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Presentation of the Apostolic Exhortation 'Gaudete et Exsultate'

Holiness in today's world

Holy, yes, but not "superhuman" or "perfect". Simply ordinary people who are unafraid to set their sights higher and each day allow themselves "to be loved and liberated by God", transforming their lives into an ongoing "mission" in service of others. "Very often it is a holiness found in our next-door neighbours", in "those who, living in our midst, reflect God's presence": this everyday holiness is at the heart of the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, signed by Pope Francis on 19 March, Solemnity of Saint Joseph, and presented on 9 April, Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord.

The document is available both in print and on the Internet at: <http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/events/event.dir.html/content/vaticanevents/en/2018/4/9/gaudete-et-exsultate.html>.

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At the Regina Caeli an appeal for Syria

Nothing can justify the slaughter of defenseless people

On Sunday, 8 April, Feast of Divine Mercy, after celebrating Mass on the parvis of Saint Peter's Basilica and before imparting his final blessing, Pope Francis led the faithful in the recitation of the Regina Caeli. At the end of the Marian antiphon, the Holy Father launched an anguished appeal, calling once again for peace in Syria, where two days earlier in the city of Douma, the civilian population had suffered a chemical attack which killed an estimated 70 people, including children, while some 500 suffered symptoms of exposure to toxic substances. "Nothing can justify the use of such weapons of ex-



Toddler receives medical assistance in Douma (AP)

termination against defenseless people and populations", the Holy Father said, calling for prayer "for all the deceased, for the wounded, for the families who are suffering".

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From the heart of the Pontificate

GIOVANNI MARIA VIAN

The document on holiness in the world today was born from the heart of the Pontificate. And the driving element of the entire Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* refers back to the radicalness of the Gospel or, alternatively, to "a bland and mediocre existence". A text perhaps unexpected by many and which instead, with indisputably personal planning and passages, shows the Pope's most authentic face. A text in constant reference to Scripture and to the continuity of the Christian Tradition which is often ensured by the witness of women: "our own mothers, grandmothers", Pope Bergoglio notes, ever attentive to the feminine component of the Church.

The first non-biblical quotation is thus from the homily of Benedict XVI for the inauguration of his Pontificate, with a nod to the mysterious and yet equally true reality of the communion of saints, thanks to which we are "surrounded, led and guided by the friends of God". But it is not only a matter of formally proclaimed saints or blessed, as in the case cited of the first model of contemporary holiness, that of a very young woman, Maria Gabriella Sagheddu, who offered her life for Christian unity. A characteristic of the text, dear to the Pope, is in fact that of emphasizing a 'holiness' that one could define as 'work day' holiness, that is, pertaining to everyday life in the context of Christian community.

It is the everyday existence of the simple and exemplary Church militant that remains hidden in history: "those men and women who work hard to support their families" and the sick who are often lonely, as well as "elderly religious who never lose their smile"; in a single effective expression, that "middle class of holiness" described by French writer Joseph Malègue who had fascinated the young Bergoglio. For that matter, the everyday dimension was already present in the new reality, and thus also in the language, of the very first Christian communities, as appears for example in the the greetings of Saint Paul's Letters to the Romans and the Corinthians, just 30 years after the preaching of Jesus.

Christ's preaching is at the root of the Papal document. Beginning with the very title, taken from the conclusion of the Beatitudes in the Gospel according to Matthew, and recalling two other Apostolic Exhortations:

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VATICAN BULLETIN

AUDIENCES

Thursday, 5 April

H.E. Mr Serzh Sargsyan, President of the Republic of Armenia, with his entourage

His Holiness Karekin II Supreme Patriarch and Catholics of All Armenians, with his entourage

His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia of the Armenian Apostolic Church, with his entourage

Friday, 6 April

Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples

Cardinal Sérgio da Rocha, Archbishop of Brasília, Brazil

Archbishop Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, SJ, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, with Bishop Juan Ignacio Arrieta Ochoa de Chinchetru, titular Bishop of Civitate, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts

Archbishop Georges Paul Pontier of Marseille, France, President of the Episcopal Conference of France, with Bishop Pascal Delannoy of Saint-Denis, Vice President; Archbishop Pierre-Marie Carré of Montpellier, Vice President; Msgr Olivier Ribadeau Dumas, Secretary General

Saturday, 7 April

Cardinal Severino Poletto, Archbishop emeritus of Turin, Italy

Archbishop Andrea Bruno Mazzacato of Udine, Italy

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, USA, Msgr Marc V. Trudeau from the clergy of the said Archdiocese, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Tinisa in Proconsulari. Until now he has served as rector of Saint John's Seminary in Camarillo (5 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Trudeau, 60, was born in Hollywood, USA. He holds a degree in biological sciences. He was ordained a priest on 6 August 1991. He has served in parish ministry and as: administrator of Saint Philip the Apostle Parish in Pasadena; private secretary to the Archbishop; vice-rector of Saint John's Seminary in Camarillo and member of the Presbyteral Council; vicar forane.



The Holy Father appointed Fr Heiner Wilmer, SCI, as Bishop of Hildesheim, Germany. Until now he has served as Superior General of the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (6 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Wilmer, 57, was born in Schapen, Germany. He made his perpetual profession for the Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1985 and was ordained a priest on 31 May 1987. He holds a doctorate in theology. He taught at various Catholic schools in Germany, and for one year in New York, USA. He was appointed rector of his religious congregation in Handrup in 1998. He has served as Provincial of the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Germany since 2007.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Luis Antonio Scozzina, OFM, as Bishop of Orán, Argentina. Until now he has served as coordinator of the Santo Tomás de Aquino Institute of the Rosario Campus of the Catholic University of Argentina (6 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Scozzina, 66, was born in San Lorenzo, Santa Fe. He was ordained a priest on 9 March 1980 for the Order of Friars Minor. He has served in parish ministry and

as: vice master for aspirants and master of the temporary professed in San Lorenzo, Santa Fe; superior of the San Miguel Province in Rosario; rector of the Fray Luis Bolaños Franciscan Theological Institute in San Antonio de Padua, Buenos Aires; dean of the Fr. R. Bacon Faculty of Chemistry and Engineering of the Catholic University of Argentina; head of animation of Justicia y Paz and Integración de la Creación for the Franciscans of the Southern Cone; guardian of the San Francisco Convent in Santa Fe.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Wilfredo D. Manlapaz of Tagum, the Philippines (7 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of Tagum Fr Medel S. Aseo from the clergy of the said Diocese. Since 2007 he has served as a missionary in Saint Mary Parish, Greensburg, Pennsylvania, USA (7 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Aseo, 63, was born in Maniki, the Philippines. He holds a degree in theology. He was ordained a priest on 7 April 1979. He has served in parish ministry and as: vice-rector and procurator at the Seminary College of Tagum; vicar forane and member of the College of Consultors; chaplain to Filipino sailors in the Archdiocese of Liverpool, Great Britain; member of the

Galilee Centre for priests in Tagaytay City.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Toma (Thomas) Adly Zaki as titular Bishop of Cabasa and Apostolic Administrator *sede vacante* of the Eparchy of Guizeh for Copts, Egypt. Until now he has served as rector of the Coptic Major Seminary in Maadi (10 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Zaki, 51, was born in Minya, Egypt. He holds a degree in civil engineering, a licence in Islamology and in biblical theology. He was ordained a priest on 20 April 2001. He has served in parish ministry and as: professor of Sacred Scripture and formator at the Coptic Catholic Seminary in Cairo; secretary general of the Assembly of the Catholic Hierarchy in Egypt; head of the St Jerome Centre for biblical studies in Cairo.

EASTERN CHURCHES

The Holy Father appointed Fr Ábel Szocska, OSBM, as Eparchial Bishop of Nyíregyháza for Byzantine Rite Catholics, Hungary. Until now he has served as Apostolic Administrator *sede vacante* of the said Eparchy (7 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Szocska, 45, was born in Vynohradiv, Ukraine. He entered the Order of Saint Basil the Great in 1996 and was ordained a priest on 30 September 2001. He was elected as provincial of the Basilian Fathers in Hungary on 16 February 2008 and was re-elected in 2015. On 1 November 2015 the Holy Father appointed him Apostolic Administrator *sede vacante* of the Eparchy of Nyíregyháza, without episcopal dignity, but with the right to participate in the Council of Hierarchs.

Pope expresses his condolences and solidarity

Fatal plane crash in Algeria

"With great sorrow His Holiness Pope Francis received the somber news of the plane crash that struck the Algerian nation on Wednesday morning. In prayer we join in the pain of the families and all persons affected by this tragedy and in the mourning of the people of Algeria". These words began the telegram sent by Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin on behalf of the Pontiff on Wednesday, 11 April, to Archbishop Paul Desfarges, SJ, of Algiers after 257 people were killed that morning when a military airplane crashed south of the capital. Asking "the Lord to receive in his peace those who have died and to comfort those who are seriously injured", Pope Francis

also implored "divine help for the staff tasked with treating the injured". Expressing "his closeness", the telegram added, the Pope invoked upon the people "and on the local Church the fullness of the Spirit and the comfort of the Most High" for "the entire Algerian nation".

Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika declared three national days of mourning in the aftermath of the disaster, the worst in the history of Algerian aviation, the previous having been in 2003 when 102 people were killed in an accident during the landing of a civil flight in Tamanrasset. Condolences for the victims were also expressed by the UN Secretary General, António Guterres.

The Synod of Bishops of the Major Archiepiscopal Syro-Malankara Church appointed the following:

— Bishop Samuel Mar Irenios (Kattukallil), titular Bishop of Tamalluma, as Coadjutor of the Eparchy of Pathanamthitta, India. Until now he has served as Auxiliary Bishop of Trivandrum for Syro-Malankara (10 Apr.).

Bishop Mar Irenios, 65, was born in Kadammanitta, India. He was ordained a priest on 22 December 1978. He was ordained a bishop on 13 March 2010, subsequent to his appointment as Auxiliary Bishop of Trivandrum;

— Bishop Yoohanon Mar Theodosius (Kochuthundil), as Coadjutor of the Eparchy of Muvattupuzha, India. Until now he has

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

GIOVANNI MARIA VIAN
Editor-in-Chief

Giuseppe Fiorentino
Assistant Editor

Editorial office
via del Pellegrino, 00120 Vatican City
telephone +39069899300, fax +390698983675

TIPOGRAFIA VATICANA EDITRICE
L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

Photo Service
photo@ossrom.va www.photo.va

Advertising Agency
Il Sole 24 Ore S.p.A.
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Via Monte Rosa 91, 20149 Milano
segreteria@dirizionesystem@ilsole24ore.com

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Our second birthday

At the General Audience the Pope speaks about Baptism

Baptism is the first of the Sacraments, "the door which allows Christ the Lord to dwell in our person and allows us to be immersed in his Mystery". At the General Audience on Wednesday, 11 April, addressing the faithful who had gathered in Saint Peter's Square, Pope Francis began his series of catecheses on the Sacraments by focusing on Baptism, the "Sacrament which ignited Christian life within us". The following is a translation of the Pontiff's catechesis, which he gave in Italian.

The 50 days of the liturgical Easter Time are propitious for reflecting on Christian life, which, by its nature, is the life which comes from Christ himself. We are, in fact, Christians to the extent that we allow Jesus Christ to live in us. Where then do we begin to rekindle this awareness if not from the beginning, from the *Sacrament which ignited Christian life within us?*

This is *Baptism*. Christ's Passover, charged with newness, reaches us through Baptism in order to transform us into his image: the baptized *belong to Jesus Christ*. He is the *Lord* of their existence. "Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1213). It is the first of the Sacraments, inasmuch as it is *the door* which allows Christ the Lord to dwell in our person and allows us to be immersed in his Mystery.

The Greek word "to baptize" means "to immerse" (cf. CCC, 1214). To bathe with water is a rite common to various beliefs to express the passage from one condition to another, a sign of purification for a new beginning. But for us Christians it must be noted that if the body is immersed in water, *the soul is immersed in Christ* in order to receive the forgiveness of sin and to shine with divine light (cf. Tertullian, *On the resurrection of the dead*, VIII, 3; CCL 2, 931; PL 2, 806). By virtue of the Holy Spirit, Baptism *immerses us in the death and Resurrection of the Lord*, drowning in the baptismal font the 'old' man, dominated by sin which separates him from God, and giving birth to the new man, recreated in Jesus. In Him all the children of Adam are called to new life.

Therefore, Baptism is a rebirth. I am certain, quite sure, that we all remember our date of birth:

certain. But I ask myself, a little doubtfully, and I ask you: do each of you recall the date of your Baptism? Some say 'yes' – okay. But it is a rather weak 'yes', because perhaps many do not remember this date. But if we celebrate birthdays, why not celebrate – or at least remember – the day of rebirth? I will give you a homework assignment, a task to do today at home. Those of you who do not remember the date of your Baptism, ask your mother, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, ask them: "Do you know the date of my Baptism?"; and never forget it. And thank the Lord for that day, because it is the very day on which Jesus entered me, the Holy Spirit entered me. Do you understand what your homework is? We should all know the date of our Baptism. It is another birthday: the date of rebirth. Do not forget to do this, please.

Let us recall the last words of the Risen One to the Apostles; they are a precise mandate: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19). Through the baptismal bath, those who believe in Christ are immersed in the very life of the Trinity.

Indeed, the water of Baptism is not just any water, but the water upon which *the Spirit*, the "giver of life" (Creed) is invoked. Let us consider what Jesus said to Nicodemus in order to explain to him birth into divine life: "unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (Jn 3:5-6). Thus Baptism is also called 'regeneration': we believe that God has saved us "in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regenera-



The Pope greets llama breeders

tion and renewal in the Holy Spirit" (Tit 3:5).

Baptism is therefore an effective sign of rebirth, in order to walk in the newness of life. Saint Paul reminds the Christians of Rome about this: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:3-4).

By immersing us in Christ, Baptism also makes us *members of his Body, which is the Church*, and sharers in her mission in the world (cf. CCC, 1213). We baptized are not isolated: we are members of the Body of Christ. The vitality which springs forth from the baptismal font is illustrated by these words of Jesus: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit" (Jn 15:5). A selfsame life, that of the Holy Spirit, flows from Christ to the baptized, uniting them in one Body (cf. 1 Cor 12:13), anointed by the holy unction and nourished at the Eucharistic table.

Baptism allows Christ to live in us and allows us to live united with him, to cooperate in the Church, each according to his or her condition, for the transformation of the world. Received only once, the baptismal bath illuminates our whole life, guiding our steps all the way to the Heavenly Jerusalem. There is a before and an after to Baptism. The Sacrament presumes a journey of faith, which we call *catechumenate*, evident when it is an adult requesting Baptism. But from antiquity, children, too, have been baptized in the faith of their parents (cf. *Rite of Baptism for children*, Introduction, 2). And I would like to tell you something about this. Some people

think: 'But why baptize a child who does not understand it? We hope that as he grows, he will understand and that he himself will request Baptism'. But this means not having confidence in the Holy Spirit, because when we baptize a child, the Holy Spirit enters that child, and the Holy Spirit cultivates in that child, from childhood, Christian values that will then flourish. This opportunity must always be given to everyone, to all children, to have within them the Holy Spirit who guides them during life. Do not forget to baptize your children!

No one can earn Baptism, which is always a gift freely given to all, adults and infants. But as it happens for a seed full of life, this gift takes root and bears fruit in a soil nourished by faith. The baptismal promises that we renew each year in the Easter Vigil must be rekindled every day so that Baptism may "christify": we must not be afraid of this word; Baptism "christifies". Those who have received Baptism and are "cristified"; they resemble Christ, are transformed in Christ and it truly renders them another Christ.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, particularly those from England, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Australia, Indonesia and the United States of America. I offer a particular welcome to the representatives of the British All Parliamentary Group on the Holy Sec. In the joy of the Risen Christ, I invoke upon you and your families the loving mercy of God our Father. May the Lord bless you all!

I offer a particular thought to *young people, the elderly, the sick and to newlyweds*. May the Easter announcement continue to enflame your heart, so that each one may experience Christ in his or her own journey and adhere to His teachings.



Before the General Audience, the Holy Father met privately at Santa Marta with Marin Sauvageon and his mother Audrey, accompanied by Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, Archbishop of Lyon.

As a student in 2016, then aged 20, Marin was brutally beaten by a gang of youth at a shopping centre in Lyon, for having defended an engaged couple. He suffered severe head injuries and continues to undergo rehabilitation.

General Audience on the first Wednesday of Easter

Not just commemoration but new life

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning and happy
Easter!

