he will never be able to escape his anguish and that God will never forgive him; a perfect ingredient of deep despair because it is silent and squalor. Yet the message of mercy has long been atmospheric from afar. Focusing on the facts, Sr. Eustacia Konsulajte, the Polish Saint of Divine Mercy, has a particular influence on Karol Wojtyla who dedicated his second Homily after his election as Bishop of Kraków: “I have always known that of the heart of the Pope.” In her homily the Saint would say that the Pope who was to be John Paul was to be a Saint who was always quite remarkable, but was a Saint who would determine the future of the Church, that of believers or non-believers, that of Christian or not even Catholic. Public opinion was to have an image of the Catholic Church as an institution: it was an image with a face, and a face that negative image by explaining that, by that, an “uncompromising mercy” reigns, as Sr. Eustacia would say, and no longer the sad statistics of accounting of sins. It is perhaps one of the great upheavals of these first few years of Francis’ Pontificate. This Pope, insisting on confusion, celebrating an Extraordinary Holy Year dedicated to mercy managed to win over the general public and to communicate that spiritual message of unchanging divine love mercy. What his Predecessors had seen now appears to be cultivated by Francis, on a grand scale and in the form of spiritual nourishment for all.

The Poor

JOSE BERTA

Inside the Sphinx Chapel, an initiation. The walls are tall. There is no turning back. Every stage, Bergoglio’s synthetic face, potter’s. Beside him is Hummel. An enigma. Hummets says something in his car. Truly some stage. “Do you forget the poor?” A whisper from the Brazilian, God, speaking, firmly. The focus of the Spirit is guiding him. “The poor, the poor!” Straight away another word rises from his heart: “Francis” is born, from another perspective. Those who want nothing in society, those condemned to live marginally, give the new Pontiff to name and sealing. Minute after. “I dream of a poor Church for the poor”. The Bishop of Rome’s programme for all Catholics. A dream, not a fiction.

Go forth

SUSANNA PEREZ

For a phrase that encompasses one of the novelties of Francis’ Pontificate, a phrase around which the pastoral programme set out in the Apostolic Exhortation, Gaudete et Exsultate is centered. Without a doubt it is an expression with which the Popes sought to explain how, before a humanity suffering from wounds of every kind, evangelization must be carried out, that is, by taking the Gospel to the existential peripheries. “Go out to the streets and go to the throes of suffering, and strive as much as you find, exclude no one” (Mt 25:40). “Accompany, especially those who are dying, the lonely, the abandoned, the blind” (Mt 25:40). “Go out quickly to the streets and to the places of squalor and with no borders but village squares and field hospitals”. With these words addressed to Italian Bishops on 11 November 2013 in the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, the Pope indicated the style of the Church that “goes forth” capability of and, helping, healing, and, above all, making God’s mercy visible. Being a Church that goes forth means seeking out those who are lost, and welcoming those who seek help. The Church is thus energized to go "forth", because she is animated by the Word of God “capacity for liberation and novelty” (Evangelii Gaudium, 4). “The Church continues to be faith that is turned toward a world populated by people Abdullah and the Rohingya. “He took a child, and with sterile gloves.” Gottfried Benn’s “Throwing Objects‘. The Pope does not accept the affirmation of the 21st century. Bergoglio has become a saint of the 21st century, a saint who has broken down the barriers and who seeks to encounter the young throughout the Papal year. A Church that understands life as dialogue, communication: the Good News of God, who becomes man in order to heal the sick, to save those who are lost, and to reconcile everything to himself. And the weapons of this Gospel that is Jesus Christ are borne with discernment – of thoughts, of words, of acts and omissions – which leads one to recognize what comes from God and what comes from the Red One. A discernment, the Pope clarifies, which is able to understand how the devil’s temptation – which has three arrows – Love, World, Money – destroys. The Pope rejects the last: “the devil’s temptations are insidious to the individuals and community. Yes, the tempter, like a virus, secretly works his way in, if so showing himself as a minor entity, then spreading his infection around, until appearing to be, in all all, a justifiable condition.

