

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

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Friday, 14 September 2018

The Pope convokes a meeting with presidents of episcopal conferences

For the protection of minors



After consulting with his Council of Cardinal advisors, Pope Francis has called for the Presidents of Episcopal Conferences around the world to convene for a meeting in the Vatican from 21-24 February 2019 to discuss the prevention of abuse of minors and vulnerable adults. The announcement was made by Paloma García Ovejero, Vice-director of the Holy See Press Office, at a press briefing Wednesday morning, 12 September, the 3rd and final day of meetings that the Council of Car-

dinals had begun on Monday, 10 September.

In a statement, García Ovejero said all Council members were present for this, the Council's 26th meeting, with the exception of Card. George Pell, Card. Francisco Javier Errázuriz and Card. Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya. The Pope participated in all but three meetings.

Much of the Council's work focused on further revisions to the draft of the new Apostolic Constitution of the Roman Curia, the provi-

sional title of which is *Praedicate Evangelium*. The text will later undergo further stylistic revisions and canonistic review.

As noted on Monday, the first day of the meetings, the Cardinals requested that the Pope reflect on the work, structure and composition of the Council itself, particularly in view of the advanced age of some of its members. They also expressed satisfaction for the success of the 9th World Meeting of Families held in Dublin and congratulated Cardinal

Kevin J. Farrell and the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, for having organized the event.

Cardinal Sean Patrick O'Malley then offered an update of the work of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors. Concerning recent events, the Cardinals renewed their expression of "full solidarity" with the Pontiff. The next meeting of the Council will take place from 10-12 December.

General Audience Free of slavery



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Audience with leadership of Episcopal Conference Pope Francis meets US Bishops

On Thursday morning, 13 September, Pope Francis received in audience the leadership of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), including Archbishop Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, President of the USCCB, and Archbishop José Horacio Gómez of Los Angeles, Vice President. They were joined by Cardinal Sean Patrick O'Malley, OFM Cap., Archbishop of Boston and President of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, and Msgr Brian Bransfield, Secretary General of the said Commission.

Christians in Pakistan

In an interview, Cardinal Joseph Coutts speaks about Pakistan's "very small" but not "invisible minority" of Christians.



NICOLA GORI PAGE 6/7

Listening to victims and survivors

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors issued a final communiqué after concluding its ninth Plenary Assembly, which was held in Rome from 7-9 September.

The statement recalled the Holy Father's emphasis on "listening to victims/survivors and having their life stories guide the response of the Church in protecting minors from sexual abuse". Among the topics discussed at the Assembly were projects "to create safe spaces and transparent processes by which people who have been abused can come forward".

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VATICAN BULLETIN



AUDIENCES

Thursday, 6 September

H.E. Mr Václav Kolaja, Ambassador of the Czech Republic, for the presentation of his Letters of Credence

Archbishop Nicolas Henry Marie Denis Thevenin, titular Archbishop of Eclano, Apostolic Nuncio in Guatemala

Archbishop José Domingo Ulloa Mendieta, OSA, of Panamá, Panamá

Bishop Gerardo Antonazzo of Soracassino-Aquino-Pontecorvo, Italy

Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, President of the Pontifical Academy for Life

H.E. Mrs Emma Madigan, Ambassador of Ireland, on a farewell visit

Friday, 7 September

H.E. Mr Paulino Domingos Baptista, Ambassador of the Republic of Angola, for the presentation of his Letters of Credence

Archbishop Brian Udaigwe, titular Archbishop of Suelli, Apostolic Nuncio in Benin and in Togo

Archbishop Corrado Lorefice of Palermo, Italy

Saturday, 8 September

Cardinal Marc Ouellet, PSS, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops

Monday, 10 September

Cardinal Beniamino Stella, Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy

Tuesday, 11 September

Members of the Episcopal Conference of Venezuela, on a visit *ad limina Apostolorum*:

– Bishop Juan Carlos Bravo Salazar of Acarigua-Araure

– Bishop Luis Armando Tineo Rivera of Carora

– Bishop José de la Trinidad Valera Angulo of Guanare

– Bishop Víctor Hugo Basabe of San Felipe

– Archbishop Manuel Felipe Díaz Sánchez of Calabozo

– Bishop Alfredo Enrique Torres Rondón of San Fernando de Apure

– Bishop Ramón José Aponte Fernández of Valle de la Pascua

– Bishop Gustavo García Naranjo of Guarenas

– Bishop Raúl Biord Castillo, SDB, of La Guaira

– Archbishop Ulises Antonio Gutiérrez Reyes, O. de M., of Ciudad Bolívar

– Bishop Helizandro Terán Bermúdez, OSA, of Ciudad Guayana

– Bishop Enrique Pérez Lavado of Maturín

– Archbishop Mariano José Parra Sandoval of Coro, with Archbishop emeritus Roberto Lückert León

– Bishop Carlos Alfredo Cabezas Mendoza of Punto Fijo

Ambassador of Angola

On Friday morning, 7 September, the Pontiff received in audience H.E. Mr Paulino Domingos Baptista, Ambassador of the Republic of Angola, for the presentation of the Letters by which he is accredited to the Holy See.



H.E. Mr Paulino Domingos Baptista, 67, is married and has four children. He holds a degree in Economics. He has served as delegate of the Interior Ministry in the provinces of Cunene, Huila and Luanda (1976-1990); National Director of Tourism (1990); Deputy Minister, Secretary of State and *ad interim* Tourism Minister (1991-2016); Tourism Minister (2016-2017).

– Archbishop Jesús González de Zárate Salas of Cumaná

– Bishop Jorge Aníbal Quintero Chacón of Barcelona

– Bishop Jaime José Villarroel Rodríguez of Carúpano

– Bishop Fernando José Castro Aguayo of Margarita

– Bishop José Manuel Romero Barrios of El Tigre

– Archbishop José Luis Azuaje Ayala of Maracaibo, with Auxiliary Bishop Ángel Francisco Caraballo Fermín, titular Bishop of Dagno, and Archbishop emeritus Ubaldo Ramón Santana Sequera, FMI

– Bishop Juan de Dios Peña Rojas of El Vigía-San Carlos del Zulia

– Bishop Jesús Alfonso Guerrero Contreras, OFM Cap., of Machiques

– Cardinal Baltazar Enrique Porras Cardozo, Archbishop of Mérida; Apostolic Administrator “*sede vacante ad nutum Sanctae Sedis*” of Caracas, with Bishop Luis Enrique Rojas Ruiz, titular Bishop of Unizibira, Auxiliary of Mérida, and Bishop Tulio Luis Ramírez Padilla, titular Bishop of Ausuccura, Auxiliary of Caracas

– Bishop José Trinidad Fernández Angulo, titular Bishop of Cerenza

– Bishop Enrique José Parravano Marino, SDB, titular Bishop of Isola,

Auxiliary of Caracas, with Cardinal Jorge Liberato Urosa Savino, Archbishop emeritus of Caracas

– Fr Victor Manuel Roa, Diocesan Administrator of Barinas with Bishop emeritus Ramón Antonio Linares Sandoval

– Bishop Pablo Modesto González Pérez, SDB, of Guasdalito

– Bishop Mario del Valle Moronta Rodríguez of San Cristóbal de Venezuela

– Bishop Cástor Oswaldo Azuaje Pérez, OCD, of Trujillo

– Archbishop Reinaldo Del Prette Lissot of Valencia en Venezuela

– Bishop Saúl Figueroa Alborno of Puerto Cabello

– Bishop Polito Rodríguez Méndez of San Carlos de Venezuela

– Bishop Georges Kahlhalé Zouhairaty, BA, titular Bishop of Abila Lysaniae, Apostolic Exarch for Melkite Greek faithful residing in Venezuela

– Bishop Timoteo Hikmat Beylouni, titular Bishop of Sabrata, Apostolic Exarch for Syrian faithful residing in Venezuela

– Bishop Benito Adán Méndez Bracamonte, Military Ordinary

– Bishop Felipe González González, OFM Cap., titular Bishop of Sinuara, Vicar Apostolic of Caroní

– Bishop Jonny Eduardo Reyes Sequera, SDB, titular Bishop of

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Ambassador of the Czech Republic

On Thursday morning, 6 September, the Pontiff received in audience H.E. Mr Václav Kolaja, Ambassador of the Czech Republic, for the presentation of the Letters by which he is accredited to the Holy See. H.E.

