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'*Humanae Vitae*' fifty years later

LUCETTA SCARAFFIA

Fifty years after its promulgation, Pope Paul VI's Encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, is viewed by the people of today in a completely different way: in 1968, it was considered a courageous document – and therefore controversial – that ran contrary to the attitude of that time, a time of sexual revolution in which reliable contraceptives and access to abortion were essential. In those days, economists also spoke of the “population bomb”, that is, the danger of overpopulation that threatened wealthy nations, decreasing their prosperity.

Two powerful forces, therefore, aligned themselves against the Encyclical: the ideal of happiness that the sexual revolution promised to everyone, and wealth, which would have been the logical consequence of a large-scale decrease in population.

Today, 50 years later, we see things in a completely different manner. These two utopian visions have been realized, but they have not produced the desired results: neither happiness nor wealth, but rather, new and dramatic problems. In developed countries the fall in birth rates is being reluctantly compensated for by the arrival of masses of immigrants. Although necessary, it is at the same time unacceptable for many. Meanwhile, medical birth control has given rise to science's invasion of the process of procreation, and the results are ambiguous and frequently worrying and dangerous.

Now, as we pay the price of a sudden and dramatic decrease in birth rates, and many women, after years of using artificial contraceptives, are unable to conceive a child, we realize that the Church was right, that Pope Paul VI was prophetic in his proposal of a natural regulation of births that would have been salutary for women's health, the relationship between the couple, and natural procreation. Today, young women are enthusiastic about ecology and turn to natural methods to control fertility, without even realizing that

Humanae Vitae exists. Today, as governments seek to enact policies that promote population growth, we must read this Encyclical again, but with different eyes. Instead of seeing it as a serious defeat of the Church faced with rampant modernity, we must regain that prophetic clarity by understanding the dangers inherent in these changes. We Catholics should congratulate ourselves, because once again the Church has not fallen into the tantalizing trap of a 20th-century utopia, but has promptly recognized the limits and the dangers.

Very few succeed, however. For many, it is still difficult to leave behind the old conflict between progressives and conservatives – amid which this Encyclical was torn to pieces – without recognizing its critical spirit and innovative strength. Even now, it seems that nobody remembers that, for the first time, a Pope had accepted the idea of the regulation of births and invited doctors to investigate natural and effective methods [of birth control].

It is thus of tremendous importance to be able to look at *Humanae Vitae* with new eyes, with the eyes of humans living in the 21st century, by now aware of the failure of many utopian ideals and economic theories that were proposed as infallible. Only in this way will we be able to address the problems that families face today, the new role of women and the difficult relationship between ethics and science, whose roots – although in some regards unknowingly – lie in that now distant text of 1968.



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VATICAN BULLETIN



CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Juan José Pineda Fasquelle, CME, titular Bishop of Oborí, from his office as Auxiliary of the Archdiocese of Tegucigalpa, Honduras (20 July).

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop José Luis Dibildox Martínez of Tampico, Mexico (20 July).

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Pablo Jaime Galimberti di Vietri of Salto, Uruguay (24 July).

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of Salto, Fr Fernando Miguel Gil Eisner from the clergy of the Diocese of Merlo-Moreno, Argentina.

Until now he has served as professor at the Catholic University of Argentina and spiritual director of the Interdiocesan Seminary of Morón (24 July).

Bishop-elect Gil Eisner, 65, was born in Montevideo, Uruguay. He holds a licence in theology from the Catholic University of Argentina and a doctorate in theology with a specialization in Church history from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He was ordained a priest on 25 March 1983. He has served in parish ministry and as professor at various seminaries in Argentina; assessor of the Diocesan Commission for Catechesis and Ministries; assessor at the Episcopal Commission for Faith and Culture of the Episcopal Conference of Argentina; director of the library of the

Faculty of Theology at the Catholic University of Argentina; vice dean and then dean of the said faculty.

The Holy Father appointed as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Montevideo, Uruguay, Fr Pablo Alfonso Jourdan Alvariza from the clergy of the Diocese of Minas, Uruguay, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Medianas Zabuniorum. Until now he has served as parish priest of San Carlos Borromeo Parish in Varela (24 July).

Bishop-elect Jourdan Alvariza, 54, was born in Montevideo, Uruguay. He holds a doctorate in medicine; a BA in theology; a licence in moral and spiritual theology. He was ordained a priest on 5 November 1995. He has served in parish ministry and as head of the Biblical Apostolate of the Diocese of Minas and since 2013 he cooperates with CEBITEPAL (CELAM) in Bogota.

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

The Holy Father appointed as Office Head of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization Msgr Michele Francesco Fiorentino from the Diocese of Alghero-Bosa. Until now he has served as Defender of the Bond at the Tribunal of the Roman Rota (19 July).

NECROLOGY

Archbishop Raymond Gerhardt Hunthausen, Archbishop emeritus of Seattle, USA, at age 96 (22 July)

Bishop Joseph Oyanga, Bishop emeritus of Lira, Uganda, at age 82 (22 July)

Bishop Pierre Auguste Pican, SDB, Bishop emeritus of Bayeux, France, at age 83 (23 July)

Cause for the Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God Chiara Corbella

Lay woman and mother of family

EDICT

On 13 June 2012, the Servant of God Chiara Corbella, lay woman and mother of a family, wife and mother of great faith in God, died in Pian della Carlotta, Manziiana, Italy.