The Devil

ENZO BANCHE

“Devil also exists in the 21st century, and so much more so in the 21st century than he habitually does in the 20th, in order to deceive the faithful about how to battle against him.” In this observation of Pope Francis, made in March 2019, the Pope’s thinking is clear, unmistakable, as is his bid to get down to the devil’s essence as – much more profoundly – on how a Christian must confront this presence which, even when lacking its monstrous images and personalizations, never cease to affect the daily life of each person. Francis is not really interested in describing the demon, the “diable” who随处可见 to separate us from God and to set us again one another. The Pope takes an interest in what the devil does and how he is able to fight day after day against the demonic, acting as a weapon in the hands of the devil. The Good News of God, who becomes man in order to heal the sick, to save those who are lost, and to reconcile everything to himself. And the weapons of this Gospel that is Jesus Christ are borne with discernment – of thoughts, of words, of acts and omissions – which leads one to recognize what comes from God and what comes from the Red One. A discernment, the Pope clarifies, which is able to understand how the devil’s temptation – which has three arrows – Love, World, Money – destroys. The Pope rejects the last: “the devil’s temptations are insidious to the individuals and community. Yes, the tempter, like a virus, secretly works his way in, if so showing himself as a minor entity, then spreading his infection around, until appearing to be, in all all, a justifiable condition.

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Letter on Certain Aspects of Christian salvation 'Placuit Deo’

Addressing two tendencies resembling the ancient heresies of Pelagianism and Gnosticism

Neo-pelagianism and neo-gnosticism are the two reductionist tendencies that threaten Christianity today. To offer clear responses to these tendencies the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has published the Letter 'Placuit Deo’, to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Certain Aspects of Christian Salvation. The following is the English text of the Letter.

CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH

Letter Placuit Deo
to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Certain Aspects of Christian Salvation

I. Introduction

1. "In His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will (cf. Eph 1:9) by which through Christ, the Word made flesh, man might in the Holy Spirit have access to the Father and come to share in the divine nature (cf. Eph 2:18; 2 Pt 1:4). The deepest truth about God and the salvation of man shines out for our sake in Christ, who is both the mediator and the fullness of all revelation’’. The teaching on salvation in Christ must always be deepened. Holding fast to the gate of the Lord Jesus, the Church turns toward all persons with a maternal love, to announce to them the plan of the Covenant of the Father, mediated by the Holy Spirit, “to sum up all things in Christ, the one head’’ (Eph 1:10). The present Letter is intended, in light of the greater tradition of the faith and with particular reference to the teachings of Pope Francis, to demonstrate certain aspects of Christian salvation that can be difficult to understand today because of recent cultural changes.

II. The effect of current cultural changes on the meaning of Christian salvation

2. The contemporary world perceives not without difficulty the confession of the Christian faith, which proclaims Jesus as the only Savior of the whole human person and of all humanity (cf. Acts 4:12; Rom 3:25-26; 1 Tim 2:4-5; Tit 2:11-12). On one hand, individualism centered on the autonomous subject tends to see the human person as a being whose sole fulfillment depends only on his or her own strength. In this vision, the figure of Christ appears as a model that inspires generous actions with his words and his gestures, rather than as He who transforms the human condition by incorporating us into a new existence, reconciling us with the Father and dwelling among us in the Spirit (cf. 2 Cor 5:19, Eph 2:18). On the other hand, a merely interior vision of salvation is becoming common, a vision which, marked by a strong personal conviction or feeling of being united to God, does not take into account the need to accept, heal and renew our relationship both with others and with the created world. In this perspective, it becomes difficult to understand the meaning of the Incarnation of the Word, by which He made a member of the human family, assuming our flesh and our history, for us and for our salvation. Pope Francis, in his ordinary magisterium, often has made reference to the two tendencies described above, that resemble certain aspects of two ancient heresies, Pelagianism and Gnosticism. A new form of Pelagianism is spreading in our days, one in which the individual, understood to be radically autonomous, presumes to save oneself, without recognizing that, at the deepest level of being, he or she derives from God and from others. According to this way of thinking, salvation depends on the strength of the individual or on purely human structures, which are incapable of welcoming the newness of the Spirit of God. On the other hand, a new form of Gnosticism puts forward a model of salvation that is merely interior, closed off in its own subjectivism. In this model, salvation consists of improving oneself, of being “intellectually capable of rising above the flesh of Jesus towards the mysteries of the unknown divinity''. It presumes to liberate the human person from the body and from the material universe, in which traces of the provident being of the Creator are no longer found, but only a reality deprived of meaning, foreign to the fundamental identity of the person, and easily manipulated by the interests of man. Clearly, the comparison with the Pelagian and Gnostic heresies intends only to recall general common features, without entering into judgments on the exact nature of the ancient errors. There is a great difference between modern, secularized society and the social context of early Christianity, in which the two heresies were born. However, insofar as Gnosticism and Pelagianism represent perennial dangers for misunderstanding Biblical faith, it is possible to find similarities between the ancient heresies and the modern tendencies just described.