Mr Václav Kolaja, 47, is married and has two children. He holds a degree in history. He has held the following positions: official in the Department for Diplomatic Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) (1996-1997); official in the Department for Political Relations with the European Union at the MFA (1997-2000); secretary at the Czech Embassy in London (2000-2004); head of the Legal and Institutional Section at the Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the European Union, Brussels (2004-2009); head of section for North America at the MFA (2009-2011); head of the Political Section at the Czech Embassy in Washington D.C. (2011-2015); coordinator for Cyber Security at the MFA (2015-2016). Since 1 June 2016 he has been Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.



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The Holy Father with members of FISC (Italian Federation of Cynological Sports)

At the General Audience the Pope continues reflection on the Commandments

Free of slavery

The third Commandment invites us to rest, to celebrate our freedom from "the interior slavery of sin", in order to be "capable of loving". Pope Francis emphasized this at the General Audience in Saint Peter's Square on Wednesday, 12 September, as he continued his reflection on the ten Commandments. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's catechesis, which he gave in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters
Good morning!

In today's catechesis we return again to the third Commandment, the one regarding the day of rest. The Decalogue proclaimed in the Book of Exodus is repeated in the Book of Deuteronomy almost identically, except for this Third Word in which a precious difference appears: whereas in Exodus the motive for rest is the blessing of creation, in Deuteronomy, it commemorates the end of slavery. On this day, the slave has to rest just like the owner, to celebrate the memory of the Passover of liberation.

Indeed by definition, slaves cannot rest. But there are many forms of slavery, both interior and external constraints. There are exterior coercions such as oppression, lives seized by violence and other types of injustice. There are interior prisons which are for example, mental blocks, complexes, character limitations and

more. Is there rest under these conditions? Can a recluse or an oppressed man or woman be free? And can a person who is tormented by inner difficulties be free?

Actually, there are people who experience great freedom of spirit even in prison. Let us think for example of Saint Maximilian Kolbe or Cardinal Van Thuan who transformed dark oppression into places of light. There are also people marked by great interior fragility who, however, know about the rest of mercy and how to transmit this. God's mercy frees us. And when you encounter God's mercy, you feel great interior freedom and you are also able to transmit it. This is why it is important to open oneself to God's mercy so as not to be slaves to ourselves.

What then is true freedom? Does it consist, perhaps, in the freedom of choice? Certainly this is part of freedom and we commit ourselves to ensure this to every man and woman (cf. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 73). But we very well know that being able to do what one wants is not enough to be truly free nor even to be happy. True freedom is much more.

Indeed there is slavery which shackles more than a prison, more than a panic attack, more than any other kind of imposition: it is slavery

to one's ego.¹ Those people who spend the whole day in front of the mirror in order to see their ego. And one's own ego is taller than one's body. They are slaves to their ego. One's ego can become a slave driver that tortures a person wherever he or she is, and causes that person the greatest oppression, namely "sin", which is not the banal breach of a code, but the failure of existence and the condition of slavery (cf. Jn 8:34).² In the end, the ego is sin, saying: "I want to do this and I do not care if there is a limit, if there is a commandment, and I do not even care if there is love".

Let us think, for example of ego in human passions: the glutton, the lustful, the miserly, the quick tempered, the envious, the bitter, the arrogant – and so forth – they are slaves to their vices which oppress and torment them. There is no relief for the greedy because gluttony is the hypocrisy of the stomach that is full but makes one think it is empty. The hypocritical stomach makes one a glutton. We are slaves to the hypocritical stomach. There is no respite for the glutton and the lustful who must live for pleasure; the anxiety of possession destroys the miser; they always hoard money, hurting others; the fire of anger and the woodworm of envy ruin relationships. Writers say that envy makes the body and soul yellow, like a person with hepatitis: they turn yellow. The envious have a yellow soul because they can never have the fresh complexion of a healthy soul. Envy destroys. Bitterness which eschews all effort and makes life impossible;

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The Holy Father hopes to visit Japan in 2019

Delegates of friendship

Before the General Audience on Wednesday morning, 12 September, in the Paul VI Hall, Pope Francis received in audience members of the "Tensho Kenoh Shisetsu Kenshokai" Association who had come from Japan. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's address, with a translation of the extemporaneous salutation that he gave in Spanish at the end of his remarks.

right to preserve the memory, as your Association does.

The journey of your young predecessors lasted more than eight years; there were no planes in those days. Yours is shorter and less tiring. But I hope you feel welcomed by the Pope as they were and that, like them, you will experience the joy of this meeting and be encouraged to return to your country as ambassadors of friendship and promoters of great human and Christian values. The four young people of the Tensho era did exactly this, showing commitment and courage. In particular, I want to remember their leader Mancio Ito, who became a priest,

and Julian Nakaura who, like many others, was executed on the famous hill of the martyrs of Nagasaki and was proclaimed blessed.

I know that your Association promotes fine projects of culture and solidarity. I especially encourage your current efforts to set up a fund for the training of young people and orphans, thanks to the contribution of companies that are sensitive to their problems. You wish to show that religion, culture and the economy can work together peacefully to create a more humane world marked by an integral ecology. This is fully in accordance with what I also wish for our human family

today and tomorrow, as I wrote in my Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*. It is the right path for the future of our common home.

Thank you once again for your visit. Like your four young predecessors, convey to your beloved people and your great country the friendship of the Pope of Rome and the esteem of the whole Catholic Church.

Availing myself of this occasion, I would like to communicate my intention to visit Japan next year. I hope to be able to fulfill this wish.

I am very pleased with what you have told me and with this history that I came to know long ago. Friendship is made in the course of history. Therefore memory is important. May you never forget the things that culture, country, language, religion and social inclusion have given us. Do not forget it; and take a step forward. The Provincial understands it because he was a museum curator, thus he is well aware of it. Memory must be nurtured.

Dear friends from Japan,

Good morning! I am very happy to meet you, and with you Fathers Renzo De Luca and Shinzo Kawamura.

The Pope is very pleased to welcome you, delegates of the Tensho Kenoh Shisetsu Kenshokai Association, to Rome. More than 400 years ago, in 1585, four young Japanese arrived in Rome, accompanied by some Jesuit missionaries, to visit the Pope, who was then Gregory XIII. It was an extraordinary journey, as it was the first time that a group of representatives of your great country came to Europe. The four young people received a wonderful welcome, not only from the Pope, but also from all the cities and courts that they passed through: Lisbon, Madrid, Florence, Rome, Venice, Milan, Genoa ... Europeans met Japanese and Japanese experienced Europe and the heart of the Catholic Church. It was an historic meeting between two great cultures and spiritual traditions, and it is

Celebrating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Integral human development in a multilateral context

PAUL RICHARD GALLAGHER

The 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration provides the Holy See an opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to the cause of human dignity, in a context where the precious patrimony of human rights, which the international community had solemnly proclaimed as the foundation of a new order in the aftermath of the horrors of war, appears seriously questioned, both in theory and in practice.

The theme chosen for this meeting "The Challenge of Universality" underscores the fact that the universality of human rights represents a crucial question for our age, a real topic *stantis aut cadentis*, the answer to which will determine whether human rights continue to mark the common horizon for the construction of our societies, the necessary point of reference for the exercise of political power and a guide for the path to be followed by the international community.

I would like to focus on three major challenges that, in the present historical context, threaten the recognition of the universality of human rights, and then look for possible paths of response. The three challenges are: a model of social development that is not sufficiently inclusive; the deviations related to growing cultural pluralism; and the persistent and serious violations of human rights that occur in different parts of the world.

The first challenge to the universality of human rights comes from the model of social development that we are pursuing, both at the level of advanced economies and at the global level. In recent years, we are witnessing in Western societies a greater breakdown of the social fabric, due to multiple factors, among which those of a socio-economic character: the growth of inequalities, the impoverishment of some sectors of the population, job insecurity, as well as the drastic downsizing of social protection systems. In general, we are witnessing a crisis in the implementation of social rights which particularly affects people in situations of vulnerability and which in many cases risks obscuring the dignity of the human person. Even on a global level, despite the overall growth of the world economy, entire populations remain in poverty and their situation is aggravated by the fact that the advances in communication technologies allow them to watch closely how other wealthy people are living in comfort and opulence.