After her marriage on 21 September 2008, Chiara began to experience very difficult situations such as the death of two children, shortly after their birth. During her third pregnancy, Chiara was diagnosed with cancer. Any treatment would have had fatal consequences for the child she was carrying, but to delay would have compromised the treatment's effectiveness. Chiara decided to bring her pregnancy to term. Her oblation remains for all a beacon of light and hope, witness to faith in God, Author of life, example of love which is greater than fear and death.

As her reputation of holiness has grown over the years and since the Cause for Beatification and Canonization of this Servant of God has been

formally requested and opened, so as to make it known to the ecclesial community, we invite each and every member of the faithful to contact us directly or to send to the Diocesan Tribunal of the Vicariate of Rome (Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano, 6 - 00184 Rome) any information which could in some way offer elements for, or against, the reputation of holiness of the said Servant of God.

Moreover, as we must collect all writings attributed to her in accordance with legal provisions, we hereby order with this Edict, that anyone in possession of any writing of the Servant of God submit it to the said Court with due diligence, if they have not already done so to the Postulator of the Cause.

We would point out that the term writings does not only mean printed works, which have already been collected, but also manuscripts, diaries, letters and all other private writings of the Servant of God. Those who wish to keep the original may present a certified copy.

The present Edict is to remain on display for two months at the entrance to the Vicariate of Rome and that it be published in the Diocesan section of *Avvenire*, as well as in *L'Osservatore Romano's* daily edition in Italian.

Given in Rome,
Vicariate of Rome, 2 July 2018
Cardinal ANGELO DE DONATIS
Vicar General

MARCELLO TERRAMANI
Notary

Pope expresses solidarity

A dam collapses in Laos

Rescue efforts are still underway to locate and recover hundreds of people still missing after the collapse on 23 July of a newly built hydroelectric dam southeast of Laos.

Residents believe as many as 300 people may have been killed when the dam gave way due to heavy rains, causing five billion cubic metres of water to surge into at least seven villages, destroying homes and livelihoods.

More than 6,500 people have been left homeless. In a telegram sent on Tuesday, 24 July to local ecclesiastical and civil authorities, signed by Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, Pope Francis expressed his solidarity with the victims of the flooding and with all those affected by the tragedy. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's telegram.

Having learned with sadness of the loss of life and of the injury caused by the serious floods following the collapse of a hydroelectric dam in southeast Laos, His Holiness Pope Francis expresses heartfelt solidarity with all those affected by this disaster. His Holiness prays especially for the repose of the deceased, the healing of those injured and the consolation of all those who grieve the loss of their loved ones and who fear for the lives of those still missing. The Holy Father likewise offers encouragement to the civil authorities and all those involved in the search and rescue efforts as they assist the victims of this tragedy. To all he sends his blessing.

Cardinal PIETRO PAROLIN
Secretary of State



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Jean-Pierre Denis, Editor-in-Chief of the French weekly, *La Vie*, writer and poet, examines the Apostolic Exhortation *'Gaudete et Exsultate'*.

Of saints and heroes

On the Apostolic Exhortation *'Gaudete et Exsultate'*

A distinctly French university professor has had great success with his recent scholarly but enjoyable publication entitled *Comment parler des livres qu'on n'a pas lu* ("How to discuss books one has not read"). A book that everyone immediately spoke about, often without having read it. Indeed, it is a matter of ordinary laziness on the part of the media to comment on works or long official texts based on a simple press release. This poor quality information is enough to fuel discussion. It is a more outmoded, but more interesting, practice to read the books, and talk about them only after having made the effort. As a journalist, I still willingly exercise this art that some deem ridiculous. I also like, before or after reading, to return to the books and read the citations, references and footnotes. One often discovers an

Throughout this spiritual geography it will not surprise us to find mentioned at different times *the Poverello* [Saint Francis] (and with him Anthony of Padua), as well as Ignatius of Loyola, who is referred to four times, one of which is to recall the Jesuit's well-known invitation to "holy indifference". Another two Jesuits appear in the text, Cardinal Martini and Hans Urs von Balthasar (the latter of whom is more in line with Ratzinger). The Exhortation also includes Fathers and Doctors of the Church: Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Basil the Great, John Chrysostom ... and naturally Popes: John Paul II and Paul VI. Such references are inherent to this type of document. Attempting to trace an original interior cartography on their basis, would not lead one very far. More significantly, through different traditions and time periods, the mendicant and charitable Orders are re-

sources, such as *The Pilgrim's Tale* (narrating the accounts of a Russian pilgrim). However he seems to show particular interest in the female mystic.

Within the text the reader comes across Hildegard of Bingen, Bridget of Sweden, Catherine of Siena, Faustina Kowalska, not to mention the 'Teresas' I have just referred to. None of whom was of lacklustre character. Many helped the papacy overcome its weaknesses and crises. Furthermore, Pope Francis refers to their "feminine styles of holiness", highlighting their importance "in times when women tended to be most ignored or overlooked". Very different female characters appear in the text, such as Saint Monica and Sister Maria Gabriella Sagheddu, an Italian Trappist whom John Paul II beatified.

Let us now return to the cartography in order to make another observation, namely, that Pope Francis' 'hagio-geography' is almost exclusively European. I referred earlier to Faustina Kowalska, beatified and canonized by John Paul II, who stands as perhaps the most emblematic saint of Wojtyła's pontificate. Through the Feast of Divine Mercy, the religious, who died in Krakow on 5 October 1938, seems to extend an invisible thread between the Argentine and the Pole, which leads the reader back to the Old Continent.