III. The human desire for salvation

5. Man perceives himself, directly or indirectly, as a mystery: Who am I? I exist, and yet do not have the principle of my existence within myself. Every person, in his or her own way, searches for happiness and attempts to obtain it by making recourse to the resources one has available. However, this universal aspiration is not necessarily expressed or declared; rather it is often more secret and hidden than it may appear, and is ready to reveal itself in the face of particular crises. Often it coincides with a hope for physical health; sometimes it takes the form of worrying about greater economic well-being; it expresses itself widely as the need for inner peace and for a peaceful coexistence with one’s neighbour. On the other hand, while the question of salvation presents itself as
dedicated toward a higher good, it also maintains the character of endurance and of overcoming pain. Together with the struggle to attain the good comes the fight to ward off evil: ignorance and error, fragility and weakness, sickness and death.

5. Regarding these aspirations, faith in Christ teaches, rejecting all claims of self-realization, that these can be fulfilled completely only if God himself makes it possible, by drawing us toward Himself. The total salvation of the person does not consist of the things that the human person can obtain by himself, such as possessions, material well-being, knowledge or abilities, power or influence on others, good reputation or self-satisfaction. No created thing can totally satisfy us, because God has destined us for communion with Him; our hearts will be restless until they rest in Him. The ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine. Revelation, in this manner, does not limit itself to announcing salvation as an answer to any particular contemporary desire. If redemption, on the contrary, were to be judged or measured according to the existent needs of human beings, how could we avoid the suspicion of having simply introduced the dominion of desire into the human creature? It is necessary to affirm that God is the origin of that faith which has a name and a face: Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior. In the Christian faith the origin of evil is not found in the material, corporeal world experienced as a boundary or a prison from which we need to be saved. On the contrary, this faith proclaims that all the universe is good because it was created by God (cf. Gen 1:31; Wis 1:14; 1 Tim 4:4), and that the evil that is most damaging to man is that which comes from his heart (cf. Mt 15:18-19; Gen 3:10). By sinning, man abandoned the source of love, and loses himself in false forms of love that close him ever more into himself. It is this separation from God — He who is the font of communion and life — that brings about the loss of harmony among human persons, and between humanity and the world, introducing the domination of disintegration and death (cf. Rom 5:12). As a result, the salvation that faith announces to us does not only pertain to our inner reality, but to our entire being. In fact, it is the whole person, body and soul, that was created by the love of God, in his image and likeness, and is called to live in communion with Him.

IV. Christ, Savior and Salvation

8. At no moment in history did God stop offering his salvation to the sons and daughters of Adam (cf. Gen. 3:15), establishing his covenant with all of humanity in Noah (cf. Gen 9:9) and, later, with Abraham and his descendants (cf. Gen 15:8). Therefore, Divine salvation takes on the creaturely order shared by all humanity and accompanies their concrete journey in history, by choosing a people to whom He offered the means to fight against sin and to draw close to Him. God prepared the coming of “a powerful Savior, in the house of David, his servant” (Lk 1:35). In the fullness of time, the Father sent to the world his Son, who proclaimed the Kingdom of God, curing every disease and illness (cf. Mt 4:23). The healings performed by Jesus, in which he makes present the providence of God, were a sign that pointed back to his own person. He was, in fact, revealed as Lord of life and of death in his paschal event. According to the Gospel, salvation for all people begins with welcoming Jesus: “Today salvation has come to this house” (Lk 15:19). The good news of salvation has a name and a face: Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior. Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a history that gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.