The social situation we are experiencing, both in developed and in developing countries, is not irrelevant to the human rights discourse, which is gaining strength in many sectors. Without justifying these positions, we must try to understand them and remedy them to respond to an increasingly serious problem of social cohesion, before which we cannot remain mere spectators.

If we see with some apprehension, on a global scale, the emergence in certain countries of models of economic growth independent of democracy and without respect for human rights, we must likewise be concerned about the development of societies based merely on the affirmation of individual liberties, which put little emphasis on the virtue of solidarity. It is therefore necessary to ask whether the models of development we are pursuing, due to their lack of inclusiveness, are compatible, in the long term, with the affirmation of the universality of human rights.

In Strasbourg

On 10 September, for the occasion of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States, addressed the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. The Declaration was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its third session on 10 December 1948. The accompanying text is an excerpt of the Archbishop's discourse.

A second challenge to the universality of human rights derives from the growing cultural pluralism that we experience within our societies. It is certainly not a new phenomenon.

In our day, however, the idea of pluralism seems to be undergoing a process of mutation. On the one hand, we are witnessing the rising trend of political nationalism and ideological fundamentalism, which seem ever less compatible with a society founded on the principles of democracy and human rights. On the other hand, part of the dominant liberal culture has shifted toward a radically individualistic interpretation of certain rights, or towards the affirmation of "new rights".

The third challenge arises from the instability of the international order and the growing threats to

peace. Here, it is not a question of a theoretical objection to the universality of human rights, but rather the troublesome spread of systematic and very serious violations of them, which continue to challenge the international community.

The three above mentioned challenges to the universality of human rights are among many that could potentially be discussed. At this point, I would like to offer some possible solutions from the perspective of the Holy See, which are inspired by the Social Teaching of the Church, as well as the prospects that

ing victim to the oppression caused by individualistic selfishness or populism.

This vision fully reflects what, from the perspective of social doctrine, we call "integral human development". From the point of view of the Holy See, this means giving priority and attention to all human beings, but especially those in a situation of weakness, those at risk of being simply discarded, from the poor to the unemployed, from migrants to young people without education, from women victims of violence, to the elderly living in loneliness, to the unborn child, to the disabled. Such attention is expressed in the wide range of charitable and social commitments that the Catholic Church and the numerous Catholic-inspired institutions continue to undertake in the world. Moreover, integral development means "development of the whole man", that is of each person in all their dimensions: starting from the basic needs of survival, the right to education, the possibility of participating in community life and including the need to live freely one's religious faith and beliefs.

Turning to the second challenge, that of a growing cultural pluralism, I believe that an answer must be sought in the robust affirmation of the right to freedom of religion, which is a condition for mutual respect and for real equality in the context of a pluralist society.

Religious freedom takes on a particular importance in the building of human rights, since it protects that relationship with the ultimate goal of existence, which constitutes the core of the transcendent dignity of the person, in which the different visions of man are also reflected. We know that freedom of religion is not limited merely to freedom of worship or professing one's faith; it includes, as stated in Article 18 of the Declaration, the freedom "either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest one's religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

Freedom of religion demonstrates the open character of a democratic society: it means recognizing the limits of the State's competence when it comes to questions at once both intimate and ultimate in their individual and communitarian dimensions. The growing distance between religious and non-religious cultures, as well as the great differences existing between different religious visions and sometimes within the same traditions, require that the State avoid taking positions for one or another of the world's visions. When the State is compelled indirectly to do so, it should respect citizens, allowing people and communities to live in accordance with their deep convictions, in so far as possible.

Certainly, an increase in pluralism can make it challenging to find a common understanding of the way



Eleanor Roosevelt, first chair of the UN Commission on Human Rights, oversaw the drafting of the Universal Declaration.



The Bishop is a man of prayer, of proclamation and communion. The Holy Father offered this observation in the Clementine Hall on Saturday morning, 8 September, in an audience with prelates who participated in a seminar organized by the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. The following is a translation of Pope Francis' address, which he delivered in Italian.

Dear Brothers,
Good morning!

I am pleased to meet you on the occasion of your training seminar. With you, I greet the communities that are entrusted to you: priests, men and women religious, catechists and lay faithful. I am grateful to Cardinal Filoni for the words that he addressed to me and I also thank Archbishop Rugambwa and Archbishop Dal Toso.

Who is the bishop? Let us ask ourselves about our identity as pastors in order to have more awareness of it, while knowing that no selfsame standard model exists in all places. The bishop's ministry causes a shudder, so great is the mystery it bears. Thanks to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the bishop is configured to Christ, Shepherd and Priest. He is called, that is, to have the features of the Good Shepherd and to make his very own the heart of the priesthood, namely, *offering his life*. Thus, he does not live for himself, but reaches out to give his life to the sheep, in particular to those who are the weakest and most at risk. For this reason the bishop fosters a true and proper compassion for the multitudes of brothers and sisters who are like sheep without a shepherd (cf. Mk 6:34) and for those who, in various ways, are discarded. I ask you to have gestures and words of special comfort for those who experience marginalization and degradation; more than others they need to perceive the predilection of the Lord, whose caring hands you are.

Who is the bishop? I would like to outline three essential traits with you: he is a man of prayer, man of proclamation and man of communion.

Man of prayer. The bishop is the Successor of the Apostles and like the Apostles he is called by Jesus to be with Him (cf. Mk 3:14). There he finds his strength and his confidence. Before the Tabernacle he learns to entrust himself to and to trust in the Lord. In this way the awareness matures in him that at night too, as he sleeps, or during the day, among the toil and sweat in the field he cultivates, the seed matures (cf. Mk 4:26-29). For the bishop, prayer is not devotion but a necessity; it is not one task among many, but an indispensable ministry of *intercession*: each day he must lead people and lay their situations before God. Like Moses, he holds up his hands to heaven in favour of his people (cf. Ex 17:8-13) and is able to persist with the Lord (cf. Ex 33:11-14), to

Men of prayer, proclamation and communion

Pope Francis speaks of the ministry of bishops

negotiate with the Lord, like Abraham. The *parrhesia* of prayer. A prayer without *parrhesia* is not prayer. This is the Pastor who prays! One who has the courage to debate with God for his flock. Active in prayer, he shares the Passion and the Cross of his Lord. Never satisfied, he constantly seeks to become like Him, striving to become like Jesus, victim and altar for the salvation of his people. And this does not come from knowing many things, but from knowing only one thing each day in prayer: [knowing] "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2). Because it is easy to wear a cross on one's breast, but the Lord asks us to bear a much heavier one on our shoulders and in our heart: He asks us to share His Cross. When Peter explained to the faithful the task of the newly created deacons, he added – and this also applies to us, bishops – "Prayer and ministry of the Word" (Acts 6:4). Prayer comes first. I like to ask every bishop this question: "How many hours a day do you pray?"

Man of proclamation. Successor of the Apostles, the bishop recognizes as his own the mandate that Jesus gave them: "Go and preach the Gospel" (cf. Mk 16:15). "Go": the Gospel is not proclaimed sitting down, but on the move. The bishop does not live in the office, like a company manager, but among the people on the streets of the world, like Jesus. He takes his Lord where He is not known, where He is disfigured and persecuted. And by coming out of himself, he finds himself again. He is not satisfied with *comfort*; he does not like a quiet life and spares no energy; he does not feel like a prince; he does all he can for others, abandoning himself to God's fidelity. If he were to seek worldly assurances and underpinnings, he would not be a true apostle of the Gospel.

And what is the *style* of proclamation? Witnessing with humility to God's love, just as Jesus did, who humbled himself out of love. Proclaiming the Gospel is subject to the temptations of power, gratification, reputation, worldliness. Worldliness. Beware of worldliness. There is always the risk of being more concerned with form than substance, of becoming more actors than witnesses, of watering down the Word of salvation by proposing a Gospel without Jesus Crucified and Risen. But you are called to be *living memories of the Lord*, so as to remind the Church that proclaiming means giving one's life, without half measures, even being prepared to accept the total sacrifice of self.

