

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

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Friday, 18 January 2019

Pope offers his condolences following attack in Nairobi

“Deeply saddened to learn of the loss of life and injury following the attack in a hotel complex in Nairobi, His Holiness Pope Francis assures all those affected by this senseless act of violence of his spiritual closeness”. These words begin the telegram, signed by Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, by which the Holy Father expresses his “heartfelt condolences to all Kenyans, in particular the families of the deceased and all those injured” during the armed incursion carried out by Somali militants on Tuesday, 15 January. “Praying for God’s healing grace”, the telegram continues, “His Holiness willingly invokes upon the entire nation the divine blessings of consolation and strength”.

Local police have identified Al Shabaab as responsible for the attack which claimed the lives of 21 victims in addition to five members of the terrorist group, who were killed by security forces after hours of fighting.

Pontifical Academy for Life

Christianity’s new frontier

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Baptism of the Lord Francis’ advice to parents



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At the General Audience an appeal for the ecumenical week of prayer

Christians united in support of the weakest



In view of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which is observed throughout the world from 18-25 January, Pope Francis called on all Christians to work together “in the affirmation of true justice and in support of the weakest”, by offering “concrete, appropriate and effective responses” in order to achieve a “common and universal witness”. The Pontiff launched this appeal at the General Audience on Wednesday, 16 January, as he looked forward to Friday’s celebration of Vespers in the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside-the-Walls.

The celebration offers the traditional opening of the Week of Prayer, which this year focuses on the theme “Justice and only justice you shall pursue” (Deut 16:18-20). “We are called to pray”, the Holy Father stressed, that “all Christians may return to being one family, consistent with the divine will that ‘they may all be one’ (Jn 17:21)”, because ecumenism, he observed, “is not an optional thing”.

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VATICAN BULLETIN



AUDIENCES

Thursday, 10 January

Hon. Nicola Zingaretti, President of the Lazio Region, Italy

Hon. Virginia Raggi, Mayor of Rome, Italy

Cardinal Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, SJ, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

Archbishop Savio Hon Tai-Fai, SDB, titular Archbishop of Sila, Apostolic Nuncio in Greece

Ms Anna Maria Tarantola, President of the *Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice* Foundation

Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, Vice Dean of the College of Cardinals

Saturday, 12 January

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

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

Br Enzo Bianchi, Founder of the Bose Community

Members of the National Council of *Pax Christi Italia*

Monday, 14 January

Archbishop Bernardo C. Auza, titular Archbishop of Suacia, Perma-

ent Observer to the United Nations in New York and to the Organization of American States

Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, titular Archbishop of Corbavia, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations Office and Specialized Agencies in Geneva, and to the World Trade Organization; Holy See Representative to the International Organization for Migration

Bishop Santiago Jaime Silva Retamales, Military Ordinary for Chile, President of the Episcopal Conference of Chile with Archbishop René Osvaldo Rebolledo Salinas of La Serena, Chile, Vice President; Cardinal Ricardo Ezzati Andreollo, SDB, Archbishop of Santiago de Chile; Bishop Juan Ignacio González Erázuriz of San Bernardo, Chile; Bishop Luis Fernando Ramos Pérez, titular Bishop of Teci, Apostolic Administrator *sede vacante ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* of Rancagua, Secretary General

Senator Maria Elisabetta Alberti Casellati, President of the Italian Senate with her husband

H.E. Mr Mehmet Paçacı, Ambassador of Turkey on a farewell visit

Bishop Stefano Russo of Fabriano-Matelica, Secretary General of the Italian Episcopal Conference

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Jorge Ignacio García Cuerva as Bishop of Río Gallegos, Argentina. Until now he has served as titular Bishop of Lacubaza and Auxiliary of Lomas de Zamora, Argentina (3 Jan.).

Bishop García Cuerva, 50, was born in Río Gallegos. He was ordained a priest on 24 October 1997. He was ordained a bishop on 20 November 2017, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Lacubaza and Auxiliary of Lomas de Zamora.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Aleixo Das Neves Dias, SFX, of Port Blair, India (6 Jan.).

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of San Jose de Antique, the Philippines, Fr Marvyn A. Maceda from the clergy of the Diocese of Naval. Until now he has served as director of the Commission for the Clergy in the same diocese (7 Jan.).

Bishop-elect Maceda, 49, was born in Bilaran, the Philippines. He was ordained a priest on 29 May 1996. He studied theology at San Jose Seminary, Quezon City. He has served in parish ministry and as: diocesan director for youth; diocesan treasurer; diocesan chancellor; diocesan director of Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC); moderator of the group of ordained ministers at Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception parish, Leyte; pastoral director of the diocesan BEC; member of the presbyteral council and of the council of consultors; vicar general of the Diocese of Naval.

The Holy Father appointed as Auxiliary Bishop of Metz, France Fr Jean-Pierre Vuillemin, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Théroutanne. Until now he has served as Dean of Epinal. (8 Jan.).

Bishop-elect Vuillemin, 51, was born in Rambervillers, France. He was ordained a priest on 11 June 1994. He holds a doctorate in canon and civil law (*utroque iure*). He has served in parish ministry and as: official at the Interdiocesan Tribunal of Saint-Dié, Nancy, Verdun and Dijon; judicial vicar at the Interdiocesan Tribunal of Besançon.

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of União da Vitória, Brazil, Fr Walter Jorge Pinto from the clergy of the Archdiocese of Mariana. Until now he has served as parish priest

of São José Operário in Barbacena-MG, Brazil, and member of the Presbyteral Council (9 Jan.).

Bishop-elect Pinto, 55, was born in Ubá, Brazil. He holds a licence in phytotechnology. On 1 June 2002 he was ordained a priest. He has served in parish ministry and as: judge auditor; defender of the bond at the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Mariana; counsellor for the vocations apostolate; vicar forane; episcopal vicar; member of the College of Consultors and counsellor for Family Pastoral Care.

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Toward the meeting on the protection of minors in the Church

The organizing committee for the February meeting on the protection of minors met on Thursday, 10 January, and after concluding their work were received in an audience with Pope Francis.

A communiqué from the Holy See Press Office on Wednesday, 16 January, noted that the meeting, which will be held from 21 to 24 February, has a concrete purpose: "that all of the Bishops clearly understand what they need to do to prevent and combat the worldwide problem of the sexual abuse of minors. Pope Francis knows", the statement reads, "that a global problem can only be resolved with a global response. The Pope wants it to be an assembly of Pastors, not an academic conference – a meeting characterized by prayer and discernment, a catechetical and working gathering.

"It is fundamental for the Holy Father that when the Bishops who will come to Rome have returned to their countries and their dioceses that they understand the laws to be applied and that they take the necessary steps to prevent abuse, to care for the victims, and to make sure that no case is covered up or buried.

"Regarding the high expectations that have been created around the Meeting, it is important to emphasize that the Church is not at the beginning of the fight against abuse. The Meeting is a stage along the painful journey that the Church has unceasingly and decisively undertaken for over fifteen years".