You see that today there are flowers: the flowers express joy, cheerfulness. In certain places Easter is also called "Easter in bloom", because the Risen Christ flourishes: he is the burgeoning flower; our justification flourishes; the holiness of the Church flourishes. Therefore, many flowers: it is our joy. All week long we celebrate Easter, all week long. And thus let us say to one another, once again, all of us, the wish of "Happy Easter". Let us say it together: "Happy Easter!" [*They respond: "Happy Easter!"*]. I would also

When the Mass has ended, "the task of Christian witness begins". The Pope emphasized this as he addressed the faithful who had gathered for the General Audience in Saint Peter's Square on Wednesday, 4 April. Completing his series of catecheses on the Mass, the Pontiff spoke of the Concluding Rites. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's catechesis, which he gave in Italian.

no. Christians go to Mass in order to participate in the Lord's Passion and Resurrection and then to live more as Christians: the task of Christian witness begins. We leave the Church by "going in peace" to carry God's blessing in our daily activities, in our homes, in our workplaces, among the occupations of the earthly city, "glorifying the Lord with our life". But if we exit the Church gossiping and saying "look at this one, look at that one...", with

and he says this: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal 2:20). This is Christian witness. May Paul's experience illuminate us too: to the measure in which we quash our selfishness – that is, kill that which is opposed to the Gospel and to Jesus' love – a greater space is created within us for the power of his Spirit. Christians are men and women who, after receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, allow their soul to expand with the power of the Holy Spirit. Allow your souls to expand! Not these souls so narrow and closed, small, selfish, no! Expansive souls, broad souls, with vast horizons.... after receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, allow your souls to expand with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Since the real presence of Christ in the consecrated Bread does not end with the Mass (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1374), the Eucharist is *safe-guarded in the tabernacle* for Communion to the sick and for silent adoration of the Lord in the Most Holy Sacrament; Eucharistic worship outside of Mass, be it in private or community form, indeed helps us to remain in Christ (cf. *ibid.*, 1378-1380). Therefore, the fruits of the Mass are intended to mature in everyday life. Thus, we can say, stretching the image somewhat: the Mass is like the grain, the grain of wheat which then grows in ordinary life; it grows and matures in good deeds, in the attitudes that assimilate us to Jesus. The fruits of the Mass, therefore, are intended to mature in everyday life. In truth, *augmenting our union with Christ*, the Eucharist renews the grace that the Spirit gave us in Baptism and in Confirmation, so that our Christian witness may be credible (cf. *ibid.*, 1391-1392).

Yet, by igniting divine charity in our hearts, what does the Eucharist do? *It separates us from sin*: "the more we share the life of Christ and progress in his friendship, the more difficult it is to break away from him by mortal sin" (*ibid.*, 1395). Regularly approaching the Eucharistic Banquet renews, strengthens, and deepens the bond with the Christian community to which we belong, according to the principle that *the Eucharist makes the Church* (cf. *ibid.*, 1396); it unites us all.

Lastly, partaking in the Eucharist *commits us to others, especially the poor*, teaching us to pass from the flesh of Christ to the flesh of our brothers and sisters, in whom he waits to be recognized, served, honoured and loved by us (cf. *ibid.*, 1397).

Carrying in earthen vessels the treasure of the union with Christ (cf. 2 Cor 4:7), we constantly need to return to the holy altar, until in heaven, we will fully taste the beatitude of the marriage supper of the Lamb (cf. Rev 19:9).

Let us thank the Lord for the journey of rediscovery of the Holy Mass which he has given to us to carry out together, and let us allow ourselves to be drawn with renewed faith to this real encounter with Jesus, our contemporary, dead and Risen for us. And may our life always be thus "in bloom", as Easter, with the flowers of hope, faith and good works. May we always find the strength for this in the Eucharist, in union with Jesus. Happy Easter to all!

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, particularly those from England, Ireland, Croatia, Sweden, Australia, the Philippines, Singapore and the United States of America. I offer a warm welcome to the newly ordained deacons from the Pontifical Irish College, together with their families and friends. In the joy of the Risen Christ, I invoke upon you and your families the loving mercy of God our Father. May the Lord bless you all!

I offer a special thought to *young people, the elderly, the sick and to new-borns*. Christ conquered death and helps us to accept suffering as a privileged occasion of redemption and salvation. May you seek to experience the Easter message, witnessing in life's places to peace and joy, gifts of the Risen One.

Msgr Carlo Alberto Capella detained

On Saturday, 7 April, at the request of the Promoter of Justice, the investigating Magistrate of the Vatican City State Tribunal issued an arrest warrant for Msgr Carlo Alberto Capella, in accordance with Article 10, paragraphs 3 and 5, Law VIII (2013). The warrant was executed by the Vatican Gendarmerie and the accused is being detained in a cell in the barracks of the Gendarmerie Corps, to which judicial authorities have access.



William Blake, "Christ appearing to the Apostles after the Resurrection"

like us to say Happy Easter – because he was the Bishop of Rome – to beloved Pope Benedict, who is following us on television. Let us all say "Happy Easter" to Pope Benedict: [*They say "Happy Easter!"*]. And a nice round of applause.

With this catechesis we conclude the cycle dedicated to the Mass, which is precisely the memorial, but not only as a remembrance, one relives the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus. Last time, we came to Communion and the Prayer after Communion; after this oration, Mass concludes with the *blessing* imparted by the priest and the *dismissal* of the people (cf. *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 90). As it began with the sign of the Cross, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, it is again in the name of the Trinity that the Mass, that is the liturgical action, is sealed.

However, we are well aware that although the Mass comes to an end, *the task of Christian witness begins*. Christians do not go to Mass to fulfil a weekly duty and then it is forgotten,

'tongues wagging', the Mass has not entered my heart. Why? Because I am not capable of living the Christian witness. Every time I leave Mass, I must exit better than how I entered, with more life, with more strength, with more willingness to bear Christian witness. Through the Eucharist the Lord Jesus enters us, into our heart and our flesh, so that we may "hold fast in our lives to the Sacrament we have received in faith" (cf. *Roman Missal*, Collect for Monday in the Octave of Easter").

Therefore, from the celebration of life, aware that the Mass is fulfilled in the concrete choices of those who personally engage in the mysteries of Christ. We must not forget that we celebrate the Eucharist in order to become *Eucharistic men and women*. What does this mean? It means allowing Christ to act within our deeds: that his thoughts may be our thoughts, his feelings our own, his choices our choices too. And this is holiness: doing as Christ did is Christian holiness. Saint Paul expresses it clearly, in speaking of his own assimilation to Jesus,

Protagonists of an outward bound Church

The Holy Father speaks to the Emmanuel Community

“Be protagonists of the ‘outward bound Church’”. The Pope addressed this exhortation to members of the Emmanuel Community whom he received in audience on Saturday morning, 7 April, in the Clementine Hall. Originating in Paris in the 1970s as a Catholic charismatic renewal prayer group, the Community was recognized in 2009 as an international public association of the faithful. The following is a translation of the Pontiff’s address.

Dear Friends,

I am very pleased to welcome you on the occasion of your annual meeting, which this time is being held in Rome. This pilgrimage is a sign of the Emmanuel Community’s full participation in the communion of the whole Catholic Church. It is also an opportunity for me to thank you for your fidelity and bond with the Successor of Peter, to tell you how much I appreciate your missionary commitment which is now present on all continents, and to encourage you to persevere in the future.

This future is marked by the recent recognition, last 15 August, of the Emmanuel Community’s Clerical Association, an organization that has become opportune due to the many priestly vocations that the Emmanuel charism inspires, and for a more fruitful evangelization. Far from isolating priests from the other members of the Community, lay or consecrated, I hope that on the contrary this recognition will vivify the beautiful communion among the states of life which you have experienced for more than 40 years in the complementary nature of the different vocations. I also invite your communities to maintain an ever closer bond with the rich reality of the local parish in which they live, and to integrate readily into the overall pastoral activity of the partic-



ular Church (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 29).

The charism of the Emmanuel Community is inscribed in its name: Emmanuel, God with us. Essentially, it is from contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation, in particular from Eucharistic adoration, that you draw missionary dynamism to proclaim the Good News to all those to whom Jesus offers his friendship. Wherever the Spirit sends you, I encourage you to enable the men and women of our time to discover the Mercy of God who loved us to the point of dwelling among us. This Mercy of the Lord, ever present, close to his people, seeks to be proposed with fresh enthusiasm through a renewed pastoral care, so that it can touch the hearts of people and encourage them to find their way back to the Father (cf. Bull *Misericordiae Vultus*, 15). May the Father’s Mercy be manifest in those places where your Community is present,

especially toward the poorest – in heart and body – healing their wounds with the comfort of the Gospel, with solidarity and attention (*ibid.*).

Dear friends, since its origins, the Emmanuel Community has been able to express a real dynamism in

proclaiming the Good News in a lively and joyful way. I urge you to remain rooted in Christ through a solid interior life and trusting in the Holy Spirit, who comes to the aid of our frailty and heals us from all that weakens our missionary commitment; to cherish in your heart this ardent desire to transmit the joy of the Gospel to those who do not know it or have lost it; to be protagonists of the “outward bound Church” which is foremost of my desires. “The Church counts on you, on your fidelity to God’s word, on your readiness to serve, and on your testimony of lives transformed by the Holy Spirit!” (*Discourse on the Vigil of Pentecost*, 3 June 2017).

Together with you I give thanks for the whole path you have travelled, driven by the Holy Spirit, who wants us to be constantly journeying; and I invite you to always remain attentive to him, because there is no greater freedom than that of allowing ourselves to be guided by the Spirit and allowing him to illuminate us and lead us where he wills.

I entrust you all to the intercession of the Virgin Mary, asking her to guide your steps and to support your efforts. I bless you and, please, do not forget to pray for me.