Amid the pages of *Gaudete et Exsultate* one will not drift very far from there. One will not navigate the waters of the Río de la Plata, but will wander near the banks of the Vistula, the Rhine, the Arno and the Tiber, or the Thames with Thomas More. One will often climb the austere Castilian Plateau, ride through poetic and mystic Spain, which Teresa of Ávila and John of the Cross traversed. Thus one will not discover much of the New World.

The only concession to a 'bio-geography' is his reference to the "sainted Cura Brochero", the Argentine priest who died of leprosy, and whom Francis canonized in October 2016. Apart from this particular case and his mention of the Vietnamese Cardinal, François-Xavier Nguyễn Văn Thuận, one must wait until paragraph 141 (of 177) to leave Europe for a globalized Catholicism, reaching Paul Miki in Japan, Andrew Kim Taegon in Korea, or Rocco González and Alfonso Rodríguez in South America.

Finally, allow me to highlight the fact that Pope Francis' 'hagio-geography' is very French. In first place is Thérèse of Lisieux, undoubtedly the most universal French Saint, Patroness of Missions. The Apostolic Exhortation abounds with intellectual and spiritual references to the 'First Daughter of the Church', France. Indeed, one can practically trace an outline of France's religious history and geography. Here, one encounters the monastic tradition with Bernard of Clairvaux, missionary charity with Vincent de Paul, and apostolic meekness with Francis de Sales of Savoy. It is also significant to note the crossing of the Mediterranean to meet Charles de Foucauld and the monks of Tibhirine, whom Pope Francis decided to beatify with other martyrs from Algeria. Adding to this list of French Saints is Joseph Malègue, a novelist fallen into oblivion, and the fearless Léon Bloy, a writer whom everyone knows but unfortunately no one or almost no one has read. With an interior landscape of this nature, it seems to me that a visit by Pope Francis to France is in order.



Father Reginald "Les saintes femmes" [The Holy Women] (2014)

imagery there, an intellectual landscape, the very scene of inspiration.

I did so with the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*. After reading the entire text, I returned to it with a highlighter in hand. What was I looking for? Names and places. Names linked to places, to culture. "We are never completely ourselves unless we belong to a people", the Pope observes in the text. "It seems that my brother cardinals have gone to the ends of the earth to get one" (a Pope), he joked from the loggia of Saint Peter's in Rome on the evening of his election. What, therefore, might be the personal geography of the author of this Apostolic Exhortation? What path does he choose to capture ideas, to reach us? Who are the men and women he refers to? And above all, who are the saints? I do not presume to invent a science, but were it necessary, perhaps we would call it 'hagio-geography', and this is precisely what we will attempt to illustrate in this text.

ferred to: the Franciscans, the Founders of the Servants of Mary, or once more John Paul II's friend, Teresa of Calcutta. Finally, there is also the ineluctable Philip Neri, the Florentine Founder of the Oratorians, not because he was a prominent figure of the Counter-Reformation, but because he was nicknamed "the joyful saint".

The text aims to place holiness within everyone's reach, in an almost practical way, and sometimes with a colloquial tone. So, here a paradox arises: it is the great mysticism that dominates these pages; a mysticism that has given to Christianity some of its principle spiritual – but also literary and poetic – masterpieces. It should be noted what an important role Carmelite spirituality plays here, in all its forms: firstly John of the Cross, mentioned four times, and with him Teresa of Ávila, Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, otherwise known as Edith Stein, and Thérèse of Lisieux, quoted or recalled four times. Pope Francis drew his information from a variety of Christi-

"The human person is created for a life of communion", and as such, "is created to coexist in the relationship of a family, community, society, as equals in dignity and to pursue their common good". And the entire human family "is responsible for [the care of our] planetary home and indeed, all creation". Speaking on Wednesday, 18 July to thousands of couples gathered at the "Teams of Our Lady" Conference in Fatima, Portugal, Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson offered a reflection on "human ecology" based on "fraternity" and "communion". The following is an abridged version of the English text of the address delivered by the Prefect of the Dicastery for Integral Human Development.



Shortly after His All Holiness, Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople had described the absolute treatment of creation in terms of sin, Pope Francis wrote his Encyclical Letter, *Laudato Si' (2015)*, on the *Care of Our Common Home* to address the current ecological crisis, both natural and human. Not only is our environment deteriorating globally, little effort is also made to safeguard the moral conditions for an authentic human ecology (LS, 3). "The destruction of the human environment", he observed, "is extremely serious, not only because God has entrusted the world to us men and women, but because human life is itself a gift which must be defended from various forms of debasement" (LS, 5). That is why celebrating the feast of St. Joseph, the custodian of the Holy Family at the inaugural Mass of his Pontificate, Pope Francis invited the faithful gathered in Saint Peter's Square and the whole world to listen to the cry of two *fragilities* in our midst: creation and the poor. Rendered *fragile* by the misdeeds of man, the Pope exhorted the human family to listen to the cry of these *fragilities* not only with the mind, but with the heart most importantly. Man cannot be indifferent to the lot of these *fragilities*; for, "every effort to protect and improve our world entails profound changes in lifestyles, models of production and consumption, and the established structures of power which today govern societies" (LS, 5). The human person and his culture is so central to the ecological crisis. So, how may we evaluate the place of the human person in the ecological crisis?