9. The Christian faith has illustrated, throughout its centuries-long history, by means of multiple figures, this salvific work of the Son incarnate. It has done so without ever separating the healing dimension of salvation, by which Christ redeems us from sin, from the elevating dimension, by which he makes us sons and daughters of God, participants in his divine nature (cf. 2 Pt 1:4). Considering the salvific perspective in a descending manner, that is, beginning with God who comes to redeem humanity, Jesus is the illuminator and revealer, the redeemer and liberator, the One who divinizes and justifies the human person. According to an ascending vision, that is, beginning with the human person turning towards God, Christ is the High Priest of the New Covenant, offering perfect worship to the Father, in the name of all humanity: He sacrifices Himself, expiates sins, and remains forever alive to intercede on our behalf. In this manner, an incredible synergy between divine and human action appears in the life of Jesus, a synergy that shows how baseless the individualist perspective is. The descending perspective bears witness to the absolute priority of the gratuitous acts of God; humility is essential to respond to his salvific love and is required to receive the gifts of God, prior to all of our works. At the same time, the ascending perspective recalls that, by means of the fully human action of his Son, the Father wanted to renew our actions so that, conformed to Christ, we are able to fulfill “the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them” (Eph 2:10).

10. Moreover it is clear that the salvation that Jesus brought in his person does not occur only in an interior manner. In fact, the Son was made flesh, in order to communicate to every person the salvific communion with God (cf. Jn 1:14). By assuming flesh (cf. Rom 8:3; Heb 4:14; 1 Jn 4:2), and being born of a woman (cf. Gal 4:4), “the Son of God was made the son of man” and our brother (cf. Heb 2:14). Thus, inasmuch as Jesus became part of the human family, “he has united himself in some fashion with every man and woman” and has established a new kind of relationship with God, his Father, and with all humanity; we can be incorporated in this new kind of relationship and participate in the Son of God’s own life. As a result, rather than limiting the salvific action, assuming flesh allows Christ to mediate the salvation of God for all of the sons and daughters of Adam.

11. In conclusion, to respond both to the individualist reduc- tionism of Pelagian tendency, and to the neo-Gnostic promise of a merely interior salvation, we must remember the way in which Jesus is Savior. He did not limit himself to showing us the way to encounter God, a path we can walk on our own by being obedient to his words and by imitating his ex- ample. Rather, Christ opens for us the door of freedom, and be- comes, himself, the way: “I am the way” (Jn 14:6). Furthermore, this path is not merely an interior journey at the margins of our relationships with others and with the created world. Rather, Jesus gave us a “new and living way that he inaugurated for us through his flesh” (Heb 10:20).

Therefore, Christ is Savior in as much as he assumed the entirety of our humanity and lived a fully human life in communion with his Father and with others. Salva- tion, then, consists in incorporating ourselves into his life, receiving his Spirit (cf. Jn 14:15). He became, “in a particular way, the origin of all grace according to his humanity.” He is at the same time Savior and Salvation.

V. Salvation in the Church, Body of Christ

12. The place where we receive the salvation brought by Jesus is the Church, the community of those who have been incorporated into this new kind of relationship begun by Christ (cf. Rom 8:9). Understanding this salvific mediation of the Church is an essential help in overcoming all reductionist tendencies. The salvation that God offers us is not achieved with our own individual efforts alone, as neo-Pelagianism would contend. Rather, salvation is found in the relationships that are born from the incarnate Son of God and that form the communion of the Church. Because the human person in Christ gives us is not a merely in- terior salvation, as the neo- Gnostic vision claims, and intro- duces us into concrete relations- ships that He himself has lived, the Church is a visible com- munity. In her we touch the flesh of Jesus, especially in our poorest and most suffering brothers and sisters. Hence, the salvific medi- cation of the Church, “the univer- sal sacrament of salvation,” assures us that salvation does not consist in the self-realization of the isolated individual, nor in an interior fusion of the individual with the divine. Rather, salvation consists in being incorporated into a communion of persons that participates in the communion of the Trinity.