Pope’s prayer intention for the month of April

For those who have responsibility in economic matters

“That economists may have the courage to reject an economy of exclusion and know how to open new paths”: this is the intention offered in Francis’ video message for the month of April, entrusted to the Apostleship of Prayer and distributed on the Internet (www.thepopevideo.org). The video displays a series of domino tiles portraying the faces of men and women of many different cultures, races and continents. The individuals depicted share the same desire to find suitable employment and a decent economic livelihood, because, as the Pope says, “the economy cannot attempt only to increase profits by reducing the workforce and thereby adding to the ranks of the excluded”.

Instead, the Pontiff stresses, “it must follow the path marked out by business leaders, politicians, thinkers, and leaders in society who place the human person in first place, and do everything possible to ensure that there are opportunities of dignified work”.

In the video a hand is seen nudging the

first of the dominoes, causing each to fall in a cascade of tiles, one face falling on top of another. Another hand then appears and places a folder between the tiles to stop their fall, setting in motion a reversal of the cascade so that the fallen tiles return to their former upright position.

Hence the Pontiff’s invitation: “Let us raise our voices together, asking that economists may have the courage to reject an economy of exclusion and know how to open new paths”. This month’s video, available in 9 languages, was produced by La Machi and recorded by Vatican Media for the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network.



With the President of Armenia

On Thursday morning, 5 April, the Holy Father received in audience H.E. Mr Serzh Sargsyan, President of the Republic of Armenia, who subsequently met with Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, accompanied by Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States.

During the cordial discussions, keen satisfaction was expressed for the good relations existing between the Holy See and Armenia. It was acknowledged that the inauguration in the Vatican Gardens of the statue of Saint Gregory of Narek, Doctor of the Church, provides a further opportunity to promote these relations, as well as those between the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Catholic Church.

Reference was then made to the regional political context, with hope for the solution of situations of conflict. Other current international issues were also touched upon, as well as the condition of Christians and religious minorities, especially in theatres of war.



Presentation of 'Gaudete et Exsultate'

Why talk about holiness?

The Pope's Apostolic Exhortation 'Gaudete et Exsultate' on the call to holiness in today's world was presented on Monday morning, 9 April, in the Holy See Press Office. The following text is a translation of a discourse given at the presentation by the Vicar General of His Holiness for the Diocese of Rome, discussing the first and last chapters of the Document.

ANGELO DE DONATIS

Why an Apostolic Exhortation on the call to holiness? Isn't this ecclesial language, to some extent, addressed to 'experts in the field' (i.e. religious)? In fact the word "holiness" is today considered rather antiquated by the same contemporary world that the Exhortation would like to address. Who today would use this word to express the aspirations of one's heart, for oneself and for one's daily existence?

These brief considerations, which perhaps express the thought of many people, tell us immediately what challenge the Exhortation faces. Thus it shows the perennial timeliness of Christian holiness, presenting its contents, as narrated in Scripture, in such a way as to propose holiness as a desirable goal for everyone's own human journey, as a call that God addresses to each one. Pope Francis sums it up in this way: holiness is "true life, the happiness for which we were created" (*Gaudete et Exsultate*, n. 1). The opposite of holiness is not, first and foremost, a life of sin, so much as settling "for a bland and mediocre existence" (n. 1). Being Christian means receiving from God the gift of a beautiful life, rich in meaning, full of flavour, setting out on a journey that renders one "more alive, more human" (n. 32). To counter the harm of being lulled into experiencing or accepting a meaningless reality so as to confine oneself in one's own fragment of existence, God offers a path of courageous and humanizing holiness, to live out in the *sequela* of Christ and in the framework of interpersonal relationships. God is the Holy One thrice over, and he pours out upon mankind his selfsame divine life: "For I am the Lord your God ... be holy, for I am holy" (Lev 11:44). He transforms mankind's existence to mirror more and more His own image and likeness.

It is obvious that with this Exhortation Pope Francis would like to focus attention on what is decisive and essential in Christian life and to help us to maintain a broad vision, against the temptation to narrow our view or lose sight of the horizon, being satisfied with "just getting by". One's membership in the Lord Jesus and the Church would dissolve and become devoid of meaning should one deviate from the straight trajectory of holiness, and fatally go off in search of "other

things", of that which has nothing to do with building the Kingdom of God.

The objective of the Exhortation is not to offer "a treatise on holiness, containing definitions and distinctions". Instead, Pope Francis writes that his "modest goal is to repropose the call to holiness in a practical way for our own time, with all its risks, challenges and opportunities" (n. 2). The Second Vatican Council already emphasized this universal call vehemently, reaffirming the fact that it is addressed to all: "Strengthened by so many and such great means of salvation, all the faithful, whatever their condition or state – though each in his own way – are called by the Lord to that perfection of sanctity by which the Father himself is perfect" (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 11). The Pope takes up and re-emphasizes this conciliar point, updating it and making it more understandable and attractive for the people of today.

Of the themes the Pope touches upon, I will comment on the first chapter, "The call to holiness" and the last, "Spiritual combat, vigilance and discernment".

With regard to the first chapter, I wish to develop four fundamental points that represent four dimensions of the call to holiness. First and foremost, the Pope wishes to tell us that holiness is not a dimension apart from the life we live every day, but is precisely our very existence lived in an extraordinary manner, because it is made beautiful by the grace of God, by the action of the Holy Spirit received in Baptism. The fruit of the Spirit is indeed a life lived in joy and love, and holiness consists in this. There are no particular conditions: holiness is not a prerogative of those who dedicate a lot of time to prayer or theological study or to exercising a particular ministry in the Church, but is that God-given new life that is practically possible for everyone "in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves" (cf. n. 14). Francis recalls the words of Vietnamese Cardinal Van Thuan, in the long days of his imprisonment, who chose to "live the present moment, filling it to the brim with love" (n. 17). The Pope deliberately offers examples of holiness found in ordinary life: "in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work hard to support their families, in the sick, in elderly religious who never lose their smile" (n. 7). They are the saints "next door", or "the middle class of holiness" (n. 7; title of a book by Joseph Malégué). For this reason Pope Francis at a certain point changes style and directly addresses his interlocutors, the readers, to tell them that holiness, which is the true and happy life, is really possible even for you: "Let the grace of your baptism bear fruit in a path of holiness. Let everything be open to God; turn to him in every situation. Do not be dismayed, for the power of the Holy Spirit enables you to do this, and

holiness, in the end, is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your life" (n. 15; but the reference to you is also mentioned in nn. 10, 14, etc.). The Council, in the previously cited passage, said that everyone is called, "each in his own way". It is not a matter of copying the works of saints, because ultimately each person has his or her own life and place in the world; but rather, "led by God's grace, we shape by many small gestures the holiness God has willed for us" (n. 18). Even if my life falls into sin or failure, the call to holiness reaches wherever I may be with a chance to start anew, a chance for redemption.

Another point: holiness is not possible alone. Individualism and feigned self-sufficiency do not lead to true life. We need others; we need to feel that our life is included in that of the People of God, on whom the Spirit of God pours his holiness. God does not save us as isolated individuals, but as he wished to reveal by entering into a popular dynamic, into the "life and history of a people", the Pope writes (n. 6); thus our path of approaching the Lord and of growing in the faith is also possible only within the complex fabric of interpersonal relationships present in a human community" (n. 6). Here Francis cites the homily for the inaug-

uration of Pope Benedict's Petrine ministry: "I do not have to carry alone what, in truth, I could never carry alone": the holy People of God "are there to protect me, to sustain me and to carry me" (n. 4); in the Church you will find the witness of others, of canonized saints, of humbler people, "in their daily perseverance" (n. 7); in the Church "you will find everything you need to grow towards holiness ... scripture, the sacraments, holy places, living communities, the witness of the saints and a multifaceted beauty that proceeds from God's love" (n. 15). In the People of God there is a masculine and a feminine way of living holiness, both "essential means of reflecting God's holiness in this world" (n. 12). And yet, "outside the Catholic Church and in very different contexts, the Holy Spirit raises up 'signs of his presence which help Christ's followers'" (n. 9, quoting *Novo Millennio Ineunte*). Clearly, Christian spirituality is essentially communitary, ecclesial, profoundly different and distant from an elitist vision or from an individual heroism of holiness.