The outburst of ecological consciousness and interest that characterized the 70's found expression variously in the organization of summits on the level of the United Nations, in studies in academic institutions and universities, and in the creation of popular *green movements*. Universities began to dedicate Chairs, Colleges and Departments to environmental studies, dealing with it purely so, as *Department of Environmental Studies*. But the academic interest in the environment took the form of a study of the relationship between the environment and the human presence within it. This gave rise to the creation in universities of *Departments of Human Ecology* for the study of the impact of the human person on his environment, or the human person in his environment as an instance of evolutionary adaptation to the environment. Sometimes, it also gave rise to interdisciplinary studies, involving very many of the social sciences.

Governments too began to respond to concerns about the environment through the creation of *Environmental Protection (or conservation) Agencies*; and, beginning with its *Conference on the Human Environment* in Stockholm (1972), the United Nations has consistently dedicated attention to the *environmental question* in subsequent conferences. Since its meeting in Johannesburg (2002), the United Nations also consistently relates the "question of the environment" with the question of "human development"; and the current UN SDGs are, according to the (former) Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, not only a

narrative about development and the protection of the environment (SDG 6, 13, 14, 15); they are also a *human dignity narrative that leaves no one behind*.

The UN Secretary General's formulation of the relationship between the protection of the environment and human dignity (or development) affirms not only the *physical inter-relatedness* of humanity with its physical environment (nature); it also affirms the *inter-dependence* of their destinies, their lot and their wellbeing. But the descriptions of the nature of the inter-relatedness and inter-dependence of man on his environment has not enjoyed unanimity and agreement in the various efforts to describe it.

Some centers of Higher Education, influenced by an evolutionary sense of development, have described the relations between the *human person* and his environment as the "*survival of the fittest*". Others describe the relationship between the human person and his environment in terms of a *human ecology*, which studies the human dimensions of ecological/environmental problems. Normally, this takes the form of an inter-disciplinary pursuit, that studies how the human person and his environment mutually affect each other. But, there are also studies that present the presence of the human species as a (potential) *menace* to the environment. Related to this position is the presentation of the *limits of the earth's resources*, as an issue of human Ecology.

So, what is man/woman, and what is their place in and their relationship with creation and their created environment?

The first strikes and strokes of the Church's understanding about the place of *man in creation* derive from the biblical account of creation in the Book of Genesis (1-3). There, in the first account of creation (Gen 1-2:4a), created nature, the environment of human existence, is presented as the work of God's Word and *by design*. The first instance of God speaking his Word was actually at the creation of the world; and it was the creation of the world as *home* for humanity. The series of "God said" did "tear through the silence of nothingness" to produce created reality. God's word ("and God said: let there be...") transformed "chaos" at the dawn of creation into a "cosmos", an ordered world system, capable of supporting human life, and suitable to be home for man.

Then, God created man, male and female, in his image and likeness, and *to have dominion over* everything that God has created. Just as man is distinct from the rest of creation by reason of his creation in the *image and likeness of God*, so is he also distinct in his relationship to the rest of creation by his exercise of *dominion over* it; and the exact sense of this exercise of *dominion over creation* is still the subject of vivid exegetical, theological, economic and social discussions.

In the second account of creation, however, this created and cosmic home, *suitable for man*, was described as a "garden planted by God" (Gen

2:8, 15). Here God placed man, formed out of the dust of the earth and the breath of God. In this second account of creation, man is more clearly related to *created nature* by reason of his sharing in its substance (*dust*), but distinct also from it by reason of his bearing within himself the breath of God. But, when man is introduced into the *garden planted by God*, he was to *till and keep it*. Thus *dominion over creation* in the first account of creation is replaced in the second account by *tilling and keeping the garden*. Though functionally presented, man's relationship with his *garden-home* in the second account is clearer to decipher.

The earth was barren and unproductive, because there was no man to till it, according to



the second account; and the *formation of man from the dust of the earth* to be breathed into by God to become a *living soul*, was to have someone to till the earth-garden and to make it productive. But man was also to *keep* the earth-garden which was his home; and how may one understand this *keeping* function and role of man?

Already, man's task of *tilling* the earth-garden was expressed in the Hebrew to describe not

only the work man in the garden-home, but also the worship or service man (Israel) renders to God in the temple. Man's work in the garden-home appears to participate in the reverential act of worship that man renders to God, the creator!

Next, man's duty of *keeping* the garden-home is expressed by the Hebrew *šmr* which was also the verb which was used by Cain to describe his duty towards his brother Abel. There Cain asked: "*Am I my brother's keeper (šmr)*"; and a brother should at least care for the safety, protection and wellbeing of his brother. The use of the same verb (*šmr*) to express the charge God gave to man about his garden-home means that man's relationship to his garden-home, which he/she had to till, was to be guided by *great solicitude for the wellbeing of the garden-home, as if for a brother*. Now, this account of creation was written thousands of years before St. Francis of Assisi; but his way of seeing himself as standing in *kinship ties* with the elements of creation is the imagery that the account of creation evokes.