And third, *man of communion*. The bishop cannot have all the attributes, a *'togetherness of charisms'* – some think they have them, poor fellows! – but he is called to have the *charism of togetherness*, that is, of maintaining unity, of solidifying communion. The Church needs union, not soliloquies apart from the choir or exponents of personal battles. The Pastor gathers: a bishop *for* his faithful, he is a Christian *with* his faithful. He does not make headlines, does not seek worldly consensus, is not interested in protecting his good name; but he loves weaving communion by being involved in the first person and by acting in a humble manner. He does not suffer if he is not the centre of attention, but lives rooted in the territory, rejecting the temptation to distance himself often from the Diocese – the temptation to be 'airport bishops' – and he avoids seeking his own glory.



Mary Padgelek, "I am the Good Shepherd"

He does not tire of listening. He does not ground himself on fabricated projects, but allows himself to be challenged by the voice of the Spirit, who loves to speak through the faith of the simple ones. He becomes wholly one with his people and above all with his presbyterate, always willing to receive and encourage his priests. By example, more than by words, he promotes a sincere priestly fraternity, showing priests that they are Shepherds for the flock, not for reasons of prestige or career, which is terrible. Do not be climbers, please, nor ambitious: tend God's flock "not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:3).

And then, dear brothers, avoid clericalism, "a peculiar way of understanding the Church's authority, one common in many communities where sexual abuse and the abuse of power and conscience have occurred". Clericalism corrodes communion, as it "leads to an excision in the ecclesial body that supports and helps to perpetuate many of the evils that we are condemning today. To say 'no' to abuse" – whether of power, of conscience, any abuse – "is to say an emphatic 'no' to all forms of clericalism" (*Letter to the People of God*, 20 August 2018). Thus do not feel you are lords of the flock – you are not masters of the flock – even if others might act as such or if certain local customs should favour it. May the People of God, *for whom and to whom* you are ordained, feel



Cardinal Joseph Coutts
(left) with Pakistani school children

together, they send sweets, and for Christmas, Christians send cakes or sweets to their Muslim neighbours, so this exchange also takes place in the workplace. It's a natural dialogue I would say. But we also have the excellent Christian Study Centre which last year celebrated its 50th anniversary. It was born as an ecumenical venture with the other mainline Churches of Pakistan so Anglicans, Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians and others, precisely to understand Islam and to dialogue with Muslims. It has a very good library on this subject. There are many different conferences, seminars or study groups where Muslim scholars are also invited.

What is the state of education in the country today?

Rome for the Consistory, representing the government of Pakistan, and he brought me the personal greetings of the Prime Minister also congratulating me and saying 'you have honoured Pakistan' – so this was really a very pleasant and nice surprise for me. The Ambassador to the Holy See also came down from Bern and though Pakistan's Ambassador to the Italian State was not in Rome at the time, he sent his Chargé d'Affaires.

Does interreligious dialogue exist in everyday life or only at a formal level?

I would say at both levels. More important for us, it is in everyday life or what I would say, a 'dialogue of life'. Remember that we are a community of only two to three percent in a very large population of 200 million, of which 95% are Muslims. The other two and a half, three percent are Hindus with a few Buddhists and Sikhs. The Catholic Church and also the Protestant Church have many old schools which are the leading schools in the country really. In some schools there are more Muslim students than Christian students and then the staff, the teachers, they are all mixed. We have many Muslim teachers and Christian teachers all teaching together. So that is a nice example of the way we relate together very easily.

In the largest city, the former capital, Karachi – it is a big port city of 19-20 million – there is lot of industry and in fact, it keeps growing. The Archdiocese has two hospitals but at the moment we have no Catholic doctors or Christian doctors, just one lady doctor who has come voluntarily for two years because both of the hospitals before were run by a group of American sisters, but gradually they did not have enough personnel so they handed the hospitals back to the diocese ... so on this level in everyday life, there is this dialogue. When there is a Muslim festival, and when people are living close

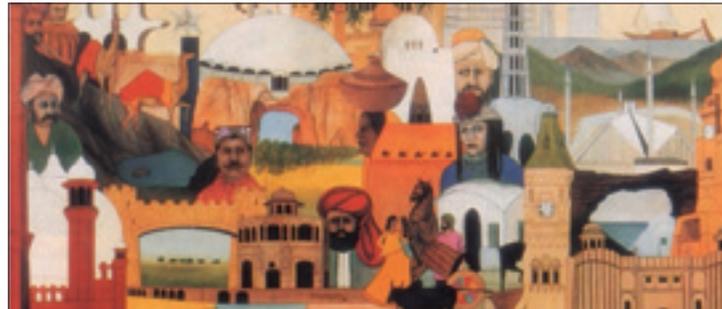
across the country is close to 300. We have seven dioceses and every diocese has many schools, 56 in Karachi alone. Many of these schools are small schools in the poorer areas. We have to find funds to run these schools because the first concern of the poor is to earn something to stay alive so they would rather go to work which leads to the phenomenon of child labour. Sometimes, poor parents feel it is better for their children to work than go to school.

What role do the consecrated play in evangelization and in the life of the Church in Pakistan?

In our Constitution it is written that there is freedom of religion; everybody is free to believe and practice and propagate his religion. But when we had a military dictatorship that lasted 11 years, from 1977 to 1988, the blasphemy law was introduced and, quietly, the word 'propagate' was removed from the Constitution. They ask us, 'why do you want missionaries?', because the idea they have of missionaries is linked to proselytism. And we say we need missionaries for our Christian community, to lead the prayers, to teach catechism.

What does the future hold for Christians in Pakistan?

Since the creation of Pakistan in 1947, our basic struggle has been really a question of identity. Initially the founder, Mohammad Ali Jinnah had a very broad idea of Pakistan as a land for Muslims but also as a modern democracy. And so Pakistan is a democracy and moderate Muslims say 'we have no problem with democracy'. But over the years, there has been increasing pressure from fundamentalist groups and extremist political parties. If the government bans one extremist organiza-



Jimmy Engineer, "Pakistan" (1988)

tion we don't get government help. And though we are allowed to charge fees, we do not want to make a commercial business out of them as do some of these private schools which are costly and mostly for wealthy people. We have to think of the poor people and of our Christians, many of whom are from the lower socio-economic level of Pakistani society. I think the number of Catholic schools

Interview with Cardinal Joseph Coutts

Christians in Pakistan: a flourishing minority

they just change their name and they, very cleverly, work in another form. They want to make Pakistan a theocratic state. But we, as Christians, have to raise our voices; we have to protest in the streets to be heard. We are very fortunate that, although we are a very small minority, we are not an invisible or hidden minority. We are not a silent minority. When we have problems, we are able to protest. I myself have led so many peaceful protests down the street in order to focus the public's attention on our rights. Of course the main problem is not coming from all those Muslims whom we meet every day; it's from these fanatic and extremist groups. What happens at the international level also affects us – such as the war in neighbouring Afghanistan. For us, religion is still very much alive and part of our culture; it's not like in Europe. Daily life is marked by prayer and during the month of Ramadan, all the restaurants are closed during the period of fasting from sunrise to sunset.

And the evolution for the future?

For the future, if a radical vision takes hold, it will become very difficult for us. It was a big blow to us when the Socialist government nationalized all of our schools in 1972. But things changed and we continue serving the country in our Catholic schools and hospitals, working with the handicapped, drug addicts, and together with Caritas Pakistan. Each time there's a disaster – and Pakistan is a country where we have many disasters: floods, earthquakes – we are always on the forefront to help. And in all the work the Church does, it is not only for Catholics or for Christians; it is for everybody and the majority does appreciate that. And together with Caritas, we coordinate closely with the government. We are



Sr Ruth Pfau, who was known as "the Mother Teresa of Pakistan"

not a hidden Church. This can be seen in the wonderful work of Sr Ruth Pfau, the German religious sister of the Congregation of the Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary who, for more than 50 years, had fought for the elimination of leprosy in Pakistan. When she died last year, something truly encouraging and wonderful happened: she received a State funeral. It was the first time in Pakistan that a non-Muslim received a State funeral. She was held in such high regard by everybody. The Prime Minister, the Governor of Pakistan, the three chiefs of the Army, Navy, Air Force, were all present at the graveyard. So this really came as a surprise and it really made us very proud, very happy. And the work of Sr Ruth carries on in her hospital, the Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre, and while not quite eradicated, leprosy is under control in Pakistan.