Audience with the founder of the Bose Community



On Saturday morning, 12 January, the Holy Father received in audience Br Enzo Bianchi, Founder of the Bose Community, who donated to the Pontiff "The Holy Communion", an icon depicting a monk carrying an elderly person on his shoulders.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE

Condensed in the first words of the 'Our Father' is "all the novelty of the Gospel": Pope Francis stressed this at the General Audience on Wednesday, 16 January, in the Paul VI Hall, where he continued the series of catecheses on the 'Lord's Prayer'. In particular, the Pontiff paused to reflect on the significance of the Aramaic word "Abba", inviting the faithful "to have a relationship with God" built on "trust" and "tenderness", "like that of a child with his dad". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's catechesis, which the Holy Father shared in Italian.



Shai Yossef, "Father and son"

Francis reflects on the importance of the first words of the 'Lord's Prayer'

To call God 'Papa' like a trustful child

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

Continuing the catecheses on the 'Lord's Prayer', today we shall begin with the observation that in the New Testament, the prayer seems to arrive at the essential, actually focusing on a single word: *Abba*, Father.

We have heard what Saint Paul writes in the Letter to the Romans: "you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, 'Abba, Father!'" (8:15). And the Apostle says to the Galatians: "And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" (Gal 4:6). The same invocation, in which all the novelty of the Gospel is condensed, recurs twice. After meeting Jesus and hearing his preaching, a Christian no longer considers God as a tyrant to be feared; he is no longer afraid but feels trust in Him expand in his heart: he can speak with the Creator by calling him 'Father'. The expression is so important for Christians that it is often preserved intact, in its original form: *Abba*.

In the New Testament it is rare for Aramaic expressions to be translated into Greek. We have to imagine that the voice of Jesus himself has remained in these Aramaic words as if 'recorded': they have respected Jesus' idiom. In the first words of the 'Our Father' we immediately find the radical newness of Christian prayer.

It does not simply use a symbol – in this case, the father figure – to connect to the mystery of God; it is instead about

having, so to speak, Jesus' entire world poured into one's heart. If we do this, we can truly pray the 'Our Father'. Saying *Abba* is something much more intimate, more moving than simply calling God 'Father'. This is why someone has proposed translating this original Aramaic word *Abba* with 'Dad' or 'Papa'. Instead of saying 'our Father', saying 'Dad, Papa'. We shall continue to say 'our Father' but with the heart we are invited to say 'Dad', to have a relationship with God like that of a child with his dad, who says 'dad' and says 'papa'. Indeed, these expressions evoke affection, they evoke warmth, something that casts us into the context of childhood: the image of a child completely enveloped in the embrace of a father who feels infinite tenderness for him. And for this reason, dear brothers and sisters, in order to pray properly, one must come to have a child's heart. Not a self-sufficient heart: one cannot pray properly this way. Like a child in the arms of his father, of his dad, of his papa.

But of course the Gospels better explain the meaning of this word. What does this word mean to Jesus? The 'Our Father' takes on meaning and colour if we learn to pray it after having read, for example, the Parable of the Merciful Father, in Chapter 15 of Luke (cf. Lk 15:11-32). Let us imagine this prayer recited by the prodigal son, after having experienced the embrace of his father who had long awaited him, a father who does not remember the offensive words the son had said to him, a father who now simply makes him understand

how much he has been missed. Thus we discover how those words become vibrant, receive strength. And let us ask ourselves: is it possible that You, O God, really know only love? Do you not know hatred? No – God would respond – I know only love.

Where in You is vengeance, the demand for justice, anger at your wounded honour? And God would respond: I know only love.

In that parable the father's manner of conduct somehow recalls the spirit of a mother. It is especially mothers who excuse their children, who protect them, who do not suspend empathy for them, who continue to love them, even when they would no longer deserve anything.

It is enough to evoke this single expression – *Abba* – for Christian prayer to develop. And in his Letters, Saint Paul follows this same path, because it is the path taught by Jesus: in this invocation there is a force that draws all the rest of the prayer.

God seeks you, even if you do not seek him. God loves you, even if you have forgotten about him. God glimpses beauty in you, even if you think you have squandered all your talents in vain. God is not only a father; he is like a mother who never stops loving her little child. On the other hand, there is a 'gestation' that lasts forever, well beyond the nine months of the physical one; it is a gestation that engenders an infinite cycle of love.

For a Christian, praying is simply saying *Abba*; it is saying 'Dad', saying 'Papa', saying 'Father' but with a child's trust.

It may be that we too happen to walk on paths far from God, as happened to the prodigal son; or to sink into a loneliness that makes us feel abandoned in the world; or, even to make mistakes and be paralyzed by a sense of guilt. In those difficult moments, we can still find the strength to pray, to begin again with the word *Abba*, but said with the tender feeling of a child: *Abba*, 'Dad'. He does not hide his face from us. Remember well: perhaps one has bad things within, things he does not know how to resolve, much bitterness for having done this and that.... He does not hide His face. He does not close himself off in silence. Say 'Father' to Him and He will an-



Pope's Letter to the President of the Pontifical Academy for Life

Fraternity is Christianity's new frontier

Invoking the humanism of solidarity between individuals and peoples

At a press conference in the Holy See Press Office on Tuesday, 15 January, Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, President of the Pontifical Academy for Life, presented the Letter that Pope Francis had written to him for the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Pontifical Academy's foundation in 2019. The very title of the Letter: "Humana Communitas", the Archbishop noted, indicates "the focal point" of the Academy's commitment to the human community. "Given the extraordinary progress of technology, a renewed attention to those who live" in our common home, "that is, to the whole human family, is increasingly urgent" today, when there is a weakening of fraternity which "contaminates all the sciences of man and of life", Archbishop Paglia warned. In his Letter, Pope Francis addressed the theme of global bioethics, which, the Archbishop explained, links "issues concerning life and health to social and environmental conditions" and consequently involves "the practice of justice", human rights issues and national and international policies. The Pontifical Academy President observed that the Holy Father's Letter also addressed the issue of "so-called emerging and convergent technologies", including "nanotechnologies, biotechnologies, information technologies and cognitive sciences" that "expand our ability to intervene on living matter" and which demand greater responsibility. "A new relationship with the world is at stake", Archbishop Paglia stressed, — one that must take into account the dignity of every human at a time when new IT devices permeate ever more pervasively various areas of reality and our bodies. Indeed, the upcoming General Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life will address these same issues. The meeting, whose theme is "Robo Ethics. Humans, machines and health", will take place from 25 to 27 February in the New Synod Hall. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's Letter to the President.