13. Both the individualistic and the merely interior visions of sal- vation contradict the sacramental economy through which God wants to save the human person. The participation in the new kind of relationships begun by Jesus occurs in the Church by means of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10.
the sacraments, of which Baptism is the door,22 and the Eucharist is the source.23 We encounter this, the inconsistency of the claims to self-salvation that depend on human ef-
forts,34 as seen. Faith con-

fesses that we are saved by means of Baptism, which seals upon us the indelible mark of belonging to Christ and to the Church. The transformation of the way of living our relationships with God, with humanity, and with creation derives from Baptism (cf. Mt 28:19). Thus, purified from original, and all other sins, we are called to a new existence conforming to Christ (cf. Rom 6:4). With the grace of the seven sacraments, believers can be spiritual and renewed, especially when the journey becomes more difficult. Without this desire for Christ by sinning, believers can be reintroduced into the kind of relationships they began by Christ in the sacrament of Penance, allowing them to again walk as He did (cf. Jn 1:18). In this way, we look with hope toward the Last Judgement, in which each person will be judged on the basis of the way of living our relationships begun by Christ in the sacramental grace of the seven sacraments, believ-
ing, with the confidence of Mary, Mother of the Savior and first among the saved, we are certain that “our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also abstain a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself” (Phil 3:20-21).

The Sovereign Pontiff Francis, on February 16, 2018, approved this Letter, adopted in the Plenary Session of this Congregation on January 24, 2018, and ordered its publication.

Rome, from the Offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, February 22, 2018, on the Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter.

LUIS F. LADARIA, SJ
Titular Archbishop of Thibica
Prefect
GIACOMO MORANDI
Titular Archbishop of Cerveteri
Secretary

1 SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation Div Vehemueu, 4.
4 Cf. Id., Encyclical Letter Lumen Fidei (29 June 2013), 47: AAS 105 (2013), 516-517; Apostolic Exhor-
tation Evangelii Gaudium, 93-94: AAS 105 (2013), 1095. Address to the Participants in the Fifth Conven-
tion of the Italian Church (10 November 2013).
5 Cf. Id., Address to the Participants in the Fifth Conven-
tion of the Italian Church (10 November 2013).
icism, a purely subjective faith whose only interest is a certain experience or a set of ideas and bits of in-
formation which are meant to console and enlighten,
but which ultimately lack the mystery of the God who
is her own thoughts and feelings”; PONTIFICIAL COUNCIL FOR CULTURE — PONTIFICIAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life. A Christian Reflection on the “New Age” (January 2003), Vatican City, 2003.
8 Cf. Id., Address to the Participants in the Pilgrimage from the Diocese of Brescia (12 June 2013): AAS 95 (2013), 637: “in this world where man is denied, where people prefer to take the road of Gnosticism, [...] of the “no flesh” — God who did not take flesh [...]”
9 According to the Pelagian heresy, developed dur-
ing the fifth century around Pelagius, man, in order to fulfill the commandments of God and to be saved, needs grace only as an external help to his freedom (like light, for example, power), not like a radical healing and regeneration of the freedom, without prior merit, until he can do good and reach the eternal life.
More complex is the gnostic movement, sprung up in the first and second centuries, which has many different forms among themselves. In general, the gnostics believed that salvation is obtained through an esoteric knowledge or gnosis. Such gnosis reveals to the gnostic his true essence, i.e., a spark of the divine Spirit that lives inside him, which has to be liberated from the body, external to his true humanity. Only in this manner, this gnostic returns to his original being in God from whom he has turned away due to a primordial fall.
10 Cf. THOMAS AQUINAS, Summa Theologica, I, q. 2, 11: 3.
11 Cf. AUGUSTINE, Confessions, 1, 1. Corpus Chris-
tianorum, 27, 1.
12 SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution in the Church in the Modern World Gaudium et Spes, 21.
13 INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, Se-
14 BENEDICT XVI, Encyclical Letter Deus Caritas Est (25 December 2005), 1: AAS 98 (2006), 217; cf. FRAN-
15 IRENAEUS, Adversus Haereses, III, 19, 1: Sources Chrétiennes, 211, 374.
16 SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution in the Church in the Modern World Gaudium et Spes, 21.
17 Cf. AUGUSTINE, Tractatus in Ioannem, 15, 4. Corpus Chris-
tianorum, 36, 132: “I am the way and the truth and the life” (Jn 14:6). If you search for the truth, follow the way, because the way is the same as the truth. The goal you aim for and the way you must tread are the same. You cannot reach your goal fol-
18 Cf. THOMAS AQUINAS, Summa Theologica, III, q. 63, a. 5.
19 Cf. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Dogmat-
ic Constitution on the Church Lumen Gentium, 11.
20 Cf. THOMAS AQUINAS, Summa Theologica, III, q. 63, a. 5.
21 Cf. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Dogmatic
Constitution on the Church Lumen Gentium, 11; Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sac-
24 Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter Redemptoris Misio (17 December 1990), 40: AAS 85 (1993), 887-
26 SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Pastoral
Constitution in the Church in the Modern World Gaudium et Spes, 22.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