What is the best response to terrorist attacks that sometimes affect Christians? And what can the international community do to curb the phenomenon of violence and aggression?

The terrorist attacks are a big problem because they are harming not only the very few Christians in Pakistan but Muslims themselves. These extremist groups want to transform Pakistan into a theocratic state. Pakistan has long been signatory of the International Declaration of Human Rights. But the terrorists brand democracy as a Western idea and they consider it as opposed to a purely Islamic system. They have a black and white vision of the world: if you are not with them, then you are against them. In December 2014 for example, they attacked a boys' school in Peshawar and massacred nearly 150 little boys, many of them sons of Army officers. It was an act of revenge because the Pakistani Army had launched a massive operation against them. Suicide attacks are a completely new phenomenon in Pakistan. Suicide is prohibited in Islam, just as it is in Christianity. Life is God's gift, but these extremists have another interpretation.

How have the public institutions responded?

The government gives us protection for all our churches, in fact the police officers of every area keep reminding us that if you are having a big gathering in the church, please inform us because that becomes what is called a 'soft target' for the terrorists. Don't forget that on 22 September 2012, two suicide bombers blew themselves up in a church in Peshawar, killing 127 people and injuring 250 others. It was the worst attack on Christians since Pakistan gained independence. And last year there were two attacks, but thank God, security was good; they did not get into the church. But the policeman who was a Muslim guarding the church, was killed as well as a few people who were passing by.

Therefore this sort of terrorism represents a danger to Muslims too?

Yes this is true. And it's making things more difficult for the govern-

ment as well. Now everywhere we have to keep thinking about security, which we never thought about before. It all started with the war in Afghanistan in 2001 which had a profound impact on the social and religious spheres in the region. According to the United Nations, there are 3 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. And the fighting is still going on – many don't want to go back – and so it's a complex situation. Also because of this, intolerance towards Christians has increased. Although the majority of Muslims think differently and are not causing problems. In fact, our hope lies in such people. We have a very good human rights commission in Pakistan. It is an independent body; the government also has a commission for justice and peace and we can work with them very easily. We also work with other human rights groups and many NGOs. We just can't sit down and be quiet; we have to widen our circle of work – talking about dialogue, reaching out to our Muslim brothers and sisters – and I see that in recent years, we Christians, and the whole Church in Pakistan are coming out of ourselves more as Pope Francis has exhorted us. In many places during the month of Ramadan, for the breaking of the fast at sunset, many Christian groups have been inviting Muslim friends to come. This is something very good, because to invite someone to come, to break the fast and to put food before the person is considered a very noble thing; it is a blessing. So I see that small things like this are also increasing. But I think we also do more. For example, every year Pope Francis, through the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, sends a Message to Muslims for Ramadan. I always wait to receive this because I put in a greeting card and I send it to all my Muslim friends and also to officials and I have received very positive responses. I must also add that Pope Francis is held in high regard by the Muslim community.

NICOLA GORI

Christians are a tiny minority in Pakistan, a country that is almost entirely Muslim. Life is not always easy for them, particularly because of the gradual spread of religious fundamentalism and radicalism. "Although we are a very small minority, we are not an invisible minority", explains Cardinal Joseph Coutts, Archbishop of Karachi. The Archbishop, who was created Cardinal in the 28 June Consistory, reiterates his belief that it is necessary to focus on the everyday "dialogue of life", which may also be accomplished through the Church's respected efforts in the fields of education and healthcare.

What does your creation as Cardinal mean for Pakistan?

Pakistan is a big country with a big population and about 50 percent of the population are not literate so many do not even know what a cardinal is. But I was so pleasantly surprised that as soon as the news reached us, many government officials ... came to greet me. They understood what it meant because we did have a cardinal before [Pakistan's first Cardinal was Archbishop of Karachi, Joseph Marie Anthony Cordero who died 24 years ago, in 1994]. He was an educationist who directed a number of Catholic schools so he had a number of ex-students whom he had taught, and they all remember him as a very good teacher.

How was your appointment seen by Muslims who form the majority of the population?

Many Muslims came to greet me and I was especially pleased to hear them say 'congratulations to you, Bishop, it is an honour for you but also an honour for Pakistan'. In fact, these were the words of the Minister for Religious Affairs who came to

Listening to victims and survivors

Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors concludes its ninth Plenary Assembly

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors has concluded the work of its ninth Plenary Assembly, which was held in Rome from 7-9 September. The following is the English text of its final communiqué.

The Holy Father has emphasized the primary importance of listening to victims/survivors and having their life stories guide the response of the Church in protecting minors from sexual abuse. Members began by listening to two testimonies of people who were affected by clerical child sexual abuse, a victim/survivor and the mother of two adult survivors who were abused as children. The Commission thanks them for sharing their stories with us, for the courage of their witness and for contributing to the learning process.

Members also reflected on the recent developments in the global church that have negatively affected so many people including victims/survivors, families and the community of faithful. The questions that have been raised in recent months not only focus the public on the seriousness of abuse, they are an opportunity to call people to the mission of prevention so that the future will be different from our history. The Commission's starting point is not to investigate abuses; our starting point is to prevent abuses.

Working with Survivors

During the Plenary Assembly the group of experts dedicated to *Working with Survivors* announced the launch of pilot projects, the first of which is in Brazil. Building on the work of founding members, these projects are a mechanism to create



safe spaces and transparent processes by which people who have been abused can come forward. Through these survivor advisory panels it is hoped the local church leadership will also benefit from the direct input of victims/survivors into how they can improve their child protection and safeguarding policies.

Local Responsibility

Since meeting in April, Commission members have taken part in over 100 safeguarding workshops.

The group that oversees *Education and Formation* outlined a series of future initiatives in formation seminars and conferences that are an essential part of promoting awareness of and responsibility for protection policies at a local level.

In April 2019, the Commission will sponsor a Safeguarding Conference for Church leaders in Central/Eastern Europe. Also in April 2019, together with the Brazilian Bishops Conference the Commission will offer a week of safeguarding formation for bishops and formators, in Aparecida, Brazil. In November 2019 Members have been invited to address a meeting of CELAM in Mexico. In 2020, the Commission will co-sponsor a Congress on Protection of Minors for operators in the church and civil society in the Americas in Bogotá, Colombia.

The working group *Safeguarding Guidelines and Norms* shared its progress on developing an auditing instrument to offer to local Bishops

Conferences to aid in the oversight of their safeguarding policies and procedures.

Working with the Holy See

Collaboration with the entities of the Holy See and Roman Curia is also an integral part of the Commission's mandate to aid the Holy Father. During the Plenary, some members had the opportunity to address the two courses for bishops newly ordained in the past year, one organized by the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and another by the Congregation for Bishops.

The Commission presentation was well attended and warmly received and members are grateful to the Prefects of these Congregations, Cardinal Filoni and Cardinal Ouellet and their collaborators for those meetings and the consistent attention to this important aspect of our safeguarding mission.

Over the course of the coming week the Commission will also have working meetings with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and with the Italian Bishops Conference CEI, to further collaborative efforts in the field of child protection.

Marking the 30th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

November 20, 2019 marks the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child which is ratified by 196 State Parties including the Holy See. The Commission will proactively work with various stakeholders to seize this opportunity to raise awareness on the protection of children.

Integral human development in a multilateral context

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

in which these fundamental values are to find their expression in the context of a complex society. It is precisely on this point, in fact, that respect for freedom of religion can be of great help, through the search for reasonable compromises and the recognition of necessary spaces for conscientious objection. These are elements that, far from breaking social cohesion, can promote it, expressing the acceptance of the difficulties of living together, respect for the other and the plurality of points of view, as well as a recognition of the need to walk together in the common search for that which protects the universal dignity of the human person.

Finally, the third challenge concerns the instability of the international order, with widespread and serious violations that continue to be registered in many countries. This is a grave challenge that often leads to doubts about the effectiveness of the human rights-based approach to the well-being of humanity and the building of peace in the world. There are, of course, no easy answers to this challenge, but it seems to me that a path might be opened by considering what is referred to in Article 1 of the Declaration: after having affirmed that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" it adds: "they are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood". This is an essential, and perhaps too often forgotten, point: the whole framework

of human rights presupposes as a condition *sine qua non* the recognition, in a spirit of fraternity, that my rights and the rights of the other are interconnected and interdependent. Hence, if the dignity and rights of others are disregarded or trampled underfoot, then even my dignity and rights are in jeopardy.