Humana Communitas

[The Human Community]

The human community is God's dream even from before the creation of the world (cf. *Eph* 1:3-14). In it, the eternal Son begotten of God the Father has taken flesh and blood, heart and emotions. Through the mystery of giving life, the great family of humanity is enabled to discover its true meaning. The ability of the family to initiate its members to human fraternity can be considered a hidden treasure that can aid that general rethinking of social policies and human rights whose need is so urgently felt today. All of us ought to grow in the awareness of our common origin in God's love and creative act. Christian faith confesses the begetting of the Son as the ineffable mystery of the eternal unity between "bringing into being" and "benevolent love" within the life of the Triune God. A renewed proclamation of this often overlooked revelation can open a new chapter in the history of human community and culture, which today cries out — "groaning as if in labour pains" (cf. *Rom* 8:22) — for rebirth in the Spirit. God's tenderness and his will to redeem all those who feel lost, abandoned, discarded, or hopelessly condemned, is revealed in the only-begotten Son. The mystery of the eternal Son who became one of us is the definitive witness to this "passion" of God.

The mystery of Christ's cross — "for us and for our salvation" — and resurrection — as "the first-born of many brothers" (*Rom* 8:29) — tells us the extent to which God's passion is directed to the redemption and full flourishing of human beings.

We need to renew a lively awareness of God's passion for humanity and its world. Human beings were made by God "in his image" — "male and female" (*Gen* 1:27) — as spiritual and sentient, conscious and free. The relationship between man and woman is the primary place where all creation speaks with God and bears witness to his love. This world is the place where we are brought to life; it is the place and time in which we gain a foretaste of the heavenly home that is our destiny (cf. *2 Cor* 5:1) and where we will live fully our communion with God and with all others. The human family is a community with a common origin and a common goal, whose attainment "is hidden, with Christ, in God" (*Col* 3:1-4). In our time, the Church is called once more to propose the humanism of the life that bursts forth from God's passion for human beings. Our commitment to valuing, supporting and defending the life of every human being is ultimately motivated by God's unconditional love. Such is the beauty and the allure of the Gospel, which does not reduce love of neighbour to criteria of economic or political convenience, or to "certain doctrinal or moral points based on specific ideological options" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 39).

A passionate and productive history

1. That passion has inspired the work of the Pontifical Academy for Life from the time it was created twenty-five years ago by Saint John Paul II at the prompting of the eminent scientist and Servant of God Jérôme Lejeune. Recogniz-

ing the rapid and sweeping changes taking place in biomedicine, Pope John Paul saw the need for a more structured and organic approach and engagement in this area. The Academy was thus able to promote initiatives of research, education and communications aimed at demonstrating "that science and technology, at the service of the human person and his fundamental rights, contribute to the overall good of man and to the fulfilment of the divine plan of salvation." (SAINT JOHN PAUL II, *Motu Proprio Vitae Mysterium* [11 February 1994], 3). The new statutes of the Academy, issued on 18 October 2016, have given renewed impetus to its activities. The goal of the statutes is to make the Academy's reflection on human life issues ever more attuned to the contemporary scene. The ever-quicken pace of technological and scientific innovation, and the phenomenon of globalization have multiplied interactions between cultures, religions and different fields of study, and among the many dimensions of our human family and the earth, our common home. "There is an urgent need for greater study and discussion of the social effects of this technological development, for the sake of articulating an anthropological vision adequate to this epochal challenge. Yet your expert advice cannot be limited solely to offering solutions to the questions raised by specific ethical, social or legal conflict situations. The proposal of forms of conduct consistent with human dignity involves the theory and practice of science and technology in terms of their overall approach to life, its meaning and its value" (*Address to the General Assembly of the Academy for Life*, 5 October 2017).

Loss of the human dimension and the paradox of "progress"

2. At this moment in time, passion for what is distinctively human, and for the whole human family, encounters serious obstacles. The joys of family relationships and social coexistence appear seriously diminished. Mutual distrust between individuals and peoples is being fed by an inordinate pursuit of self-interest and intense competition that can even turn violent. The gap between concern with one's own well-being and the prosperity of the larger human family seems to be stretching to the point of complete division. In the Encyclical *Laudato Si'*, I pointed to the state of emergency existing in our relationship with the history of the earth and its peoples. This alarming situation is the result of the scarce attention paid to the decisive global issue of the unity of the human family and its future. The erosion of this sensitivity, due to



worldly forces of conflict and war, is growing worldwide at a much higher rate than that of the production of goods. We are speaking of a real culture – indeed, it would be better to speak of anti-culture – of indifference to the community: hostile to men and women and in league with the arrogance of wealth.

3. This emergency reveals a paradox. How could it happen that, at the very moment of history when available economic and technological resources make it possible for us to care suitably for our common home and our human family, in obedience to God's command, those same economic and technological resources are creating our most bitter divisions and our worst nightmares? People sense acutely and painfully, albeit often confusedly, the spiritual dejection, or even nihilism, that subordinates life itself to a world and a society dominated by this paradox. The attempt to dull this sense of deep distress by the blind pursuit of material pleasure produces the ennui of a life lacking in a purpose that can satisfy its spiritual yearning. Let us face the fact: men and women in our time are often demoralized and disoriented, bereft of vision. All of us are, to some extent, closed in on ourselves. The financial system and the ideology of consumerism regulate our needs and manipulate our desires, with little concern for the beauty of a life in common and for the sustainability of our common home.

Responsible listening

4. Christians, hearing the cry of suffering peoples, need to react against the negativity that foments division, indifference and hostility. They must do so not simply for their own sake, but for that of everyone. And they need to do so now, before it is too late. The ecclesial family of disciples – and of all others who seek in that family reasons for hope (cf. *1 Pet* 3:15) – has been planted on earth as “a sacrament, a sign and instrument of communion with God and of the unity of the entire human race” (*Lumen Gentium*, 1). The restoration of each of God's creatures to the joyful hope of his or her spiritual destiny must become the passionate theme of our preaching. It is urgent that the elderly have greater confidence in their best “dreams” and that the young have “visions” able to sustain them to act boldly in history (cf. *Jl* 3:1). At the level of culture, our goal must be a new and universal ethical perspective attentive to the themes of creation and human life. We cannot continue down the mistaken path followed in recent decades of allowing humanism to be deconstructed and considered simply as another ideology of the will to power. We must resist such ideologies, however strongly urged by the market and by technology, and choose humanism. The distinctiveness of human life is an absolute good, worthy of being ethically

defended, precious for the care of creation as a whole. For humanism not to draw inspiration from the loving act of God would be a contradiction and a scandal. The Church must be the first to rediscover the beauty of this inspiration and make her contribution with renewed enthusiasm.

A difficult task for the Church

5. We acknowledge the difficulties involved in restoring this broader humanistic horizon, even within the Church. First, we can ask frankly if our ecclesial communities today realize and testify to the gravity of this contemporary emergency. Are they seriously focused on the passion and joy of proclaiming God's love for the dwelling of his children on the earth? Or are they still overly focused on their own problems and on making timid accommodations to an essentially worldly outlook? We can question seriously whether we have done enough as Christians to offer our specific contribution to a vision of humanity capable of upholding the unity of the family of peoples in today's political and cultural conditions. Or whether we have lost sight of its centrality, putting our ambition for spiritual hegemony over the governance of the secular city, concentrated as it is upon itself and its wealth, ahead of a concern for local communities inspired by the Gospel spirit of hospitality towards the poor and the hopeless.