The source from which holiness springs is the Lord Jesus, the goal towards which it strives is the transformation of history into the Kingdom of God. This is a central point. The Pope writes that every person who comes into this world needs "to see the entirety of his or her life as a mission" (cf. n. 23). When I ask myself: 'why was I born? Why am I alive and what use is life? What is my contribution to the growth of this world?', I am asking myself about my mission. So, "each saint is a mission" (n. 19), that is, he or she is an envoy of the Father in order to incarnate and make Christ, the new man, present in the world. Jesus is indeed the wellspring of all holiness: all the Holy Spirit does is to replicate today, in us, the features of Christ's face. However, each one in a different way: there are saints who replicate His hidden life in Nazareth, others His closeness to the least; spouses become sacraments of the Bridegroom Christ, priests the sacrament of Christ the Good Shepherd.... "The contemplation of these mysteries ... leads us to incarnate them in our choices and attitudes" (n. 20). On the other hand, Christ was sent for the Kingdom. For this reason, Francis says, again ad-



Sue Killingsworth, "The Great Multitude from Revelation"

holiness involves a battle and calls for an approach of constant vigilance. In order to live it we must ask for the gift of discernment. The battle is against "a worldly mentality", against our disorderly "human weaknesses and proclivities", but also against "the evil one" (nn. 159-161). Pope Francis, as we know, speaks of him often and in the Exhortation emphasizes that when we speak of the Enemy we are not only dealing with "a myth, a representation, a symbol, a figure of speech or an idea" (n. 161), but "a personal being who assails us" (n. 160). In the *Our Father* the final invocation is in fact "deliver us from evil". The Enemy's goal is that of separating us from God, of making us pass from the experience of the forgiven sinner, one who has received mercy (sin as the place of the liberating and humanizing encounter with God's mercy), to that overturning of our reality as children of God which is corruption (nn. 164-165). Here it is important to exercise great vigilance, because the corrupt are those who experience "a comfortable and self-satisfied form of blindness", where everything "appears acceptable" (n. 165). Here Satan "disguises himself as an angel of light", even deceiving and isolating us in the most radical self-referentiality (n. 165).

What are we to do? The Pope invites us to ask for the gift of discernment. This grace of the Spirit is transformed into a permanent gaze upon reality: what is in our heart (our thoughts, feelings and desires, there, where God inspires, attracts and consoles ...) and the reality that surrounds us, where the Spirit acts by giving rise to what the Council calls "signs of the times"

(*Gaudium et Spes*, n. 11). "Discernment" is truly a key word of this Pontificate, because it expresses the spiritual style and manner by which Jesus' disciples and the community are called to interpret matters of life, to decide by choosing God's will, to create his Kingdom in the world. It is not just a matter of intelligence or common sense, nor of using the contribution of human sciences (psychology, sociology ...), considering them as resolved. Discernment transcends all this, because, by placing ourselves in silence and in prayer before the Lord, with an attitude of total openness, we are prepared "to listen to the Lord and to others, and to reality itself, which always challenges us in new ways". It is only when we "have the freedom to set aside our own partial or insufficient ideas, our usual habits and ways of seeing things", that we are "truly open to accepting a call that can shatter our security" (n. 172). Pope Francis, for example, asks "all Christians not to omit, in dialogue with the Lord, a sincere daily 'examination of conscience'" (n. 169), thereby creating in our personal life a space of solitude and prayer, where we can read and understand our own life, welcoming God's call.

"The gift of discernment has become all the more necessary today", because we are "immersed in a culture of zapping" wherein "we can easily become prey to every passing trend" (n. 167). I conclude by quoting a beautiful verse inscribed on the tomb of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, which Pope Francis recalls in a footnote to describe the life lived in the constant attitude of discernment: *Non coarctari a maximo, contineri tamen a minimo divinum est*, "Not to be confined by the greatest, yet to be contained within the smallest, is truly divine".

Our life is included in that of the People of God, on whom the Spirit of God pours his holiness

dressing each of us, his readers: you too "cannot grow in holiness without committing yourself, body and soul, to giving your best to this endeavour" (n. 25). Christian holiness is not separate from the commitment to human history – on the contrary! Saints are formidable revolutionaries, because they are determined to wager themselves completely on the mission entrusted to them by the Father. They know that those who lose their life for the Kingdom, find it, like Jesus. As Francis emphasized in *Evangelii Gaudium* (nn. 87-92), the Incarnation and the Cross cannot be removed from Christian spirituality, perhaps to devote oneself to a god of personal wellbeing, detached from human events, from the suffering flesh of his children. There is no Christian holiness where spirituality is disconnected from history, and in the name of a vague communion, perhaps one with "harmonizing energies", one forgets the communion with other human beings and the search for the face of the other; one forgets fraternity and the revolution of tenderness. We are entrusted with the task of accepting this call to holiness, accomplished by imitating Jesus and endeavouring with him to transform human history. "May you come

to realize what that word is, the message of Jesus that God wants to speak to the world by your life. Let yourself be transformed" (n. 24).

This proposal to lead a life of Christian holiness tends to gradually conform man to Christ by unifying and integrating his life. Prayer and action in the world, times of silence and times of service, family life and work commitments, can all "be accepted and integrated into our life in this world, and become a part of our path to holiness" (n. 26). Seeking moments of solitude and silence, away from life's feverish pace, is the basis of this inner unification under God's gaze. In this personal space, at last in contact with the truth of ourselves, we can experience a sincere dialogue with the Lord and allow ourselves to be permeated by him. "Do not be afraid to set your sights higher, to allow yourself to be loved and liberated by God. Do not be afraid to let yourself be guided by the Holy Spirit. Holiness does not make you less human, since it is an encounter between your weakness and the power of God's grace" (n. 34).

Allow me to add a few words on the final chapter, because it is a very important part of the Exhortation. The title explains that the path to



Jorge Cocca, "Sermon on the Mount"

*Visit by Queen Elisabeth of Belgium
(20 January 1928)*



An Orthodox woman among the Bollandists

RORY WATSON

Times are changing for the Bollandists. For the past four centuries, the independent Jesuit society has been self-financing and self-effacing in its dedication to hagiographic scholarship. Now, the Brussels-based society is raising its profile, actively looking to the wider world for funding for its work. It considers this essential to ensure both its independence and a solid financial future for its core mission of collecting, critically editing, and publishing texts on the lives of saints.

Robert Godding, the director of the society since 1998, is overseeing the many changes taking place. He explains why the move away from the previous dictum “a secret life is a happy life” is essential. “Bollandists have always cultivated discretion, confident that the quality of their work was the best guarantee for the institute’s reputation. Our creed has not changed, but we have to acknowledge that today’s many challenges require us to be more proactive in promoting the society.” He points to practical research needs, such as investing in electronic data bases, and more material demands: the upkeep and security of the premises and conservation and restoration of ancient books and manuscripts. “Our hope is that more people can be convinced that this great institution, which does not receive any public funding, deserves to be generously supported in its service to the Church and more broadly to Christian culture,” he adds.

What is perhaps surprising at first glance is the decision to give the heavy responsibility of raising the Bollandists’ visibility and finances to an outsider: a non-Catholic Greek mother of three, Irini de Saint Sernin.

There is logic behind the initiative. Irini started working with the Bollandists three years ago, helping to computerise their analytical index catalogue of over 50,000 entries. Crucially, Irini has corporate banking experience. She trained in Barclays Bank’s management development programme, working for the company for four years in London and Brussels. She arrived just when the Bollandists were becoming increasingly aware of the need to be more proactive since the Society of Jesus, its financial lifeline for so many years, was facing increasing demands on its limited resources.

This led to her new responsibility for advancement and external relations, with fund-raising at its core. “I prefer to speak of ‘advancement’ rather than ‘fund-raising’. Advancement means: how do I advance the Bollandists’ mission and cause,” she explains.

An accomplished linguist, Irini speaks Greek, French, English, Spanish and Russian and has a degree in Russian language and literature and an MA in European literature. She has worked in a consultancy specialising in the European Union, taught at the state university of Guadalajara when her husband was transferred to Mexico and been involved in a range of voluntary work. Those skills and experience are now at the Bollandists’ service.

The combination of a Greek Orthodox female working with Jesuits is not an issue for Irini. “I’m pretty ecumenical. Coming from a

not. Christianity has played a crucial role in the formation of our political systems and culture. This is not about promoting faith, but about promoting understanding and knowledge,” she insists.

Irini vividly remembers her first visit to the Bollandists’ library. The collection contains half a million books and over 1,000 periodicals. It is housed in a neo-romanesque building, part of a Jesuit-owned complex a few kilometres from the centre of Brussels. The drab entrance gives visitors no inkling of what is inside. I was in total awe. There is no other way to describe it. It is a magic place. Working here is a real treat. I’m always happy to unlock the door of this unique universe every morning,” she says. Less cerebral visitors immediately consider themselves transported to Harry Potter’s Hogwarts world as they enter a totally unknown universe and absorb the unique surroundings and atmosphere.

The Bollandists are using modern technology to increase the efficiency of the library, whose contents are used by them and scholars from around the world. But new injections of finance are essential. Not only is there no full-time librarian, but, as Irini explains, simply to restore a single book written before 1800 costs between €200 and €1,200.

The first successful foray into fund-raising led to a gift of €538,000 from the Belgian not-for-profit organisation, Le Fonds Baillet Latour. The donation pays for three full time professionals to digitally catalogue over the next three years some 20,000 books published before 1800. The scale of the wider challenge ahead can be seen from the fact that only books acquired since 2003 are digitally catalogued. All those amassed earlier are still on card indexes developed over the past 150 years.

Funds are needed not just to preserve and purchase books, but also to recruit qualified personnel and expand research facilities. “An endowment, for instance, could create a full time position in Slavonic studies, an area currently underrepresented,” Irini points out.