An integral approach to the question of peace, which includes support for the development of the poorest nations, also implies responsibility for environmental protection, which is an essential part of the promotion and protection of human

rights. This teaching is also clearly expressed by Pope Francis in his Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, where he constantly stresses that "everything is interconnected": respect for our own lives and for the lives of others; a fair economy and the enjoyment of rights; the health of democratic institutions and that of the protection of creation; caring for the environment, promoting justice and safeguarding peace. "Everything is interconnected": this could be another way of expressing the universality of human rights.



To the International Union of Benedictines

Sisters in the faith and in the Body of Christ

In the Consistory Hall on Saturday morning, 8 September, Pope Francis received in audience participants in the Symposium of the International Union of Benedictines. He thanked them in particular for their "special care" of the environment and their "efforts to protect the gifts of the earth", and acknowledged the incalculable value of their prayers "for those who endure injustice, wars and violence, and see their dignity violated". The following is the English text of the Holy Father's discourse.

Dear Father Abbot Primate,
Sister Judith Ann
and Benedictine Nuns and Sisters,

Welcome to Rome! I thank the Father Primate for his words of introduction: I have told him that his Italian has improved! Your Symposium is a good occasion for Benedictine nuns and sisters from all over the world to experience together a period of prayer to reflect on the various ways in which the spirit of Saint Benedict, after fifteen hundred years, continues to be vibrant and fruitful today. I am spiritually close to you during these days of your meeting.

For your theme, you have taken an exhortation from the fifty-third chapter of the *Rule of Saint Benedict*: "All are to be welcomed as Christ". This expression has given the Benedictine Order a remarkable vocation to hospitality, in obedience to those words of the Lord Jesus which are an integral part of his "rule of conduct" found in Saint Matthew's Gospel: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (25:35; cf. *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 192-103). Today there are many people in the world who seek to reflect in their lives the tenderness, compassion, mercy and acceptance of Christ in their lives. To them you offer the precious gift of your witness, as you are instruments of God's tenderness to those who are in need. Your welcoming of persons of different religious traditions helps to advance with spiritual anointing ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue. For centuries, Benedictine houses have been known as places of welcome, prayer and generous hospitality. I hope that by reflecting on this theme and sharing your experiences, you may find new ways of furthering this essential work of evangelization in your various monasteries.

The motto *Ora et Labora* places prayer at the centre of your lives. The daily celebration of Holy Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours puts you at the heart of the Church's life.

Every day, your prayer enriches, in a manner of speaking, the "breathing" of the Church. It is a prayer of praise to express the voice of all humanity and all creation. It is a prayer of thanksgiving for the countless and continued blessings of the Lord. It is a prayer of supplication for the sufferings and anxieties of



the men and women of our time, especially the poor. It is a prayer of intercession for those who endure injustice, wars and violence, and see their dignity violated. You do not meet these people personally, but you are their sisters in the Faith and in the Body of Christ. The value of your prayer is incalculable, yet surely it is a most precious gift. God always hears the prayers of hearts that are humble and full of compassion.

I want to thank you for the special care you show towards the environment and for your efforts to protect the gifts of the earth, so that they can be shared by all. I know that the Benedictine nuns and sisters in the world are good administrators of God's gifts. As women, you feel and appreciate especially the beauty and harmony of creation. Your monasteries are often found in places of great beauty where people go to pray, to find silence and to contemplate the marvels of creation. I encourage you to continue this style and service, so that God's wonderful works can be admired and speak of him to many persons.

Your life in community bears witness to the importance of mutual love and respect. You come from different places and experiences, and each of you is different, and so the way you accept one another is the first sign you offer in a world that finds it hard to live out this value. We are all children of God and your prayer, your work, your hospitality, your generosity, all combine to reveal a communion in diversity that expresses God's hope for our world: a unity made of peace, mutual welcome and fraternal love.

Dear Sisters, I accompany you with my prayers. You bring a precious gift to the life of the Church through your feminine witness of goodness, faith and generosity, imitating the Holy Mother of the Church, the Virgin Mary. You are icons of the Church and of our Blessed Mother: do not forget this. Icons. Who sees you, sees the Church as Mother and Mary as Mother of Christ. For this we praise the Lord and we thank you. I ask you please to pray for me and I cordially bless you and your communities, and all whom you serve in the name of Christ. Thank you!

Men of prayer, proclamation and communion

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

you are fathers, not masters; caring fathers: no one has to manifest an air of submission to you. At this historic time, in various places, certain tendencies of "leaderism" seem to have arisen.

Showing you are strong men, who maintain a distance and command over others, might seem convenient and captivating, but it is not evangelical. It causes often irreparable harm to the flock, for whom Christ lovingly gave His life, humbling himself and annihilating himself. Thus may you be men poor in goods and rich in relationships, never harsh and ill tempered, but affable, patient, simple and open.

I would also like to ask you to keep a few institutions at heart, in particular:

Families. Although penalized by a culture that transmits the logic of the provisional and favours individual rights, they remain the first cells of every society and the first Churches, because they are domestic Churches. May you promote courses of marriage preparation and of accompaniment for families: they will be seeds that will bear fruit in time. Defend the life of the unborn just as that of the elderly; support parents and grandparents in their mission.

Seminaries. They are tomorrow's seedbeds. May you be at home there. Be careful to ensure that they are led by men of God, by capable and mature educators who, with the help of the best human sciences, guarantee the formation of healthy, open, authentic, sincere, humane individuals. Give priority to vocational discernment to help young people

recognize God's voice among the many that echo in their ears and their hearts.

Then, *young people*, to whom the upcoming Synod will be dedicated. Let us listen; let us allow ourselves to be challenged by them; let us embrace their wishes, doubts, criticisms and crises. They are the future of the Church; they are the future of society: a better world depends on them. Even when they seem infected by the viruses of consumerism and hedonism, let us never put them in quarantine; let us seek them, hear their heart which begs for life and implores freedom. Let us offer them the Gospel, with courage.

The poor. To love them means to fight all forms of poverty, spiritual and material. Dedicate time and energy to the least without fear of getting your hands dirty. As apostles of

charity may you go out to the human and existential peripheries of your Dioceses.

Lastly, dear Brothers, please be wary of the lukewarmness that leads to mediocrity and indolence, that 'midlife crisis'. Be wary of that. Be wary of the tranquility that steers clear of sacrifice; of the pastoral haste that leads to intolerance; the abundance of goods that disfigures the Gospel. Do not forget that the devil enters through the pocket! I wish you instead holy restlessness for the Gospel, the only restlessness that gives peace. I thank you for listening and I bless you, in the joy of having you as the dearest of brothers. And I ask you, please, do not forget to pray and to have prayers said for me.

Thank you.

For the integral development of Africa

Prefect of the Dicastery for Communication encourages collaboration among Catholic media



The accompanying text is an excerpt of the Message of the Prefect of the Dicastery for Communication to the Union of the Catholic African Press (UCAP) at a conference held in South Africa from 9-13 September.

PAOLO RUFFINI

For so many years, “development” was reduced to “economic growth”. Fortunately, the notion now encompasses all dimensions of the human person in a holistic and more complex perception which includes anthropological, historical, cultural, economic, political, ecological, religious and spiritual features (cf. Encyclical letter *Populorum Progressio* 1967). Many scholars have pointed out how the conventional idea of development as eco-

nomonic growth is obsolete, after witnessing the failed attempt to impose a development ideology on poor countries.

Public opinion is ever more aware of the need to face up to the fact that economic growth does not create jobs, nor does it decrease inequality. It only increases human and environmental problems. Pope Francis has underlined how “a technological and economic development which does not leave in its wake a better world and an integrally higher quality of life cannot be considered progress” (Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 194).

The Message to the People of God, issued at the conclusion of the Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops, makes an appeal to join spiritual

forces and recalls what Pope Benedict XVI said during his homily at the inaugural Mass of this Synod: that Africa is the “spiritual lung” of humanity today. (...) But he also warned that: “this lung runs the risk of getting infected by the double virus of materialism and religious fanaticism.”