Building universal fraternity

6. It is time for a new vision aimed at promoting a humanism of fraternity and solidarity between individuals and peoples. We know that the faith and love needed for this covenant draw their power from the mystery of history's redemption in Jesus Christ, a mystery hidden in God even before the creation of the world (cf. *Eph* 1:7-10; 3:9-11; *Col* 1:13-14). We know too that human minds and hearts are not completely closed or insensible to the seeds of faith and the works of this universal fraternity sown by the Gospel of the kingdom of God. We must once again bring this fraternity to the fore. For it is one thing to feel forced to live together, but something entirely different to value the richness and beauty of the seeds of common life needing to be sought out and cultivated. It is one thing to resign oneself to seeing life as a battle against constant foes, but something entirely different to see our human family as a sign of the abundant life of God the Father and the promise of a common destiny redeemed by the infinite love that even now sustains it in being.

7. The ways of the Church all lead to man, as Saint John Paul II solemnly proclaimed in his first encyclical (*Redemptor Hominis*, 1979). Before him, Saint Paul VI, echoing the teaching of the Council, had stated in his own first encyclical that the Church family extends in concentric circles to all

men and women, even to those who consider themselves extraneous to the faith and the worship of God (cf. *Ecclesiam Suam*, 1964). The Church shelters and protects the signs of grace and mercy that God offers to every human being who comes into this world.

Recognizing the signs of hope

8. In this mission, we are encouraged by signs that God is at work in our time. These signs need to be acknowledged and not overshadowed by certain negative factors. Along these lines, Saint John Paul II pointed to the many efforts to welcome and defend hu-

The future of the Academy

9. Before all else, we need to enter into the language and lives of men and women today, making the Gospel message incarnate in their concrete experiences, as the Council demanded. To appreciate the meaning of human life, we should begin with the experience of procreation; this will enable us to avoid reducing life merely to a biological concept or a universal abstraction divorced from relationships and from history. The primordial reality of our “flesh” precedes and makes possible all further consciousness and reflection, preventing us from thinking that we are the source of our own exist-



Sarah Paulsen “Beloved Community, Sanctuary Cities” (detail)

man life, the growing opposition to war and to the death penalty, and a greater concern for the quality of life and ecology. He also indicated as a sign of hope the development of bioethics as “reflection and dialogue – between believers and nonbelievers, as well as between believers of different religions – on ethical problems, even the most fundamental ones, that affect the life of man” (*Evangelium Vitae*, 27). The scientific community of the Pontifical Academy for Life has demonstrated, over the past twenty-five years, its ability to enter into this dialogue and to offer its own competent and respected contribution. A sign of this is its constant effort to promote and protect human life at every stage of its development, its condemnation of abortion and euthanasia as extremely grave evils that contradict the Spirit of life and plunge us into the anti-culture of death. These efforts must certainly continue, with an eye to emerging issues and challenges that can serve as an opportunity for us to grow in the faith, to understand it more deeply and to communicate it more effectively to the people of our time.

ence. Only after receiving the gift of life, and prior to any intention or decision of our own, can we become aware that we are in fact alive. Life necessarily entails being a child, welcomed and cared for, however inadequately in certain cases. “It thus seems reasonable to see a connection between the care we have received from the beginning of life, that enabled it to grow and develop, and the responsible care we in turn give to others... This precious connection preserves a human and God-given dignity that endures, even despite one's loss of health, role in society and control over his or her body” (*Letter of the Cardinal Secretary of State to the Conference on Palliative Care*, 28 February 2018).

10. We know that the threshold of basic respect for human life is being crossed, and brutally at that, not only by instances of individual conduct but also by the effects of societal choices and structures. Business strategies and the pace of technological growth now, as never before, condition biomedical research, educational priorities, investment decisions and the quality of interpersonal relationships. The

BAPTISM OF THE LORD

"Never quarrel in front of the children": the Pontiff offered this advice to the parents of 27 infants who were baptized during the Mass celebrated in the Sistine Chapel on Sunday, 13 January, Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's homily, which he shared in Italian.



Never quarrel in front of children

Francis' advice to parents during the baptismal celebration in the Sistine Chapel



At the beginning of the ceremony, you were asked a question: "What do you ask for your children?" And you all said: "Faith". You ask the Church for faith for your children, and today they will receive the Holy Spirit and the gift of faith, each within their heart, within their soul. But this faith has to develop, it has to grow. Yes, someone may tell me: "Yes, yes, they have to study it...". Yes, when they will attend catechism classes, they will study the faith well; they will learn catechesis. However, before being studied, faith should be *transmitted*, and this is a task that is up to you. It is a task that you receive today: *to transmit the faith*, the transmission of the faith. And this is done *at home*. Because faith is always transmitted "in dialect": the dialect of the family, in the spirit of the home.

This is your task: to transmit the faith by example, with words, teaching how to make the *sign of the Cross*. This is important. You see, there are children who do not know how to make the sign of the Cross. [One says]: "Make the sign of the Cross"; and they do something like this; one cannot understand what it is. First of all, teach them this.

But what is important is to transmit the faith *with your life of faith*: that they may see the love between spouses, that they may see peace at home, that they may see that Jesus is there. And allow me this word of advice – forgive me, but I offer you this advice –: never quarrel in front of the children, never. It is normal for husbands and wives to quarrel; it is normal. The opposite would be strange. Do it, but so that they do not hear, that they do not see. You

cannot imagine the distress that a child feels when he or she sees their parents quarrel. Allow me to offer this advice which will help you transmit the faith. Is it bad to quarrel? Not always, but it is normal, it is normal. But so the children do not see, do not hear, because it is distressing.

And now, let us continue the ceremony of Baptism, but keep this in mind: your task is to transmit the faith to them. To transmit it at home because that is where faith is learned; it is then studied in catechism classes, but faith [is received] at home.

And before continuing, I would like to tell you another thing: you know that today the children are feeling that they are in a strange environment, a bit too hot, they are covered up... And they feel the stuffy air... Then they cry because they are hungry; they are hungry. And a third reason for their crying is "precautionary crying". A curious thing: they do not know what will happen and they think: "I will cry first, then we will see... It is a form of defence. I tell you: let them be comfortable. Be careful not to cover them up too much. And if they cry out of hunger, breastfeed them. To the mothers I say: feed the children, do not worry, the Lord wants this. Because where is the danger? That they have also a polyphonic vocation: one starts to cry, and the other makes the counterpart to him, and then the other, and in the end it is a chorus of crying!

And so let us continue with this ceremony, with the awareness that it is up to you to transmit the faith.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

Today, at the conclusion of the Liturgical Season of Christmas, we celebrate the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. The liturgy calls us to more fully get to know Jesus, whose birth we have just celebrated; and for this reason the Gospel (cf. Lk 3:15-16, 21-22) illustrates two important elements: Jesus' relationship with the people and Jesus' relationship with the Father.