One of Irini’s early initiatives was to start a Facebook page. It now has just under 4,000 regular followers. “This is only a minor element of our overall work, but it does place extra demands on the small team. However, we consider it important. It is one way to



Irini de Saint Sernin (photo by Jacques de Selliers)

Greek background, Jesuit scholarship is extremely well respected and I have always had contacts with Jesuits. Being married to a French Catholic and having three children christened Catholic, I manage a sort of ecumenical household.”

For her, at stake is a fundamental principle far more important than religious differences. “We have to preserve institutions like this and pass them on to our children. Since its inception, the institute has always strived to include all saints. It does not matter to which church you belong, or if you are a believer or

The poor have a right to the Gospel

To members of the Prado Institute

"The poor have a right to the Gospel". Pope Francis emphasized this to members of the Prado Institute, "a beautiful family of priests, sisters and consecrated lay women, spread throughout various countries", whom he received in audience on Saturday, 7 April, in the Consistory Hall. The following is a translation of the Pope's address which he delivered in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am pleased to welcome you on the occasion of your pilgrimage to Rome as members of the Prado family, committed to offering your life daily to follow Fr Antoine Chevrier's example of service to the poorest. This meeting gives me the opportunity to thank the Lord with you for the journey undertaken from the time when your Blessed Founder, struck by the poverty of the most destitute people of his times, decided to be close to them so that they could know and love Jesus. Since then, the plant has grown admirably: you are now a beautiful family of priests, sisters and consecrated lay women, spread throughout various countries, harbouring the same love as Jesus, who became poor among the poor, and by the same zeal to evangelize.

Our age, too, knows its poverty, old and new, material and spiritual; and there are many around us who experience all manner of suf-

fering, wounds, misery and distress. They are very often far from the Church and completely overlook the joy and comfort that comes from the Gospel. The mission to be carried out among them is immense, and Mother Church is happy to be able to count on the support of Fr Chevrier's disciples. Indeed, I cannot but approve and encourage the pastoral activity that you carry out, in accordance with the charism of your institutes, a charism which touches me personally and which is at the heart of the missionary renewal to which the entire Church is called, because there is a "profound connection between evangelization and human advancement, which must necessarily find expression and develop in every work of evangelization" (Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 178).

On the occasion of the beatification of Fr Chevrier in 1986 in Lyons, Saint Pope John Paul II offered you various approaches to

strengthen your dynamism, which you well know; and on my part, I cannot but renew them. To mention just one of them, he asked that you "speak about Jesus Christ with the same intensity of faith as Fr Chevrier... The poor have the right to be told about Jesus Christ. They have the right to the Gospel and to the totality of the Gospel" (*Address to the Prado Institute*, 7 October 1986). In fact, I like to recall that the vast majority of the poor have a particular openness to faith; they need God, and the lack of spiritual attention toward them is the worst type of discrimination. "Our preferential option for the poor must mainly translate into a privileged and particular religious care" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 200).

Dear brothers and sisters, I invite you to return continually to the magnificent figure of your Founder, to meditate on his life, to ask for his intercession. The spiritual experience which he lived intensely – an immense compassion for the poor, an understanding and sharing of their suffering and, at the same time, a contemplation of the despoliation of Christ who became one of them – was the source of his apostolic

zeal. And it will also be so for your missionary dynamism.

May the Holy Spirit illuminate the paths he calls you to travel; may he comfort you in the face of challenges and difficulties. Entrusting your Institutes and all their members to the intercession of Blessed Antoine Chevrier, I pray that the Virgin Mary may keep them under her maternal protection, and I impart to you my heartfelt Apostolic Blessing.



Message of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue on the feast of Vesakh

Christians and Buddhists: together in combating corruption

"Christians and Buddhists: Preventing and Combating Corruption Together". is the title of the Message sent by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue to Buddhists for the feast of Vesakh 2018. The following is the English text of the Message.

Dear Buddhist Friends,

On behalf of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, we extend our warmest greetings and prayerful good wishes on the occasion of *Vesakh*. May this feast bring joy and peace to all of you, your families and your communities throughout the world.

We wish to reflect this year on the pressing need to promote a culture free of corruption. Corruption involving the abuse of positions of power for personal gain, both within the public and private sectors, has become such a pervasive scandal in today's world that the United Nations has designated 9 December as International Anti-Corruption Day. As the phenomenon of corruption becomes more widespread, governments, non-governmental organizations, the media, and citizens around the world are joining together to combat this heinous crime. As religious leaders, we too must contribute to fostering a culture imbued with lawfulness and transparency.

Pope Francis' monthly prayer intention for February 2018 was "Say 'No' to Corruption." In denouncing "the sin of corruption," he recognizes that corruption is found

throughout the world among politicians, business executives and clerics. Those who ultimately pay the price for corruption, he observes, are the poor. Recalling the words of Jesus to his disciples, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant" (*Matthew* 20:26), the Pope insists, "the only road leading out of corruption [...] is service. Because corruption comes from pride, from arrogance, and service is humbling: it is precisely the humble charity of helping others" (*Morning Meditation, Domus Sanctae Marthae*, 16 June 2014).

Dear friends, as Buddhists, you regard corruption as an unwholesome state of mind that causes suffering and contributes to an unhealthy society. You identify three principal toxins – greed, hate, and delusion or ignorance – as sources of this social scourge that must be eliminated for the good of the individual and society. The Second Precept of Buddhism, "I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from taking that which is not given," teaches Buddhists to discern whether those things that come into their possession are indeed meant for them. If such things have been taken from others illicitly, they may not rightfully be kept. Buddhist teachings and practice not only disapprove of corruption but also seek to transform the unhealthy state of mind, intentions, habits and actions of those who are corrupt.

Even though both our religious traditions firmly denounce the evil of corruption, we sadly acknowledge that some of our followers participate in corrupt practices and this leads to bad governance, corporate bribery and the pillaging of national assets. Corruption puts lives at risk for it is connected to low economic growth, weak investment, inflation, monetary devaluation, tax evasion, great inequality, poor education, sub-standard infrastructure, and the degradation of the environment. It also threatens the health and safety of individuals and communities. People are scandalized by incompetent and corrupt politicians, ineffective legislation and the failure to investigate major corruption cases. Populist movements, sometimes motivated and sustained by religious fundamentalism, have arisen to protest the breakdown of public integrity.

We believe that corruption cannot be answered with silence, and that well-intentioned ideas will prove inadequate unless they are applied, and that such implementation is necessary for corruption to be eliminated. We Buddhists and Christians, rooted in our respective ethical teachings, must work together to prevent corruption by eradicating its underlying causes and to root out corruption where it exists. In this effort, our main contribution will be to encourage our respective followers to grow in moral integrity and a sense of fairness and responsibility.

Our common commitment to combating corruption must include cooperating with the media and civil society in preventing and exposing corruption; creating public awareness of corruption; holding white-collar criminals who plunder national assets accountable for their actions, regardless of their ethnic, religious, political, or class affiliations; teaching and inspiring all people, but especially politicians and public servants, to act with the utmost fiscal integrity; calling for due legal process to recover assets that are stolen through corruption and bringing to justice those responsible for this crime; encouraging more women to participate in politics; refusing to entrust with public office those engaged in illegal activities; and introducing transparent and inclusive institutions based on the rule of law for good governance, accountability, and integrity.

Dear friends, may we actively commit ourselves to fostering within our families and social, political, civil, and religious institutions an environment free of corruption by living a life of honesty and integrity. It is in this spirit that we wish you once again a peaceful and joyful feast of *Vesakh*!

Cardinal JEAN-LOUIS TAURAN
President

Bishop MIGUEL ÁNGEL AYUSO
GUIXOT, MCCJ
Secretary

After half a millennium Catholic Mass in Lund's Lutheran Cathedral

Concrete gestures of unity

For the first time since the Reformation, the Lutheran Cathedral in Lund, Sweden will once again host Catholic Mass. Built between the 11th and 12th centuries and then passed on to Lutherans, the Cathedral is the same shrine in which, on 31 October 2016, Pope Francis participated in an ecumenical prayer service for the fifth centenary of the Reformation.

Beginning on 21 October this year, the Lutheran Cathedral will open its doors for the celebration of Catholic Masses on Sundays. The ecumenical gesture of cooperation comes as the Catholic Church of Saint Thomas in Lund will be closed for extensive restoration.

A note on the Catholic Church in Sweden's website explains that such cooperation is an expression of the spirit of the ecumenical document "From Conflict to Communion" that reflects 50 years of talks between Catholics and Lutherans and which also lent its name to Pope Francis' meeting with Lutheran Church leaders in Lund in 2016. The chaplain of the Cathedral, Rev. Lena Sjöstrand, said the meeting had "touched many people" who are happy to see that it had not been "a one-off event", but rather one that further strengthens



relations through concrete and important steps towards greater ecumenical cooperation between Catholics and Lutherans in Lund.