‘Placuit Deo’

David Leiberg, untitled

herself with all of her efforts to evan-

elization, the Church continues to

volve the definitive coming of the

aror, since it is “in hope that

or are saved” (Rom 8:24). The

vation of men and women will be

plete only when, after having con-

quered the last enemy, death (cf.
1 Cor 15:26), we will participate fully

in the glory of the risen Jesus, who

will bring our relationship with

God, with our brothers and sisters,

and with all of creation to fullness.

Total salvation of the body and of

the soul is the final destiny to which

God calls all of humanity. Founded

in faith, sustained by hope, and

working in charity, with the example
of Mary, Mother of the Savior and

first among the saved, we are certain

that “our citizenship is in heaven,

and from it we also abstain a savior,

the Lord Jesus Christ. He will

change our lowly body to conform

with his glorified body by the power

that enables him also to bring all

things into subjection to himself”

(Phil 3:20-21).

Page 10 L´OSSERVATORE ROMANO Friday, 16 March 2018, number 11
Let us not leave them alone

The following is the English text of a letter sent on Ash Wednesday, 14 Feb-
ruary, 2018, by Bishop of the world from
Cardinal Leonardo Sandri and Arch-
bishop Cyril Vasil, respectively Prefect
and Secretary of the Congregation for
the Oriental Churches, on the occasion
of the annual Collection for the Holy
Land, which is traditionally taken up on
Good Friday.

The Lenten Season, which we are
living once again, invites us to go to
Jerusalem through the way of the Cross
on Good Friday. It is also the day when
accomplished his redemptive mis-

The Lenten journey is not a solitary act,
but a liturgical act sung by all the
Christians in the world, in which each
one of us is called to pause and like the
Good Samaritan concern ourselves with
innocent persons who have been pushed
by war to death, even death on a cross”
(Phil 2:7-8), the outcry of our broth-

which the Son of God who “emptied

the Son of God who “emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave” (Phil 2:7-8),
found human in appearance, he
humbled himself, becoming obedi-
ent to death, even death on a cross”
(Phil 2:7-8), the outcry of our broth-
erer remains unheard and the faces of
ourstaticmethod of so many persons of good

the words of charity. Knowing that the
Lenten journey is not a solitary act,
but a liturgical act sung by all the
Christians in the world, in which each
one of us is called to pause and like the
Good Samaritan concern ourselves with
innocent persons who have been pushed
by war to death, even death on a cross”
(Phil 2:7-8), the outcry of our broth-

Let us not leave them alone.

British astrophysicist Stephen Hawking dies

The renowned astrophysicist Step-
hen Hawking died at his home in
Cambridge, Great Britain, on 13
March. He was 76 years old.