In the narrative of the Baptism, administered to Jesus by John the Baptist in the waters of the Jordan, we see first and foremost the role of the people. Jesus is in the midst of the people. This is not just background scenery, but is an essential component of the event. Before immersing himself in the water, Jesus *'immerses' himself in the crowd*; he joins it, fully taking on the human condition, sharing everything, except sin. In his di-

Jesus initiates a new creation

At the Angelus the Pope invites the faithful to renew their Baptismal vows

When Jesus is baptized in the River Jordan, "a new world is being initiated, a 'new creation' in which all those who welcome Jesus into their life participate". Pope Francis recalled this in the reflection he shared with the faithful who gathered for the recitation of the Angelus in Saint Peter's Square on Sunday, 13 January, Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's reflection, which he offered in Italian.

By joining the people who ask John for the Baptism of conversion, Jesus shares with them the deep desire for inner renewal. And the Holy Spirit, who descends upon him "in bodily form, as a dove" (v. 22), is a sign that with Jesus a new world is being initiated, a 'new creation' in which all those who welcome Jesus into their life participate. The words of the Father are also addressed to each of us, that we may be reborn with Christ in Baptism: "Thou art my beloved son; with thee I am well pleased" (v. 22). This Fatherly love, which all of us received on the day of our Baptism, is a flame that was lit in our heart, and needs to be kindled by means of prayer and charity.

The second element emphasized by Luke the Evangelist is that, after his immersion in the people and in the waters of the Jordan, Jesus *'immerses' himself in prayer*, that is, in communion with the

that of Jesus. It means regenerating continually in prayer, evangelization and the apostolate, in order to bear a clear Christian witness not according to human designs, but according to the plan and style of God.

Dear brothers and sisters, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord is a propitious opportunity to renew with gratitude and conviction the promises made at our Baptism, by committing ourselves to live in harmony with it daily. It is also very important, as I have said to you many times, to know the date of our Baptism. I could ask: 'Who among you knows the date of his or her Baptism?'. Not everyone, to be sure. If some of you do not know it, when you get home, ask your parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, godparents, family friends... Ask: 'On what date was I baptized?'. And then, do not forget it: let it be a date kept in your heart to be celebrated every year.

May Jesus, who saved us not for our own merits but in order to realize the immense goodness of the Father, make us merciful toward all. May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, be our guide and our model.

After the Angelus, Pope Francis added:

Dear brothers and sisters, I offer my greeting to all of you, dear people of Rome and pilgrims: I greet the teachers and students from Los Santos de Maijuna and Talavera la Real, Spain; the parish groups from Poland and also the Polish neocatechumens – you have come to celebrate Kiko's birthday, of course! I greet as well the faithful from Loreto and Vallemare, in the province of Rieti.

This morning, as customary on this Feast Day, I had the joy of baptizing a beautiful group of infants. Let us pray for them and for their families. And, on this occasion, I renew the invitation to all to keep ever alive and present the memory of your own Baptism. There lie the roots of our life in God; the roots of our eternal life, which Jesus gave us with his Incarnation, Passion, Death and Resurrection. In Baptism there are the roots! And let us never forget the date of our Baptism.

Tomorrow, as the Season of Christmas has concluded, we will resume with the liturgy the journey of Ordinary Time. Like Jesus after his Baptism, let us allow the Holy Spirit to guide us in all that we do. But we must invoke this of him. Let us learn to invoke the Holy Spirit more often, in our daily life, so as to be able to experience ordinary things with love, and thereby render them extraordinary.

Happy Sunday to all. Do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci!*



Daniel Bonnell, "The Baptism of the Christ II"

vine holiness, full of grace and mercy, the Son of God became flesh precisely to take upon himself and take away the sin of the world: taking on our miseries, our human condition. Thus today's event is also an *epiphany*, because by going to have himself baptized by John, in the midst of the repentant people, Jesus manifests the logic and meaning of his mission.

Father. Baptism is the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, of his mission in the world as the envoy of the Father in order to manifest his goodness and his love for mankind. This mission is fulfilled in constant and perfect union with the Father and with the Holy Spirit. The Church's mission too, and that of each of us, in order to be faithful and fruitful, is called to 'graft' ourselves onto

Toward the meeting on the protection of minors and vulnerable adults

February meeting of pastors aims for concreteness

ANDREA TORNIELLI

There is excessive anticipation in the media in view of the upcoming meeting convoked by Pope Francis on the theme of the protection of minors and vulnerable adults, as if it were an event halfway between a Council and a Conclave. Anticipation that risks relegating to second place the ecclesial significance of a meeting of pastors, of the Presidents of the Bishops' Conferences of the entire world who together with the Successor of Peter will reflect on the theme of abuse.

The first thing to underscore is the typical universality of the Catholic Church that reverberates in the meeting: the presence of the episcopates of the entire world – called together for the first time to address this most painful wound that has been and continues to be a source of enormous suffering for the victims, and an evangelical counterwitness – will help to raise everyone's awareness of the gravity of the crisis. The phenomenon of the abuse of minors, the tragic experiences of the victims, the procedures to apply when faced with accusa-

tions and recommendations for guaranteeing a safe environment for children and young people will thus be examined with not merely a European perspective or that of the United States.

The aim of the meeting is firmly concrete: to ensure that each of those who will be participating may return to his country with absolute clarity as to what must be done (and not done) in regard to these cases. What are the steps to be taken to protect victims, while respecting the truth and the people involved, in order to ensure that no case may ever again be covered up or buried.

Of course we will have to wait for the dialogue among the bishops and the proposals that will be advanced in order to better clarify or specify some of the particular aspects of the applicable regulations on the subject. With the awareness that it is not a matter of a 'year zero' in the fight against abuse because many significant and concrete steps have been taken over the last 16 years. The rules for action were established and stiffened by will of the most recent Pontiffs and in some cases can be defined

as 'emergent' for the swiftness of action they allow with regard to those who have been tarnished by this crime.

But the increasingly honed and precise norms, laws, codes and procedures are not enough; they can never suffice without a change of mind-set and heart of those who are called to apply them. This is why Francis continues to point to the way of conversion. This is why it is important that each of the participants in the meeting listens to the testimonies of victim-survivors and takes an example from the testimony of Benedict XVI and of his Successor, who over the last 10 years, in different parts of the world, have embraced victims, listened to them, wept with them, sharing in their suffering.

In his recent address to the Roman Curia, after re-emphasizing that even just one case of abuse would be "something itself monstrous", Francis added that the February meeting would serve to "make past mistakes opportunities for eliminating" the scourge of abuse, "not only from the body of the Church but also from that of society".

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop António José Cavaco Carrilho of Funchal, Portugal (12 Jan.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Nuno Brás da Silva Martins as Bishop of Funchal. Until now he has served as titular Bishop of Elvas and Auxiliary of the Latin Patriarchate of Lisbon, Portugal (12 Jan.).