One example of such cooperation is the celebration of Vespers on alternating Sundays in the Lutheran Cathedral and in Saint Thomas Catholic Church. The note clarifies that due to the two Churches' doctrinal differences regarding the Eucharist, Catholics and Lutherans will not celebrate Mass together in the Cathedral. However, it states that "instead of focusing on what differentiates, we chose to cooperate in what unites, namely the Word of God, baptism, prayer and diaconal care". A press conference to explain the details of the ecumenical initiative is scheduled for Friday, 13 April, in Lund Cathedral, with the participation of Rev. Sjöstrand, Fr Johan Linden, parish priest of Saint Thomas Catholic Church, and Friar Anders Piltz of the same parish. "People are happy to attend these functions", Rev. Sjöstrand explained, adding that the ecumenical celebration with Pope Francis and now the celebration of Catholic Mass, are concrete gestures that can only "strengthen relations between the two Christian communities".

First Baniwa priest ordained in Brazil

Geraldo Trindade Montenegro has recently become the first priest of the Baniwa ethnic group, one of the 23 indigenous peoples present in the Brazilian diocese of São Gabriel da Cachoeira, in the Amazon. The priestly ordination on Saturday, 17 March, was prepared with care and trepidation by the entire diocesan community; some travelled several days to participate in the moving celebration, presided by Bishop Edson Taschetto Damian of São Gabriel da Cachoeira. The liturgy was accompanied by elements of indigenous spirituality, deeply linked to Christian life.

Father Geraldo was born into the Araripirã Cachoeira community on the Ayari River, a border region between Brazil and Colombia. After his formation at the interdiocesan seminary in Manaus, he worked as a deacon for just over a year in his home parish, Nuestra Señora de la Asunción del Río Içana, where he will now continue his mission as parish priest. Father Geraldo told Agenzia Fides that he had decided to become a priest "in response to a need in our region, where there is a lack of priests. At the beginning", he said, "I felt called by this, but with time I discovered that being a priest is much more. Being a priest means becoming Jesus' presence in the everyday world".

The newly ordained priest then asked his bishop's permission to work in his region, despite his initial fear of not being welcomed in his native land. In reality, Fr Geraldo said, "I think I will be able to converse better with my people and show them what a priest is, that is: another member of the community and not one who decides and commands or responds to everything".

With Captains Regent of San Marino

On Friday, 23 March, the Holy Father received the Captains Regent of the Most Serene Republic of San Marino, Their Excellencies Mr Matteo Fiorini and Mr Enrico Carattoni, who subsequently met with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, accompanied by Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States.

During the cordial discussions, great satisfaction was expressed for the constructive relations that unite the Holy See and the Republic of San Marino, emphasizing the joint effort to strengthen bilateral cooperation. The positive contribution of the local Church to Sanmarinese society, especially in the social and educational fields, was also acknowledged.

Attention then turned to various themes of mutual interest, such as the migratory phenomenon, prospects for the future of the European project, and the international situation.



VATICAN BULLETIN

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served as Bishop of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia and Apostolic Visitor for Syro-Malankaras resident in Europe and Oceania (10 Apr.).

Bishop Mar Theodosius, 59, was born in Puthussery, India. He was ordained a priest on 22 December 1985. He was ordained a bishop on 21 September 2017, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia.

APOSTOLIC NUNCIO

The Holy Father appointed as Apostolic Nuncio in Azerbaijan Archbishop Paul Fitzpatrick Russell, titular Archbishop of Novi, Apostolic Nuncio in Turkey and in Turkmenistan (7 Apr.).

APOSTOLIC VISITATOR

The Holy Father appointed Fr Cristian Dumitru Crișan as Apostolic Visitor for Greek-Catholic Romanians residing in Western Europe. Until now he has served as parish priest of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Parish of Saint George in Paris and rector of the Romanian Greek-Catholic mission in France (9 Apr.).

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR LEGISLATIVE TEXTS

The Holy Father accepted the resignation, for reasons of age, of Cardinal Francesco Coccopalmerio from the office of President of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts. To succeed him the Pope has appointed Archbishop Filippo Iannone, O.Carm., Bishop emeritus of Sora-Cassino-Aquino-Pontecorvo, Italy. Until now he has served as

adjunct secretary of the said Pontifical Council (7 Apr.).

START OF MISSION

On 7 February, Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, titular Archbishop of Capri, began his mission as Apostolic Delegate in Jerusalem and Palestine with the presentation of his Letters of Credence to President Mahmoud Abbas.

On 14 February, Archbishop Angelo Accatino, titular Archbishop of Sabiona, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio in Bolivia with the presentation of his Letters of Credence to President Juan Evo Morales Ayma.

NECROLOGY

Archbishop Ricardo Pedro Chaves Pinto Filho, O. Praem., Archbishop emeritus of Pouso Alegre, Brazil at age 79 (1 Apr.)

H.B. Ignace Pierre VIII Abdel-Ahad, Patriarch emeritus of Antioch for Syrians, at age 87 (4 Apr.)

At the Regina Caeli the Holy Father makes an appeal for Syria

Nothing can justify the slaughter of defenseless people

After celebrating Mass on the parvis of Saint Peter's Basilica on Sunday, 8 April, Feast of Divine Mercy, and before imparting his final blessing, the Pontiff led the recitation of the Regina Caeli and expressed his best wishes to the faithful of the Eastern Churches who, according to the Julian calendar, were celebrating Easter. Francis also congratulated members of the Rom and the Sinti communities on their International Day, 'Romano Dives'. He then expressed an appeal for peace in the aftermath of a chemical weapons attack in Syria. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's reflection which he shared in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Before the final blessing, we will turn in prayer to our heavenly Mother. But first I would like to thank all of you who have participated in this celebration, in particular the Missionaries of Mercy who have gathered for their meeting. Thank you for your service!

To our brothers and sisters of the Eastern Churches who today are celebrating the Solemnity of Easter, I offer my most cordial good wishes. May the Risen Lord fill them with light and peace, and comfort their communities that live in particularly difficult situations.

I offer a special greeting to the Rom and the Sinti present here, on the occasion of their International Day, "Romano Dives". I wish peace and brotherhood to the members of these ancient peoples, and I hope

that this Day's celebration may favour the culture of encounter, with mutual good will to meet and respect each other. This is the path that leads to true integration. Dear Rom and Sinti, pray for me and let us pray together for your Syrian refugee brothers and sisters.

I greet all the other pilgrims present here, the parish groups, families, associations; and together let us place ourselves under the mantle of Mary, Mother of Mercy.

After praying the Regina Caeli, Pope Francis made an appeal on behalf of the people of Syria.

Terrible news of bombings has arrived from Syria, with dozens of victims, many of whom were women and children; news of many people stricken by the effects of chemical substances contained in the



bombs. Let us pray for all the deceased, for the wounded, for the families who are suffering. There are no good wars and bad wars, and nothing, nothing can justify the use of such weapons of extermination against defenseless people and populations. Let us pray that the responsible politicians and military may choose the other path, that of negotiation, the only path that can lead to a peace which is not the path of death and destruction.

From the heart of the Pontificate

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the programmatic document of Francis' Pontificate (*Evangelii Gaudium*) and a nearly forgotten text of Paul VI on Christian joy (*Gaudete in Domino*). And the Gospel Beatitudes themselves are evoked by the Pontiff, commented on and summarized in an effective series with a Franciscan flavour, from the first ("Being poor of heart: that is holiness") to the eighth ("Accepting daily the path of the Gospel, even though it may cause us problems: that is holiness"). Up to the "great protocol" of the Last Judgment described in the 25th Chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, to which Pope Francis has turned many times in these five years.

Francis' teaching is too often mutilated by simplifications and caricatures by the media, often malicious but above all far removed from reality. A teaching which instead continuously recalls Christian Tradition, as in the last part of this document dedicated to Christian life, which is "a constant battle": against evil and more precisely against the devil, "a terrible reality" about which the Pontiff quotes a little-known text of Paul VI and about which he writes salient pages. At the conclusion of an extraordinary and very personal document on the call to holiness in the contemporary world which closes with a touching vision of the motherhood of Mary, Saint among saints.

G.M.V.

An Orthodox woman among the Bollandists

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popularise the Bollandists' highly specialised knowledge to a wider audience," she explains. The page regularly features a historical insight and critical commentary of a saint, and, when possible, relevance to a topical event.

The website is being overhauled to make it more user-friendly and extensive. The aim is to keep its visitors abreast of new developments, conferences and possibly summaries of book reviews. The latter currently only appear in the society's highly respected academic journal, *Analecta Bollandiana*, published twice a year with a print run of 800 copies. "We need these different forms of visibility for the outside world. It is obviously much easier when I'm at a conference or speak to people about what the Bollandists are doing to also be able to refer them to these sources," Irini explains.

That need for visibility was brought home when she attended last year's World Union of Jesuit Alumni in Cleveland, Ohio. Some were unaware of the Bollandists' existence. "Many people were impressed and surprised to know that within the Catholic Church there is a free independent institute that devotes itself to this critical historical research," she recalls.