The “probo koala” scandal in the Ivory Coast in 2006 revealed the illicit trade of toxic waste in Africa. Africa, the Cradle of Humanity, is being used as a dumping ground for the toxic waste of the industrialized world, despite the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, issued by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The African Continent is clearly struggling with determination to preserve its spiritual patrimony against various attacks and contamination. That’s why I would like to recall the insufficiently publicized “Common Declaration of the Bishops of Africa and Madagascar”, regarding the current developments on the African Continent, in view of the September 25-27 New York Summit for the adoption of a “post-2015 global development agenda”.

Finally, I encourage collaboration with SIGNIS, the World Catholic Association for Communication, CAMECO, the Catholic Media Council and the Pan-African Episcopal Committee of Social Communications (CEPACS). I’m delighted to note the new cooperation with the support of the Federation of Catholic Media (*Fédération des Médias Catholiques*). My sincere hope is that the Catholic News

Agency for Africa CANAA, may be strengthened, taking advantage of the SECAM Golden Jubilee (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar). We can never insist enough on the need for collaboration among Catholic communication practitioners and media establishments, in terms of finding alternative means of giving voice to the voiceless, exposing corruption, and denouncing the structures of evil.

May the Jubilee be an opportunity to establish UCAP in all 37 Episcopal Conferences at national and regional level, so that African Catholic journalists can come together as a team. Individually, they need to be ambassadors of hope, helping communicate a positive image of Africa!

May UCAP continue connecting, with national and international organizations, to promote capacity building for all African Catholic journalists.

May this Conference encourage and challenge you on the basis of your traditions and culture, as well as your age-old African wisdom, to face and deal with the structural imbalances that create and maintain impoverishment on this beautiful continent, not only at a material level but anthropologically and spiritually especially!

May your program based on Catholic Social Teaching (CST), with the roadmap of “*Africae munus*”, help address the challenges of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace, and so enlighten the signs of the times with the Gospel and restore dignity to all African children, giving high priority to the youth.

Pope’s prayer intention for September Education and work for African youth

A young man and a young woman in the shadows of a bazaar on the outskirts of an African city are hurriedly packing some documents into a bag. They then run toward the university to hand in the results of their study project to their professor of architecture. They arrive with a minute to spare and their hard work is rewarded: the professor smiles and indicates they’ve passed the exam!

This is the short video entrusted to the Worldwide Prayer Network (www.thepopevideo.org) communicating Pope Francis’ prayer intention for September: “Let us pray that young people in Africa may have access to education and work in their own countries”.

This month, the Pontiff’s gaze shifts to Africa where his appeal for prayer is especially significant given a recent UNESCO report estimating that nearly 60% of African youth aged 15-17 did not attend school in 2017.

In a global context in which we witness the tragedy of those who are forced – due to war, violence and poverty – to flee their own countries in search of a better future, the Pope invites Africans to focus on working toward long term sustainable development in the areas of education and labour. “Africa is a wealthy continent, and its greatest, most valuable resource is its young people”, Pope Francis says, and young people “should be able to choose between letting themselves be overcome by difficulty or transforming the difficulty into an opportunity”. According to the Holy Father, the



“most effective way to help them in this choice is to invest in their education” because “if young people don’t have the possibility of education, what future can they have?”.

Translated into nine languages, the prayer intention video was created for the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network by La Machi agency which handled the production and distribution, in collaboration with Vatican Media which recorded it.

VATICAN BULLETIN

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Canapium, Vicar Apostolic of Puerto Ayacucho, with Vicar Apostolic emeritus Bishop José Ángel Divassón Cilveti, SDB, titular Bishop of Bamaccora

– Bishop Ernesto José Romero Rivas, OFM Cap., titular Bishop of Novasparsa, Vicar Apostolic of Tucupita

APOSTOLIC NUNCIO

The Holy Father has appointed as Apostolic Nuncio in Belize, Archbishop Fortunatus Nwachukwu, titular Archbishop of Acquaviva, Apostolic Nuncio in Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica, Grenada, Cooperative Republic of Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Santa Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname, and Apostolic Delegate in the Antilles (8 Sept.).

Holy Father to representatives of the Italian Parents' Association

Trust and cooperation between school and family

"The educational pact" between schools and families must be restored, so as to recreate a relationship of reciprocal trust and cooperation between them. Pope Francis made this observation in his remarks to representatives of the Italian Parents' Association (AGE) whom he received in audience on Friday morning, 7 September, in the Paul VI Hall. The following is a translation of the Pontiff's address, which he delivered in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

I am pleased to welcome all of you, representatives of AGE, the *Associazione Italiana Genitori*, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. A great accomplishment! It is an important occasion to confirm the motivation of your commitment in favour of the family and of education: a commitment you fulfil according to principles of Christian ethics, so that the family may be increasingly appreciated and a protagonist in social life.

Much of your energy is dedicated to accompanying and supporting parents in their educational task, especially with regard to school, which has always been the primary partner of families in educating their children. What you do in this field is truly commendable. Today, in fact, when the educational alliance between school and family is addressed, it is spoken of, in particular, to voice complaints: the educational pact is in decline. The family no longer appreciates, as it once did, the work of the often underpaid teachers, and they regard the presence of parents in their schools as an annoying invasion, and end up keeping them at the margins or considering them adversaries.

To improve this situation someone must take the first step, overcoming fear of the other and extending a hand with generosity. For this reason I invite you to always foster and cultivate trust with regard to school and teachers: without them you run the risk of conducting your educational task alone and of being less and less able to face the new educational challenges that come from contemporary culture, from society, from the mass media, from new forms of technology. Like you, teachers are committed each day in educational service to your children. If it is fair to complain of the potential limitations of their work, it is fitting that they be appreciated as your most valuable allies in the educational undertaking which you carry out together. Allow me to tell you an anecdote. I was 10 years old, and I said something bad to the teacher. The teacher called my mother. The next day my mother came, and the teacher went to welcome her; they spoke, then my mother called me and, in front of the teacher, she scolded me and said: "Apologize to the teacher". I did. "Kiss the teacher", my mother told me, and I did. And then I went back to the classroom happy, and the episode was over. No, it was not over. The second chapter was when I went home... This is called "cooperation" in edu-

cating a child: between the family and the teachers.

Your responsible and helpful presence, a sign of love not only for your children but toward that universal resource that is the school, will help overcome many divisions and misunderstandings in this sphere, and ensure that families be appreciated for their primary role in the upbringing and education of children and young people. Indeed, as you parents need teachers, the school also needs you and cannot meet its objectives without establishing a constructive dialogue with those who have the primary responsibility for the advancement of its students. As the Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* recalls, "schools do not replace parents, but complement them. This is a basic principle: 'all other participants in the process of education are only able to carry out their responsibilities in the name of the parents, with their consent and, to a certain degree, with their authorization'" (n. 84).

Your experience as an association has surely taught you to rely on mutual cooperation. Let us recall the wise African proverb: "It takes a village to raise a child". Therefore, in scholastic education there must never be a lack of cooperation among the various members of the educational community itself. Community is not built without regular communication and without mutual trust; and without community, one cannot educate.

Helping to eliminate the educational isolation of families is also the task of the Church. Thus, I invite



you to feel that she is always beside you in the mission of educating your children and of making the whole of society a fitting place for families, so that each person may be welcomed, accompanied, oriented toward true values and empowered to give the best of him or herself for mutual advancement. Therefore you have a twofold strength: that which you derive from being an association, that is, people who join together not *against* someone but *for* the good of all, and the strength you receive from your bond with the Christian community, in which you find inspiration, confidence, support.

Dear parents, children are the most precious gift you have received. May you be able to safeguard it with commitment and generosity; allow the children the necessary freedom to develop and mature

as people capable, in their turn, of one day opening themselves to the gift of life. As an association, may the attention you pay to the dangers that threaten the life of the littlest ones not prevent you from looking with confidence at the world, knowing how to choose and indicate to your children the best opportunities for human, civil and Christian growth. Teach your children moral discernment, ethical discernment: what is good, what is not so good, and what is bad. So that they may know how to distinguish. But this is learned both at home and at school: together, jointly.