He was born on 8 January 1942
in Oxford, where his mother had
taken refuge to escape the Nazi
bombing of London. Despite suf-
fering most of his life from
astrophysical seizures (a
serious and disabling disease,
Hawking firmly established himself
in the fields of academia and sci-
ence at a very young age. By 1972
he had already been elected a Fellow
of the Royal Society. And from 1979
to 2009, he held the prestigious Lu-
casian Chair of Mathematics at
Cambridge University, a position
once held by Isaac Newton.

A self-proclaimed atheist, he argued
that the simplest explanation
for the existence of the universe
was in the negation of a Creator
God.

His studies on black holes, quantum

He was a recipient of the Medal of Freedom,
the Albert Einstein Medal and the Gold Medal
Courage to admit our weaknesses

"Lenten" Sunday, that is, the day to "rejoice," is thus called because it "makes us to rejoice." Pope Francis explained this at the start of the Fourth Week of Lent to the some 30,000 faithful gathered for the Angelus prayer in Saint Peter’s Square on Sunday, 4 March. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's reflection, which he shared in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On this Fourth Sunday of Lent, called “Lenten”, that is, “rejoice”, because this is the opening antiphon of the Eucharistic liturgy that invites us to joy. “Rejoice, Jerusalem” — thus, it is a call to joy — “Be joyful, all who were in mourning”. This is how the Mass begins. What is the reason for this joy? The reason is God’s great love for mankind, as today’s Gospel passage tells us: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (Jn 3:16). These words, spoken by Jesus during the encounter with Nicodemus, summarize a theme that lies at the centre of the Christian message: even when the situation seems desperate, God intervenes, offering his grace and save it. Even when we are tempted to surrender to life’s difficulties, May she convey to us the sentiments of her Son Jesus, so that our Lenten journey may become an experience of forgiveness, of welcome and of charity.

After the Angelus, Pope Francis added:

Dear brothers and sisters, I greet all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims from Italy and from other countries, in particular the faithful from Agropoli, Padua, Trona, Foggia and Caltanissetta, and the young people of Saint Anthony of Padua parish in Serra di Pepe. I greet the Brazilian community of Rome, the confraternities of Tivoli with their Bishop, the young people of Avigliana and the youth of Saronno.

I offer a special greeting to the university students who have come from various parts of the world and joined in the first "Vatican Hackathon" promoted by the Dicastery for Communication: dear young people, it is good to place the intelligence, the need of truth and of the most needy. I wish everyone a happy Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. Arrivederci!

Ecological conversion

Telegram to Cardinal Turkson for International Conference on Laudato Si’

The Pontifical Gregorian University, in cooperation with the Embassies to the Holy See of Georgia, Germany and the Netherlands, hosted an international Conference 7-8 March, devoted to the teachings outlined in Pope Francis’ Encyclical, ‘Laudato Si’: Entitled “Radical Ecological Conversion after Laudato Si’: Discovering the Intrinsic Value of all Creatures Human and Non-Human, the workshops aimed to identify new ways to bring about a radical change of hearts — not only in the individual, but also within economic, social and political communities — towards caring for our common home. On the occasion of the Conference, Pope Francis sent a telegram to Cardinal Peter Turkson who gave the keynote speech. The following is the text of the Holy Father’s telegram.

His Eminence

Cardinal Peter Turkson
Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

On the occasion of the international conference entitled: "Radical Ecological Conversion after Laudato Si’", I would like to convey my cordial greetings and prayerful best wishes to all the participants. Conscious in a particular way during this season of Lent of the importance of conversion in the renewal of Christian life, which includes the responsible stewardship of creation, I encourage those taking part to reaffirm their commitment to promoting a more profound appreciation for the gift of our common home. I also trust that through their deliberations they will be better enabled to communicate to the world the beautiful truth that every creature is “the object of the Father’s tenderness, who gives it its place in the world. Even the fleeting life of the least of beings is the object of his love, and in its few seconds of existence, God endows it with his affection” (Laudato Si’, 77). Upon all those present for an important event, I willingly invoke an abundance of Almighty God’s blessings.

FRANCISCUS PP