work of relationships, fashioned by the *created gift of procreation*. For, when in Genesis 2, Adam had given names to all created living beings and found none to be of his kind, God fashioned the *woman* out of him to be his kind. When later, Adam "*knew*" his wife, they engendered a son, propagating their kind. In Cain, their son, the creation of the human person in the *image and likeness of God*, is passed on. And when, again, Adam knew his wife, they engendered another son (Abel), a *brother* of Cain. Thus, the biblical account of the origins of the world and the human family presents *birth* as the source of the multiplication of the human species. But born from the *same womb*, brothers/sisters (*adelpho/adelphai*) share the same transmitted nature of having been *created in the image and likeness of God*. Brothers (sisters), therefore, are *equal in dignity*, – and every killing or murder of a human being is a *fratricide*. The human being is, therefore, not an individual. He/she is a *person, a relational being*. He/she is created to *coexist in the relationship of a family, community, society*, as equals in dignity and to pursue their *common good*. The human person is created for a life of *communion!*

Furthermore, in the New Testament, the prologue of the Gospel of John (Jn 1) recalls the first account of creation by the Word of God in the Book of Genesis, and identifies the Word of God with Jesus Christ. Thus the Evangelist John writes: "*All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being*" (Jn 1:3; cf. Is. 45:12ff; Job 38:4; Neh. 9:6 etc.). What has come into being through the Word of God was "*life*", and creation is born of the Word of God which overcomes *nothingness* and creates *life*.

Besides, *creation* in the Prologue of the Gospel of John is not a passing encounter of God's Word with the world. John calls the Word of God, "*Logos*". As the Word of creation, God's *Logos* reaches down to man and creation to initiate a *dialogue*; a *dialogos*. Man and creation are forever engaged in *dialogue* with God; and man is a *dialogue partner* before God.

This sustained encounter of God's Word with man and his/her world which *creation* denotes finds its fullest expression in the *incarnation of Jesus Christ*. In assuming human flesh, Jesus Christ has come to share in creation, definitively and eternally binding God to it. Furthermore, in his work of redemption, Jesus Christ has redeemed creation from the effects of sin, making it capable of fulfilling its original purpose and destiny, of being truly a *home* for the human family and a place where God dwells among men, as a sign of and in anticipation (*prefiguration*) of the *Kingdom of God*. In Jesus Christ, as St. Paul testifies, "*Grace has abounded all the more, where sin once increased*" (cf. Rom. 5:20). Thus, the world, as God's creation, is not only designed to be the *home of man*. It is also an instance of *created and redeemed goodness*, that witnesses to the Creator's goodness; for everything God created was "*good*", indeed, "*very good*" (Gen. 1).

Thus *human ecology* is not just the interplay of interaction of man with his/her environment. It is rather the *created conditions of goodness, order, justice, love, brotherhood, solidarity and piety, which make human life flourish as God's creation*. It is the unification of humanity with the Christian

Cardinal Turkson speaks at the Teams of Our Lady conference in Fatima

Human ecology fraternity and communion

ideal of a single human family of peoples in solidarity and fraternity.

Let us unpack this further: *Ecology* starts with three letters "eco" from the Greek *oikos*, which means "home or household"; and then adds *logos*, which is "discourse, meaning, sense". So ecology is meaningful talk about our home; and its usual application is to our home the earth. Being "a wondrous work of the Creator," the natural environment contains "a *grammar*" which sets forth ends and criteria for its wise use, not its reckless exploitation" (Benedict XVI, Civ 48).

Accordingly, the notion of "ecology" enjoins responsibility. We understand the natural world as our home because we understand what it means to have a home for our family. So we also understand that our family is responsible for the family home – so the human family is responsible for the planetary home and, indeed, all creation.

Economy starts with *oikos* again and adds *nomos*, "rule" or "law". What are the rules that make our family's home or household viable and genuinely human? By extension, it is about rules and laws that make all of humanity's home work properly?

The two words beginning with *oikos* imply how we should dwell and behave here on our planet – we are members of one household, which is common to all; and the whole idea and experience of *economy* requires justice.

The ethical or moral import of ecology and economy for the family is undeniable. We recognize that, in our days, the family can easily suffer a two-fold vulnerability from the viewpoint of the economy (insufficient salary, joblessness, insecurity, trafficking and slavery – briefly, the lack of decent work) and from the viewpoint of ecology (insufficient access to water, hunger and malnutrition, precarious housing, wasted lands or fisheries – briefly, environmental degradation and the throw-away culture).

On the other hand, the family is at the origins of the most basic positive or constructive attitudes and habits. The experience of parental love nourishes appreciation for Divine Providence. A good family life is suffused with gratitude. Families can learn not to waste and, on the contrary, to share in a spirit of gratitude, generosity. Families can also learn to live in greater austerity both out of choice and out of necessity. Many families already know these things.

Finally and very importantly, it is first in the family that we learn to share and to face challenges straight-on, together, with courage and with creativity. Good families do not allow themselves to decline into victimhood; instead, they rally their gifts, talents and resources and – often joining with others, with relatives or neighbours or friends – confront whatever threatens or undermines their human dignity and their integral development. And this "whatever" includes various forms of environmental degradation.

If all of these are attributes of the human person and its life in communion in a family, then the conditions which make these attributes possible constitute *human ecology*: the environment that favours and promotes these. It is a real *human dignity* programme, a *morality programme*, and the *Magisterium* of the Church has not failed in her own ways: in the Writings and Addresses of Popes, to teach it.

Conference in Brisbane

On the open seas of mission

"We are to see the Lord in the marginalized and serve Him through our service to them": this is what Cardinal John Dew, Archbishop of Wellington, told delegates at the Proclaim2018, a conference held from 12 to 14 July organized by the Archdiocese of Brisbane in partnership with the National Centre for Evangelisation of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. "We are to go out and 'do', not stay in church and write reports", the Cardinal stressed.