Bishop Brás da Silva Martins, 55, was born in Vimieiro, Portugal. He was ordained a priest on 4 July 1987. He was ordained a bishop on 20 November 2011, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Elvas and Auxiliary of Lisbon.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Óscar Aníbal Salazar Gómez of La Dorada-Guaduas, Colombia (13 Jan.).

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of La Dorada-Guaduas Fr Hency Martínez Vargas from the clergy of the Diocese of Málaga-Soatá. Until now he has served as vicar general of the said Diocese (13 Jan.).

Bishop-elect Martínez Vargas, 60, was born in Málaga, Colombia. He was ordained a priest on 10 June 1985. He holds a licence in dogmatic theology. He has served in parish ministry and as: diocesan chancellor; director of catechesis; formator at the Major Seminary in Bucaramanga; rector of the Major Seminary.

HOLY SEE

The Holy Father appointed the following as members of the Scientific Council of the "Holy See's Agency for the Evaluation and Promotion of Quality in Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties" (AVEPRO): Fr Sal-

vatore Loiero, professor of theology at the University of Freiburg; Fr Mauro Mantovani, SDB, rector of the Pontifical Salesian University and President of CRUPR; Fr Đinh Anh Nhue Nguyễn, OFM Conv., President of the Pontifical Theological Faculty of Saint Bonaventure; Sr Mary Melone, SFA, rector of the *Antonianum* Pontifical University; Ms Isabel Capeloa Gil, President of FIUC; Ms Katy Duykaerts, director of AEOES; Ms Fiona Hunter, associate director of CHEI-Catholic University in Milan (15 Jan.).

VATICAN SECRET ARCHIVES

The Holy Father appointed Mr Paolo Vian as Vice Prefect of the Vatican Secret Archives. Until now he has served as *Scriptor latinus* and director of the Department of Manuscripts of the Vatican Apostolic Library (15 Jan.).

With the President of the Slovak Republic

On Friday morning, 14 December 2018, the Holy Father received in audience H.E. Mr Andrej Kiska, President of the Slovak Republic, who subsequently met with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, accompanied by Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States.

During the cordial discussions, the good bilateral relations and the contribution of the Church to Slovak society, especially in the field of education, were evoked. Subsequently, various themes of common interest were considered, including climate change and the

PONTIFICAL SWISS GUARDS

The Holy Father appointed Mr Martin Kurmann as Major of the Pontifical Swiss Guard (12 Jan.).

SPECIAL ENVOY

The Holy Father appointed Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, as his Special Envoy at the concluding celebration of the Fourth National Eucharistic Congress in Taiwan, to be held in the Diocese of Kiayi, Taiwan, on 1 March (5 Jan.).

START OF MISSION

On 19 November 2018, Archbishop Dagoberto Campos Salas, titular Archbishop of Forontomiana, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio in The Gambia, with the presentation of his Letters of Credence to H.E.

Mr Adama Barrow, President of The Gambia.

On 19 December 2018, Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor, titular Archbishop of Illici, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio in Colombia, with the presentation of his Letters of Credence to H.E. Mr Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic.

NECROLOGY

Bishop Michael Yeung Ming-cheung of Hong Kong, at age 72 (3 Jan.)

Bishop Sergio Otoniel Contreras Navia, Bishop emeritus of Temuco, Chile, at age 92 (5 Jan.)

Archbishop Giorgio Zur, titular Archbishop of Sesta, Apostolic Nuncio, at age 88 (8 Jan.)

Bishop José Belvino do Nascimento, Bishop emeritus of Divinópolis, Brazil, at age 86 (8 Jan.)

Bishop Armando Bortolaso, SDB, titular Bishop of Raphanea, Vicar Apostolic emeritus of Aleppo, Syria, at age 92 (8 Jan.)

Bishop Joseph Lawson Howze, Bishop emeritus of Biloxi, USA, at age 95 (9 Jan.)

Bishop Charles Soreng, SJ, Bishop emeritus of Hazaribag, India, at age 84 (11 Jan.)

Bishop Rafael Arcadio Bernal Supelano, CSSR, Bishop emeritus of Líbano-Honda, Colombia, at age 84 (11 Jan.)

Bishop Christian Blouin, CMM, Bishop emeritus of Lae, Papua New Guinea, at age 77 (12 Jan.)

Bishop Roberto Cáceres, Bishop emeritus of Melo, Uruguay, at age 97 (13 Jan.)



reception of migrants, in light of recent international meetings. Finally, attention turned to the international context and to peace, security and cooperation in Europe, in view of Slovakia's Presidency of the OSCE in 2019.

Tigermuou, "The Last Supper"

A meeting between the Presidents of the Doctrinal Commissions of the Episcopal Conferences of Asia and a Delegation from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, led by Cardinal Prefect Luis F. Ladaria Ferrer, SJ, and Archbishop Joseph Augustine Di Noia, OP, Adjunct Secretary, was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 15-18 January. The first such meeting between the Congregation and the Doctrinal Commissions of continental Episcopal Conferences took place in 1984 in Latin America (Bogotá). Subsequent meetings were held in Africa (Kinshasa, 1987); Europe (Vienna, 1989); Asia (Hong Kong, 1993); Latin America (Guadalajara, 1996); and North America (San Francisco, 1999). More recently, meetings have taken place in Africa (Dar es Salaam, 2009) and in Europe (Esztergom-Budapest, 2015). The following is the English text of the message Pope Francis sent to participants at the conference in Bangkok.



For the Unity of the Faith

Holy Father's Message to the Doctrinal Commissions of Asian Episcopates

Dear Brothers in the Episcopate,

On the occasion of the meeting of the Presidents of Doctrinal Commissions of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, taking place in Bangkok from 15 to 18 January 2019 with the participation of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, I cordially send you my fraternal greetings.

You gather together from across this vast continent that is marked by religious, linguistic and cultural diversity, in order to reaffirm our common responsibility for the unity and integrity of the Catholic faith and to explore new ways and methods of bearing witness to the Gospel amid the challenges of our contemporary world.

In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, I invited the whole Church "to go forth". I am pleased that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is actively supporting the important work of the Episcopal Conferences and especially of their Doctrinal Commissions, as they assist and foster the effective and fraternal cooperation among the Pastors of the Church in Asia.

Praying that this meeting may offer an opportunity to address the concerns of the Gospel that are specific and relevant to Asia, to all those taking part I gladly impart my blessing.

From the Vatican, 10 January 2019

FRANCIS

Meeting with World Council of Churches

The Staff members of both the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) and the Office of Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation (IRDC) of the World Council of Churches (WCC) met together for their annual meeting at the PCID premises on 10-11 January 2019.

As is their wont, they exchanged news and views on various activities undertaken by the respective offices in the last year, and mutually shared the planned programmes in the current year.

Important aspects of the meeting included an update on the document titled Education for Peace in a Multi-Religious World, the latest joint project between the two offices, and brainstorming and mapping out a plan for a future joint project.

Both the offices, which have been in collaborative engagement since 1977, have realized, so far, some common interreligious projects, namely, Interreligious Prayer (1994); Reflection on Interreligious Marriage (1997) and Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct (2011).