The arrival of Marc Lindeijer from Rome 18 months ago is also bringing a new dimension to the society's work. In a graphic example of how few Bollandists there have been over the centuries, he is only the 69th in the past 410 years. Traditionally, they have always worked in small teams. Even now, there are only three Jesuit and two lay members. With a life-long interest in the saints, Marc points out he "is the first Bollandist to have expertise in the saint making process". Before moving to Brussels, he worked for seven years in Rome as assistant to the Postulator General. His specialisation is modern hagiography from the 16th century onwards – a period previously somewhat unrepresented in the Bollandists' research.

A female with a full life beyond the Bollandist male community, Irini brings a different perspective, particularly on financial matters. Professional and family lives have impressed on her the importance of sound finances to ensure the Bollandists' future needs are met.

She is now implementing an advancement strategy to achieve that goal. This involves raising awareness of the Bollandists' existence and mission whenever possible and developing potential streams of finance. On her to-do list, she is looking to secure money for specific projects and partnerships for endowments. All donations are channelled through the Brussels-based public benefit foundation, the King Baudouin Foundation. This provides legitimacy to a project and a guarantee to donors that the money is going where it is intended.

There is no doubt she and the society are benefiting hugely from the professional relationship. Irini appreciates listening to Robert and his colleagues discuss their work. "It is fascinating and deserves to have a wider audience," she says.

The Bollandists are grateful for the energy, enthusiasm and passion she brings to her role. Those qualities are not her only contribution. "Precisely because she comes from outside, she helps us look at our institute differently. She sees the beauty of it. We see the instrument. For me the books are work material. For her, they are treasures," Marc points out.

Another visible sign of these two different worlds coming closer together is the fact that since last year Irini has been listed in the *Analecta Bollandiana* – the first woman and Greek Orthodox to contribute to the publication.

The work can be frustrating. "You have to do everything. Make the contacts, create your lists and write emails that people may or may not reply to. It all takes time and you end up playing a waiting, psychological game." However, this is heavily outweighed by the encouraging comments that occasionally accompany small individual donations. "It is very heart-warming to see there are others who appreciate our scholarship," she says.

The role is incredibly demanding. "I don't switch off when I leave the library. And I certainly could not do it without the support of many friends who generously give me their advice, expertise and time. I and the Bollandists owe them a huge debt of gratitude," she says.

Mass on Divine Mercy Sunday

From the grace of shame to the joy of forgiveness

In today's Gospel, we hear, over and over, the word "see". The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord (Jn 20:20). They tell Thomas: "We have seen the Lord" (v. 25). But the Gospel does not describe *how* they saw him; it does not describe the risen Jesus. It simply mentions one detail: "He showed them his hands and his side" (v. 20). It is as if the Gospel wants to tell us that *that* is how the disciples recognized Jesus: through his wounds. The same thing happened to Thomas. He too wanted to see "the mark of the nails in his hands" (v. 25), and after seeing, he believed (v. 27).

Despite his lack of faith, we should be grateful to Thomas, because he was not content to hear from others that Jesus was alive, or merely to see him in the flesh. He wanted to see *inside*, to touch with his hand the Lord's wounds, the signs of his love. The Gospel calls Thomas *Didymus* (v. 24), meaning *the Twin*, and in this he is truly our twin brother. Because for us too, it isn't enough to know that God exists. A God who is risen but remains distant does not fill our lives; an aloof God does not attract us, however just and holy he may be. No, we too need to "see God", to touch him with our hands and to know that he is risen, and risen for us.

How can we see him? Like the disciples: through his wounds. Gazing upon those wounds, the disciples understood the depth of his love. They understood that he had forgiven them, even though some had denied him and abandoned him. To enter into Jesus' wounds is to contemplate the boundless love flowing from his heart. This is the way. It is to realize that his heart beats for me, for you, for each one of us. Dear brothers and sisters, we can consider ourselves Christians, call ourselves Christians and speak about the many beautiful values of faith, but, like the disciples, we need to see Jesus *by touching his love*. Only thus can we go to the heart of the faith and, like the disciples, find peace and joy (cf. vv. 19-20) beyond all doubt.

Thomas, after seeing the Lord's wounds, cried out: "My Lord and my God!" (v. 28). I would like to reflect on the adjective that Thomas repeats: *my*. It is a possessive adjective. When we think about it, it might seem inappropriate to use it of God. How can God be *mine*? How can I make the Almighty *mine*? The truth is, by saying *my*, we do not profane God, but honour his mercy. Because God wished to "become ours". As in a love story, we tell him: "You became man *for me*, you died and rose *for me* and thus you are not only God; you are *my God*, you are *my life*. In you I have found the love that I was looking for, and much more than I could ever have imagined".

God takes no offence at being "ours", because love demands confidence, mercy demands trust. At the

God's "mercy is not simply one of his qualities among others, but the very beating of his heart". Pope Francis explained this as he celebrated Mass in Saint Peter's Square on Divine Mercy Sunday, the Second Sunday of Easter, 8 April. Concelebrating the liturgy with the Pontiff were five cardinals, Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, numerous archbishops and bishops, and the Missionary of Mercy priests whom the Pope sent across the globe as apostles of the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the Extraordinary Jubilee of 2016. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's homily.

very beginning of the Ten Commandments, God said: "I am the Lord *your God*" (Ex 20:2), and reaffirmed: "I, the Lord *your God* am a jealous God" (v. 5). Here we see how God presents himself as a jealous lover who calls himself *your God*. From the depths of Thomas' heart comes the reply: "*My Lord and my God!*" As today we enter, through Christ's wounds, into the mystery of God, we come to realize that mercy is not simply one of his qualities among others, but the very beating of his heart. Then, like Thomas, we no longer live as disciples, uncertain, devout but wavering. We too fall in love with the Lord! We must not be afraid of these words: *to fall in love with the Lord*.

How can we savour this love? How can we touch today with our hand the mercy of Jesus? Again, the Gospel offers a clue, when it stresses that the very evening of Easter (cf. v. 19), soon after rising from the dead, Jesus begins by granting the Spirit *for the forgiveness of sins*. To experience love, we need to begin there: to let ourselves be forgiven. To let ourselves be forgiven. I ask myself, and each one of you: do I allow myself to be forgiven? To experience that love, we need to begin there. Do I allow myself to be forgiven? "But, Father, going to confession may seem difficult...". Before God we are tempted to do what the disciples did in the Gospel: to barricade ourselves behind closed doors. They did it out of fear, yet we too can be afraid, ashamed to open our hearts and confess our sins. May the Lord grant us the grace to understand *shame*, to see it not as a closed door, but as the first step towards an encounter. When we feel ashamed, we should be grateful: this means that we do not accept evil, and that is good. Shame is a secret invitation of the soul that needs the Lord to overcome evil. The tragedy is when we are no longer ashamed of anything. Let us not be afraid to experience shame! Let us pass from shame to forgiveness! Do not be afraid to be ashamed! Do not be afraid.

But there is still one door that remains closed before the Lord's forgiveness, the door of *resignation*. Resignation is always a closed door. The disciples experienced it at Eas-

ter, when they recognized with disappointment how everything appeared to go back to what it had been before. They were still in Jerusalem, disheartened; the "Jesus chapter" of their lives seemed finished, and after having spent so much time with him, nothing had changed, they were resigned. We too might think: "I've been a Christian for all this time, but nothing has

slowly detaches us from sin. Then we discover that the power of life is to receive God's forgiveness and to go forward from forgiveness to forgiveness. This is how life goes: from shame to shame, from forgiveness to forgiveness. This is the Christian life.

After the shame and resignation, there is another closed door. Sometimes it is even ironclad: *our sin*, the same sin. When I commit a grave sin, if I, in all honesty, do not want to forgive myself, why should God forgive me? This door, however, is only closed on one side, our own; but for God, no door is ever completely closed. As the Gospel tells us, he loves to enter precisely, as we heard, "through closed doors", when every entrance seems barred. There



changed in me; I keep committing the same sins". Then, in discouragement, we give up on mercy. But the Lord challenges us: "Don't you believe that my mercy is greater than your misery? Are you a backslider? Then be a backslider in asking for mercy, and we will see who comes out on top". In any event, — and anyone who is familiar with the Sacrament of Reconciliation knows this — it isn't true that everything remains the way it was. Every time we are forgiven, we are reassured and encouraged, because each time we feel more loved and more embraced by the Father. And when we fall again, precisely because we are loved, we experience even greater sorrow — a beneficial sorrow that

God works his wonders. He never chooses to abandon us; we are the ones who keep him out. But when we make our confession, something unheard-of happens: we discover that the very sin that kept us apart from the Lord becomes the place where we encounter him. There the God who is wounded by love comes to meet our wounds. He makes our wretched wounds like his own glorious wounds. There is a transformation: my wretched wounds resemble his glorious wounds. Because he is mercy and works wonders in our wretchedness. Let us today, like Thomas, implore the grace to acknowledge our God: to find in his forgiveness our joy, and to find in his mercy our hope.