With the theme, "Make your home in me", the three day conference aimed to inspire "Catholics to explore new ways of contemplating the face of Christ in community and so empower them to set out on the new paths of mission which the Holy Spirit is tracing for us at this crucial time". The new evangelization is a fundamental task of the Australian Catholic Church in light of child abuse cases, and the reason behind its decision to celebrate in 2020 its first Plenary Council in 80 years.

Addressing the topic "Leadership in a Time of Change", keynote speaker Cardinal Dew identified five key obstacles

that stand in the way of the Christian mission: mistaken ideas, embarrassment, lack of opportunities, fear of rejection and doubts. He then spoke about the experience of renewal underway in New Zealand's parishes with the establishment of pastoral teams composed of lay leaders working for an "outward push". Their challenge, the Cardinal explained, is to identify how to "move beyond our parish, our own formation and our own ministry activities" towards the "needs of the community out there" and how to "serve those people".

During the conference, which presented national guidelines for the pastoral care of lay people, Archbishop of Brisbane Mark Benedict Coleridge said, "what we set ourselves to do is to press the refresh button in the Church right across the nation". Drawing from the recent incident in which a boys' football team became trapped for two weeks in caves in Thailand, he observed that "in that story we recognise a kind of good news that goes to the heart of the truth of where we are as human beings. We, the human race, are trapped. We mightn't even recognize it". And, he ad-

ded, "we can do absolutely nothing down there in the darkness but wait and hope that someone comes".

"God comes to our rescue through Jesus who dies so that we might live", Archbishop Coleridge told the 600 delegates, and "this is the good news that we have to proclaim", with words and mostly with our actions, with facts. He called on participants to consider whether a new paradigm was needed for local communities to ensure that parishes do not fear leaving the tranquility of the past behind for the open seas of mission. Cultural change, young people and belonging were among the themes explored at the conference through plenary sessions and workshops.



The "Proclaim2018" logo

India flooding

The Catholic Church in the forefront of relief operations

Flooding in India's southern state of Kerala has displaced tens of thousands of people, forcing many to seek refuge in the more than 400 relief centres set up by the government and by Catholic and other charities. The low-lying agricultural area of Kuttanad is among the hardest hit by recent monsoon rains which the Indian press describes as some of the most devastating in the last two decades. The rains have swallowed up thousands of homes and local reports say some 90% of paddy fields are now under water, gravely threatening this year's rice production. The Director of Carmel International Publishing House in Kerala, Fr James Alakkuzhiyil, OCD, offers this assessment of the situation and illustrates the Catholic Church's efforts to provide assistance to those affected by the flooding.

The annual monsoon in the Southern Indian State of Kerala has devastated many low-lying areas. The most affected area is known as Kuttanad in the civil districts of Allappuzha and Kottayam. Owing to the numerous rivers and back waters, it is known as the "Venice of the East". The plain land with endless paddy fields and coconut groves decorated with narrow rivers and clear water lakes makes Kuttanad the most visited tourist destination both by foreign tourists and locals.

But now Kuttanad is witnessing the worst flooding in its recent history and as such has been isolated from the rest of the state. There is no electricity or phone connectivity in the area. The rescue boats operated by the service personnel and Water Transport Department are the only link to the mainland. The scarcity of food and drinking water is another huge problem. Kuttanad is marooned and is virtually shut down. Primary health centres, government offices, mini civil stations, churches and business establish-

ments have all been closed down following heavy rain and flooding.

There are hundreds of thousands of people affected by the flood and many of them are residing at numerous relief camps in the districts. Fears of an epidemic outbreak is looming large in the aftermath of the devastating floods in Kuttanad.

There are about 150 parishes in the area. The Changanacherry Archdiocese, under the auspices of Changanacherry Social Service, took the lead in relief work – providing food, drinking water, shelter, clothing, medicine etc. Tonnes of food materials such as rice, vegetables, bread, milk, and clothing items, medicine etc. are being distributed to the people by different dioceses. The

Diocesan Hospitals such as Saint Thomas Hospital, Chethipuzha, Sahridaya Hospital, Alappuzha, The Great Jubilee Hospital, Edathwa and others are conducting free medical camps for the affected people and distributing medicine free of charge. Different dioceses from all over Kerala are now supporting the Changanacherry Diocese in the relief operations.

All the pastoral and spiritual organisations of the Diocese such as the Vincent De Paul Society, Radio-Media Village, youth associations, Catholic Congress, parish councils etc. are fully involved in the relief efforts and in controlling any possible outbreak of an epidemic common in such natural disasters. The parish

halls and school buildings which are not affected by the flooding have been converted into relief camps.

Months ago when Storm Okhi affected the coast of Trivandrum, the Archdiocese of Trivandrum took the same type of lead in the relief operations for the people irrespective of caste or creed. All the dioceses of Kerala and the many religious congregations took part in the relief operations at the time.

Though the mainstream media do not report such acts of charity of the Church during such situations as these, without these massive and disciplined relief works by the Church, the suffering of the people would have been boundless and deaths would have been too numerous.