Expressing happiness over the increasing mutual collaboration between the two offices over the years, both the delegations reiterated their desire to continue their common engagement, ecumenically, in the service of interreligious dialogue.

Vietnam and the Holy See

Implementing the Agreement reached at the Sixth Session of the Vietnam – Holy See Joint Working Group (October 2016), the Seventh Session of the Joint Working Group took place in Hanoi last month. The Standing Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam, Bui Thanh Son, Head of the Vietnamese Delegation, and the Undersecretary for Relations with States, Msgr Antoine Camilleri, Head of the Delegation of the Holy See, co-chaired the Session.

The two sides held a broad and comprehensive discussion on relations between Vietnam and the Holy See, including matters pertaining to the Catholic Church in Vietnam and noted that relations between Vietnam and the Holy See have recently witnessed positive developments. They reached an agreement on relevant matters towards upgrading relations in the near future between Vietnam and the Holy See from Non-Permanent Pontifical Representative to Permanent Pontifical Representative.

The Holy See expressed appreciation and gratitude to the Vietnamese side for the attention that the Vietnamese authorities have accorded to the Catholic Church in Vietnam in recent years. The Holy See pays keen attention to the rich and active Catholic life in the country and encourages the Catholic Church in Vietnam to contribute to the common good and the prosperity of the country.

The Vietnamese side reiterated that the Vietnamese Party and State are consistently implementing and tirelessly improving the policy framework respecting and ensuring freedom of beliefs and religion of the people, encouraging the Catholic Community to participate actively in national, economic and social development and construction.

The two sides also discussed issues concerning the partition of dioceses and the appointment of bishops in Vietnam and agreed to hold the Eighth Session of the Vietnam – Holy See Joint Working Group in the Vatican.

The Holy See delegation also paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Nguyen Xuân Phúc and the Chairman of the Government Committee on Religious Affairs Vu Chien Thang.

Causes of Saints

Promulgation of Decrees

On 15 January, the Holy Father received in audience Cardinal Angelo Becciu, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. During the audience, the Pontiff authorized the promulgation of Decrees regarding:

- the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Marguerite Bays, virgin, of the Third Order of Saint Francis of Assisi, born in La Pierraz, Switzerland on 8 September 1815 and died in Siviriez, Switzerland on 27 June 1879;

- the martyrdom of the Servants of God Maria del Carmen (in the world: Isabella Lacaba Andía) and 13 Companions, professed religious of the Order of the Franciscan Conceptionists, killed in hatred of the faith in Spain in 1936;

- the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Anna Kaworek, Co-Foundress of the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Michael the Archangel, born in Biedrzychowice, Poland on 18 June 1872 and died in Miejsce Piastowe, Poland on 30 December 1936;

- the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Maria Soledad Sanjurjo Santos (in the world: Maria Consolata), professed Sister of the Congregation of the Servants of Mary, Ministers to the Sick, born in Arecibo, Puerto Rico on 15 November 1892 and died in San Juan de Puerto Rico on 23 April 1973.

Name deciphered half a century after its discovery

The ring of Pontius Pilate

In a truly extraordinary discovery, two Israeli scholars have managed to decipher the name of Pilate, the Roman Prefect of Judea, engraved on a simple bronze ring dating back to the first century of the Christian era. The ring was among thousands of objects found in the excavations carried out between 1968 and 1969, shortly after the Six-Day War. The item was discovered at Herodion, the fortress built near Bethlehem by Herod the Great and later used by

The deciphering of the name was made possible, writes Nir Hasson in the 29 November issue of the Israeli daily *Haaretz*, by photography of the ring with a special camera, whereby Shua Amurai-Stark and Malcha Hershkovitz were able to identify the image of a chalice surrounded by Greek letters that translate to 'Pilatus'. Amurai-Stark and Hershkovitz have published an article on their discovery in the latest issue of the *Israel Exploration Journal*. Prof. Daniel

Schwartz, also of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, indicated to *Haaretz* that the name Pilatus was rare at that time in Israel. "I don't know of any other Pilatus of the period", Schwartz said, "and the ring shows he was a person of stature and wealth".

The ring, almost certainly a signet, is of simple design, and thus suggests that the Roman official, who appears in the Gospels and in the writings of ancient historian Flavius Josephus, wore it every day, not just on special occasions. The importance of the discovery

of the name of the imperial representative is that it is the second piece of such archaeological evidence to be found following the 1961 discovery of the famous inscription at the site of Caesarea Maritima.



Ring of Pontius Pilate (Photo: C. Amit; drawing: J. Rodman)

the Romans. The artifact was unearthed by archaeologist Gideon Forster of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in the course of preparations then underway for the opening of the site to visitors.

Like a trustful child

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

swer you. You have a father. 'Yes, but I am a delinquent...'. But you have a father who loves you! Say 'Father' to him, start to pray in this way, and in the silence he will tell us that he has never lost sight of us. 'But Father, I have done this...'. – 'I have never lost sight of you; I have seen everything. But I have always been there, close to you, faithful to my love for you'. That will be his answer. Never forget to say 'Father'. Thank you.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

This coming Friday, with the celebration of Vespers in the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside-the-Walls, the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* begins, with the theme: 'Justice and only justice you shall pursue'. This year too we are called to pray, that all Christians may return to being one family, consistent with the divine will that "they may all be one" (Jn 17:21). Ecumenism is not an optional thing. The intention will be that of maturing a common and universal witness in the affirmation of true justice and in support of the weakest, through concrete, appropriate and effective responses.

I welcome the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, especially the groups coming from Korea and the United States of America. In the context of the forthcoming Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, I offer a special greeting to the group from the Bossey Ecumenical Institute. My cordial greeting also goes to the priest alumni of the Pontifical North American College. Upon all of you I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

I address a particular thought to *young people*, to the *elderly*, to the *sick* and to *newlyweds*, who are so numerous. I wish that for each one this encounter may revive communion with the universal ministry of the Successor of Peter and, at the same time, be an occasion of renewal and spiritual grace. I invoke the joy and peace of the Lord Jesus upon you all!

Letter to the President of the Pontifical Academy for Life

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

possibility of directing economic development and scientific progress towards the covenant between man and woman, towards caring for our common humanity and towards the dignity of the human person, surely arises from a love for creation that faith helps us to deepen and illuminate. The prospect of a global bioethics, with a broad vision and a concern for the impact of the environment on life and health, offers a significant opportunity for strengthening the new covenant between the Gospel and creation.