I thank you for this meeting and I wholeheartedly bless you, your families and the whole Association. I assure you of my remembrance in prayer. And you too, please, do not forget to pray for me. Thank you!

Free of slavery

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

arrogant egocentricity; that ego I was talking about digs a trench between itself and others.

Dear brothers and sisters, who then is the real slave? Who is the one who knows no rest? Those who are not capable of love! And all these vices, these sins, this egoism distance us from love and they make us unable to love. We are our own slaves and we cannot love because love is always outgoing.

The third Commandment which invites us to celebrate freedom with rest is, for us Christians, a prophecy of the Lord Jesus who breaks the interior slavery of sin, in order to make mankind capable of loving. True love is true freedom: it detaches us from possession, rebuilds relationships, knows how to welcome and value others, transforms all toil into a joyful gift and makes us capable of communion. Love makes people free even in prison, even if one is weak and limited.

This is the freedom that we receive from our Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ.³

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, especially those from England, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Nigeria, Australia, Malaysia, Canada and the United States of America. In particular I greet the International Young Catholic Students meeting in Rome in preparation for the forthcoming Synod on Young People. I also greet the journalists and teachers taking part in a seminar organized by the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross.

I welcome too the members of the Green Affordable Housing Project from the United States. Upon all of you, and your families, I invoke the Lord's blessings of joy and peace. God bless you!

I offer a special thought to *young people, the elderly, the sick and newlyweds*. To *newlyweds* I say that they are brave because these days it takes courage to get married. And they are good for doing this. Today is the Feast of the Most Holy Name of Mary. All we Christians are called to understand in the name of Mary, the grand project that God had for this sublime creature and, at the same time, the answer of love which, as Mother, she gave to her Son Jesus by contributing to his work of salvation, sparing no effort.

¹ Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1733: "The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to 'the slavery of sin'".

² Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1739: "Freedom and sin. Man's freedom is limited and fallible. In fact, man failed. He freely sinned. By refusing God's plan of love, he deceived himself and became a slave to sin. This first alienation engendered a multitude of others. From its outset, human history attests the wretchedness and oppression born of the human heart in consequence of the abuse of freedom".

³ Cf. *Ibid*, 1741: "By his glorious Cross Christ has won salvation for all men. He redeemed them from the sin that held them in bondage. 'For freedom Christ has set us free' (Gal 5:1): In him we have communion with the 'truth that makes us free.' The Holy Spirit has been given to us and, as the Apostle teaches, 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom' (2 Cor 3:17). Already we glory in the 'liberty of the children of God'".

The Pontiff's reflection before the Angelus prayer

Good is to be done without ostentation

"Good is to be done without clamour, without ostentation, without 'blowing one's trumpet'. It should be done quietly". This was Pope Francis' reminder to the faithful who had gathered for the Angelus in Saint Peter's Square on Sunday, 9 September. He commented on the day's Gospel passage from Mark, which recounts the healing of the deaf and dumb man. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's reflection, which he gave in Italian.

With this attitude, He teaches us that *good is to be done without clamour*, without ostentation, without "blowing one's trumpet". It should be done quietly.

When they had drawn aside, Jesus put his fingers in the deaf man's ears and touched his tongue with saliva. This gesture refers to the Incarnation. The Son of God is a man inserted into human reality: he became man; therefore he can understand another man's distressing condition and intervene with a gesture which concerned his own humanity. At the same time, Jesus wanted to make it understood that the miracle occurred because of his union with the Father: for this reason, he looked up to heaven. He then sighed and said the decisive word: "*Ephphatha*", which means "Be opened". And immediately the man was healed: his ears were opened, his tongue was released. For him the healing was an "opening" to others and to the world.

This Gospel narrative emphasizes the need for a *twofold healing*. First and foremost the healing from illness and from physical suffering, in order to restore bodily health; even though this aim is not completely achievable on the earthly plane, despite the many efforts of science and medicine. But there is a second,

perhaps more difficult healing, and it is healing from fear. Healing from the fear that impels us to marginalize the sick, to marginalize the suffering, the disabled. And there are many ways to marginalize, even by showing pseudo compassion or by ignoring the problem; we remain deaf and dumb to the suffering of people marked by illness, anguish and difficulty. Too often the sick and the suffering become a problem, while they should be an occasion to show a society's concern and solidarity with regard to the weakest.

Jesus revealed to us the secret of a miracle that we too can imitate, becoming protagon-

ists of "*Ephphatha*", of that phrase 'be opened' with which He gave speech and hearing back to the deaf and dumb man. It means opening ourselves to the needs of our brothers and sisters who are suffering and in need of help, by shunning selfishness and hardheartedness. It is precisely the heart, that is the deep core of the person, that Jesus came to "open", to free, in order to make us capable of fully living the relationship with God and with others. He became man so that man, rendered internally deaf and mute by sin, may hear the voice of God, the voice of Love that speaks to his heart, and thereby in turn, may learn to speak the language of love, transforming it into gestures of generosity and self-giving.

May Mary, the One who completely "opened" herself to the Lord's love, enable us to experience each day, in faith, the miracle of "*Ephphatha*", in order to live in communion with God and with our brothers and sisters.

After the Angelus, the Holy Father added:

Dear brothers and sisters, yesterday in Loreto, at the Pontifical Shrine of the Holy House, the Feast of the Nativity of Mary was celebrated, and the proposal of spirituality for families was launched: the House of Mary, House of every family. Let us entrust to the Blessed Virgin the initiatives of the Shrine and those who will participate in them in various ways.

Today in Strasbourg, the Beatification of Alphonse Marie Eppinger, Foundress of the Sisters of the Most Holy Saviour is being proclaimed. Let us thank God for this courageous and wise woman who, through suffering, silence and prayer, witnessed to God's love especially to those who were sick in body and in spirit. A round of applause for the new Blessed, all together!

I greet you all with affection, people of Rome and pilgrims from different countries: families, parish groups, associations.

I greet the faithful from the Diocese of Como, the young participants in the meeting promoted by *L'Opera della Chiesa*, the confirmands from Prevalle, Italy.

I wish you all a happy Sunday. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci!*



Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

This Sunday's Gospel passage (cf. Mk 7:31-37) refers to the episode of the miraculous healing by Jesus of a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment. They brought to him a deaf and dumb man, beseeching Him to lay a hand upon him. Instead, He performed two different gestures upon him: first of all He took the man aside, far from the crowd. On this occasion, as on others, Jesus always acts with discretion. He does not want to impress people; He is not seeking popularity or success, but wishes only to do good to people.

Explaining the plight of refugees to children

It has become ever more clear that society is duty-bound to raise awareness among children and young people of the tragic situation of migrants and refugees, many of whom are their peers and are less fortunate than they are. This duty has become a mission to several writers who have recently compiled enlightening stories for little children – complete with illustrations and accompanying explanations – focusing on the ordeal of people who have been compelled to leave their homes and most precious possessions in search of a new life in some faraway place, confronting untold dangers in the process. In its 'Children's Books' section on 31 August, "The New York Times" presented a few of these narratives that have the common objective of explaining, through exemplary stories and in simple language, the



Illustration by Julie Morstad in Camille Andros' "The Dress and the Girl", one of the children's books reviewed in the New York Times

situation of migrants and refugees, shedding light on the cruelty of those who exploit these persons and on the generous hearts of those who, on the contrary, do all they can to relieve the desperation of the victims.

In *The Day War Came*, Nicola Davies describes little Rebecca's journey from serenity to unhappiness after war, in an instant losing everything she held dear; while in *Mawaan's Journey*, Patricia de Arias retraces the odyssey of a boy in

flight from his beloved, war-torn homeland to seek refuge in safer lands. The boy will have to cross a desert and overcome its perils: in this undertaking however, he is sustained by his determination to one day return home, where "the night never never never goes so dark again". Several families, rather than individuals, are the main characters in Lisa Lucas' *Spectacularly Beautiful*. They form a long caravan as they flee their precarious situation to find a safe port in the face of countless difficulties.

Such narratives have no historical setting or precise geographical location. Against this backdrop, the authors in fact communicate the nature and truth of a universal tragedy which touches everyone, transcending ethnic and social distinctions. (Gabriele Nicolò)