Cardinal George Alencherry and Archbishop Perumthottam visiting the flood affected area

The Cardinal poet

Interview with the Japanese Archbishop, Thomas Aquino Manyo Maeda

NICOLA GORI

"A clear sky/a rumble/like that of Pentecost": this was the verse with which Thomas Aquino Manyo Maeda, master of the Japanese short poetic form known as haiku, expressed his reaction to Pope Francis' decision to add him to the College of Cardinals. The Archbishop of Osaka, born in the Archdiocese of Nagasaki and having served as a pastor in Hiroshima – the two cities martyred by nuclear folly – shared these thoughts in an interview with *L'Osservatore Romano* in which he also spoke of the role of the Church in an increasingly secularized Japan.

What did you do when you heard that the Pope had named you a cardinal?

At first I was puzzled and, overcome with astonishment. I wondered, why me? I'm not qualified! Then, without even thinking about it, I composed the verse: "A clear sky/a rumble/like that of Pentecost", because that announcement was so like a flash of lightening in a clear sky. After some time, I thought, if this is the work of the Holy Spirit, then this same Spirit will give me the strength to fulfil the task. A Gospel phrase came to mind: "At your word, I will let down the nets" and so I decided to accept the service required of me with humility.

What are the biggest challenges that the Church in Japan must overcome?

The most urgent issues are that the number of faithful is not increasing and there are fewer and fewer vocations to the priesthood and to consecrated life. To combat this trend, I think that the faithful, the clergy and religious should have greater awareness of the importance of living the faith with joy. If we live our faith with this joy, I am sure that the number of Catholics will increase, as well as the number of vocations to the priesthood and to consecrated life. It is above all important to evangelize the ecclesiastical community itself. Despite knowing how to intervene, due to lack of courage, or simply out of respect, these communities appear unable to respond to others. On the other hand, I also think it is important to recapture, in a certain sense, the methods of the so-called missionary period, perhaps finding new means of expression: both for that

missionary method and for the missionary zeal of that period.

What role does education play in Christian witness in a country in which Catholics are a minority?

I think the school environment is the privileged one for spreading the Gospel to young people. In the past, until about 40 years ago, a high number of baptisms was celebrated thanks to schools. Today, this is much rarer. Not only are we reluctant to administer the sacraments of initiation, there is also abstinence from religious education. It is necessary to transmit the Gospel with more courage in schools and universities as well as elsewhere. To that end, it is important to train qualified Catholic teachers.

What is the situation of interreligious dialogue?

There is a specific department in the National Bishops Conference which deals with this and there is a committee in every diocese that has the task of carrying out exchange programmes and dialogue with other religions. For example, numerous initiatives to promote peace have been launched in cooperation with representatives of Buddhism and Shintoism. Joint prayer vigils are often held together. However, I think it is important to see how the dialogue is already practiced in everyday life. There are people who belong to different religions in the same family. It is moving to observe how these people live, reciprocally respecting one another, as they seek God's will. I think it is important to consider dialogue also from this point of view.

Is it possible to evangelize in a secular society?

It is precisely because we live in a society in which secularization is quite advanced that preaching the Gospel becomes ever more necessary. Indeed, it seems that a growing number of individuals is seeking a message of good news like that of the Gospel. To meet this need, it is necessary to cultivate enthusiasm and renew our methods and expressions of proclaiming that message.

What is the role of consecrated people in the Church of the Rising Sun?

I would say that it is very important. Today, despite the aging members and the drop in vo-



Sadao Watanabe "Pentecost" 1975

ocations, various religious congregations are greatly contributing to society's evangelization through activities in keeping with their charisma. It is enough to think about their commitment in the field of education, health and other sectors of society. Moreover, within diocesan pastoral care, they support parishes and the work of the various commissions. In particular, the work of consecrated people is important in the pastoral care of foreigners. At the same time, as we can read in the working tool that is being drawn up by the Synod on the "new evangelization", by offering themselves, consecrated people bear witness to the primacy of God over every other thing and by living in communities they bear witness to the strength and the depth of the bonds which spring from the Gospel. I think that such witness represents a very important aspect of their mission. The make-up of religious communities is also becoming a form of witnessing. Indeed they are always more international, and in a society like Japan's, which is slowly opening up to diversity, this is a testimony that shows it is possible to live "together", overcoming international barriers.

What are you doing about the numerous immigrants that arrive each year?

The commitment of the Church in this area has various aspects. First of all, there is the pastoral one. Finding themselves suddenly in an environment and culture that are different from the ones of origin, immigrants need help so that they can keep and nurture their faith. By offering our assistance, we are working to make that possible. Regular celebrations in the mother tongue of their country of origin are being planned. At the same time, in parishes we endeavour to receive them warmly and to journey with them. There is also a social aspect. Migrants who arrive to Japan encounter various difficulties. They need accommodation. They have to learn the language. They need help with the education of their children, with legal advice etc. We work to offer assistance in these areas. In my Archdiocese of Osaka, the centre for social activities is responsible for this type of aid. There is also a humanitarian aspect. Irrespective of whether they are Christian or not, we are committed to welcome them with warmth and to protect their rights as people. Lately, there have been priestly and religious vocations among the immigrants. We cannot but be pleased about this.

Morocco selects women to become public notary officials

In a historic decision, Morocco's Justice Ministry announced on Saturday, 21 July, that 299 women have been selected to act as public notaries. The decision marks the first time that women will be permitted to exercise the profession, traditionally practiced by men, in the Islamic world. According to the Ministry, women represented 40 per cent out of nearly 19,000 applicants who took the professional examination held in May. Typically, a public notary is licensed by the government to perform official acts and document legal affairs including real estate and commercial transactions, inheritance, and marriage licenses.

Describing the decision as "historic", Morocco's Justice Ministry said it "embodies the modernist democratic choice of the Kingdom, particularly in the promotion of women's rights, the

fight against all forms of discrimination and the strengthening of their position alongside men."

A total of 800 applicants passed the examination, including 299 women and 501 men.



The Parliament of Morocco in Rabat

Pope's appeal to the international community following recent shipwrecks in the Mediterranean

Safety, rights and dignity for migrants

In a heartfelt appeal on Sunday, 22 July, Pope Francis called on the international community to act "decisively and promptly" in response to the migrant crisis. After the recitation of the Angelus together with some 25,000 faithful gathered in Saint Peter's Square, the Pope referred explicitly to the tragic shipwrecks that have occurred recently in the Mediterranean. Before the

Angelus, the Holy Father reflected on the day's Gospel passage (Mk 30-34) and highlighted "the three verbs" of the Shepherd: "to see", "to have compassion" and "to teach", pointing out that Jesus first offered the "bread of the Word" to the "starving and lost crowd". The following is a translation of the Pope's reflection, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today's Gospel passage (Mk 6:30-34) tells us that after their first mission, the Apostles returned to Jesus and told him "all that they had done and taught" (v. 30). After the experience of the mission, which was undoubtedly thrilling but also arduous, they needed to rest. And understanding this well, Jesus wished to give them some relief and said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest for a while" (v. 31). But Jesus' intention could not be fulfilled this time because the crowd, guessing the location of the lonely place where he would take the disciples by boat, ran there and got there ahead of them.

The same can happen today. At times we are not able to complete our projects because something urgent and unexpected occurs, disrupting our plans and [this] requires flexibility and being available to the needs of others.

In these situations, we are called to imitate what Jesus did: "As he landed he saw a great throng, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things" (v. 34). With this brief sentence, the Evangelist offers us a *flash* of singular intensity, taking a snapshot of the eyes of the divine Master and his teaching. Let us observe the three verbs in this frame: *to see, to have compassion, to teach*. We can call them the Shepherd's verbs. The *gaze* of Jesus is not a neutral one – or worse, a cold and detached one because Jesus always looks with the eyes of the heart. And his heart is so tender and filled with *compassion*, that he is able to understand even the most hidden needs of people. Moreover, his compassion does not simply suggest an emotional response toward people



Migrant women on a rescue boat off the coast of Gibraltar (Reuters)

in situations of distress. It is much more. It is God's attitude and predisposition toward mankind and its history. Jesus appears as the fulfillment of God's concern and care for his people.

Because Jesus was moved when he saw all those people in need of guidance and help, we would now expect him to perform some miracles. Instead, he began *teaching* them many things. This is the first bread that the

Messiah offers to the starving and lost crowd; the bread of the Word. We all need the Word of truth to guide and illuminate our way. Without the truth which is Christ himself, it is not possible to find the right direction in life. When we distance ourselves from Jesus and his love, we become lost and life is transformed into disappointment and dissatisfaction. With Jesus by our side, we can proceed with confidence and overcome all trials, advancing in love toward God and neighbour. Jesus gave himself for others, thus becoming an example of love and service for each of us.

May Mary Most Holy help us to bear the problems, suffering and difficulties of our neighbours with an attitude of sharing and service.

Holy Father's grief and closeness

Dozens killed in fires in Greece

Wildfires believed to have been started by arsonists have claimed more than 80 lives and injured hundreds in Greece this past week. Flames erupted in at least 15 different locations northeast of Athens on Monday, 23 July, and fanned by high winds, they swept through neighbourhoods and tourist villages. Many people attempted to reach the shore to escape the blaze and were rescued by fishing boats; many others never made it, including 26 children and adults who died clinging to each other on a cliff top. Dozens of people are still missing. More than 1,500 homes were damaged or destroyed. Greek Premier Alexis Tsipras declared three days of national mourning and asked the European Union to assist with rescue efforts. In a telegram sent on Tuesday, 24 July, to local ecclesiastical and civil authorities, and signed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, Pope Francis expressed his "heartfelt solidarity" with all those affected by the tragedy. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's telegram.

His Holiness Pope Francis was deeply saddened to learn of the recent wildfires in Greece, and extends his heartfelt solidarity to all those affected

by this tragedy. In particular, he commends the deceased to the merciful love of Almighty God, and offers encouragement to the civil authorities and emergency personnel as they continue in their rescue efforts. Upon all who mourn, Pope Francis willingly invokes the Lord's blessings of consolation and strength.

Cardinal PIETRO PAROLIN
Secretary of State



After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, in recent weeks we have heard the tragic news of the shipwrecks of boats laden with migrants in the waters of the Mediterranean. I express my grief before such tragedies and I assure my thoughts and prayers for the deceased and their families. I direct a heartfelt appeal to the international community to act decisively and promptly, in order to avoid similar tragedies from being repeated and to guarantee the safety and the respect of the rights and dignity of all.

I greet all of you people of Rome and pilgrims. I extend a special greeting to the faithful from the Diocese of Rio Do Sul, Brazil, the youth from the Diocese of Seville, Spain and those from the Diocese of Pelplin, Poland, who have come here from Assisi in a "relay of prayer" for the next Synod of Bishops.

I greet the parish groups and associations, the very young group from Piazzola sul Brenta, Diocese of Vicenza.

I wish everyone a pleasant Sunday and please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci!*