11. Our shared humanity demands a global approach to the questions raised by the dialogue between diverse cultures and societies that, in today's world, are in increasingly close contact. May the Academy for Life be a place for courageous dialogue in the service of the common good. I encourage you not to be afraid to advance arguments and formulations that can serve as a basis for intercultural and interreligious, as well as interdisciplinary, exchanges. But also to take part in the discussion of human rights, which are central to the search for universally acceptable criteria for decisions. At stake is the understanding and exercise of a justice that demonstrates the essential role of responsibility in the discussion of human rights and about their close correla-

tion with duties, beginning with solidarity with those in greatest need. Pope Benedict XVI has spoken of the importance of "a renewed reflection on how rights presuppose duties, if they are not to become mere licence. Nowadays we are witnessing a grave inconsistency. On the one hand, appeals are made to alleged rights, arbitrary and non-essential in nature, accompanied by the demand that they be recognized and promoted by public structures, while, on the other hand, elementary and basic rights remain unacknowledged and are violated in much of the world". Among those rights, the Pope emeritus points to "lack of food, drinkable water, basic instruction and elementary health care" (*Caritas in Veritate*, 43).

12. Another area calling for study is that of the new technologies described as "emergent" and "convergent." These include information and communication technologies, biotechnologies, nanotechnologies and robotics. Relying on results obtained from physics, genetics and neuroscience, as well as on increasingly powerful computing capabilities, profound interventions on living organisms are now possible. Even the human body is subject to interventions capable of modifying not only its functions and capabilities, but also its ways of relating on personal and societal levels, with the result that it is increasingly exposed to

market forces. There is a pressing need, then, to understand these epochal changes and new frontiers in order to determine how to place them at the service of the human person, while respecting and promoting the intrinsic dignity of all. This task is extremely demanding, given its complexity and the unpredictability of future developments; consequently, it requires even greater discernment than usual. We can define this discernment as "a sincere work of conscience, in its effort to know the possible good on the basis of which to engage responsibly in the correct exercise of practical reason" (SYNOD OF BISHOPS ON YOUNG PEOPLE, *Final Document* [27 October 2018], 109). This process of research and evaluation thus entails the workings of the moral conscience and, for the believer, is part of his or her relationship with the Lord Jesus, in the desire to put on the mind of Christ in our actions and choices (cf. *Phil* 2:5).

13. The kind of medicine, economy, technology and politics that develop within the modern city of man must also, and above all, remain subject to the judgment rendered by the peripheries of the earth. Indeed, the many extraordinary resources made available to human beings by scientific and technological research could overshadow the joy of fraternal sharing and the beauty of common undertakings,

unless they find their meaning in advancing that joy and beauty. We should keep in mind that fraternity remains the unkept promise of modernity. The universal spirit of fraternity that grows by mutual trust – within modern civil society and between peoples and nations – appears much weakened. The strengthening of fraternity, generated in the human family by the worship of God in spirit and truth, is the new frontier of Christianity. Every detail of the life of the body and of the soul, in which the love and redemptive power of the new creation shine forth within us, leads to amazement before the miracle of a resurrection in the very process of occurring (cf. *Col* 3:1-2). May the Lord grant that we multiply these miracles! May the witness of Saint Francis of Assisi, who saw himself as the brother of every creature on earth and in heaven, inspire us by its perennial relevance. May the Lord prepare you for this new phase of your mission, your lamps filled with the oil of the Spirit to light your path and to guide your steps. How beautiful indeed are the feet of those who bring the joyful proclamation of God's love for the life of all those who dwell upon our land (cf. *Is* 52:7; *Rom* 10:15).

From the Vatican, 6 January 2019

Francis

Ninety years since the birth of Martin Luther King

Never drink from the cup of hatred

GABRIELE NICOLÒ

The gunpowder keg was already ready. It was missing the spark, which set it off, symbolically, on a bus. When the US seamstress and activist Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery on 1 December 1955, after refusing to give up her seat to a white man, protests burst out in opposition to the inveterate discrimination against African Americans. The motivation for that arrest had poured salt on a long festering wound: Rosa Parks had 'violated' the laws of segregation. The open denial of the most basic civil rights to Blacks, in Montgomery as in many other US cities, had already provoked bitter tension in the African American community.

The Parks episode had had a significant precedent on 2 March, also in 1955: 15-year-old student Claudette Colvin had been arrested then; she too had refused to give up her seat to a white man, and she too paid for her 'disobedience' with her arrest. That 2 March, what followed the outrage over the incident were not genuine protest rallies; instead, the humiliation inflicted on Rosa Parks sparked vehement reactions, which culminated on 5 December 1955, four days after her arrest, in the famous bus boycott. The initiative was a great success, even better than the most sanguine expectations: that day the buses ran their routes completely empty.

It was against this backdrop that the figure of Martin Luther King – born in Atlanta on 15 January, 90 years ago – stands out: as written in a 1955 editorial in *The Washington Post*, he "welded" the various segments of the African American Civil Rights Movement, becoming its leader. Rights which could only be won through an activity undertaken with the hallmarks of peace and dialogue: this strategy, which King adopted not only from Gandhi, a staunch champion of nonviolence, but also from Richard Gregg, the first American to theorize, methodically, the concept of the 'non-violent struggle'.

After founding the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Martin Luther King began, or better yet, once again undertook an itinerant mission in various parts of the United States – this time, however, in an official capacity – designed to raise public awareness about central themes concerning the fundamental rights of African Americans, but in reality strictly tied to the principle itself, wide-ranging, with respect for and in promotion of human dignity. An expression composed by him, which often recalled Gospel passages to instil in the collective conscience awareness of the perennial timeliness of the Christian message: a message that rests on the values of brotherhood, equality, mutual love and peace.

The iconic moment of that itinerant mission was the renowned speech delivered in Washington, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, on 28 August 1963: *I Have a Dream*. That dream was formulated for the 'March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom', which he had organized and which had gathered over 250,000 peaceful demonstrators. Thanks to this mobilization – the crystal clear testimony of a pacifist struggle that was increasingly affirmed in the social and civil fabric of the United States (also echoing loudly in countries marked by prejudice and racial discrimination) – the following year, after fraught proceedings, the Civil Rights Act – the law that put an end to segregation between Blacks and Whites in the United States – was approved. And at the end of 1964, King – sealing his commitment and his action – was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

"His spiritual legacy" is how *The New York Times* described Martin Luther King's speech on that unforgettable 28 August. In what did that dream consist? First of all in the fact that his four young children would one day live in a nation where "they will not



Front page of the comic book "Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott", illustrated by Dan Kalal (2006)

be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character". But the path towards the achievement of that dream, King stressed, is still long and tortuous. Indeed, "the Negro still is not free". His life is "still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination". "The Negro", King emphasized before a cheering crowd, still "lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity ... the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land".

But the real key to that impassioned speech consists in the preaching of nonviolence,



Martin Luther King in Saint Peter's Square, 18 September 1964 (AP Photo)

ence, precisely when the open and candid condemnation of injustice and tyranny would appear to be the prelude, even an invitation, to bloodshed and armed retaliation. "In the process of gaining our rightful place", King said, "we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred". Then followed the exhortation to rise to the "majestic heights" of those who meet "physical force with soul force". Indeed of particular importance was King's call for dialogue and reconciliation. Whites should not be seen as *a priori* enemies. The black community should not be conditioned by "distrust" in the white community because Whites – who participated in the event in great numbers – "have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom".

But that violence, which King had always rejected, ended up striking him. To death. He was shot dead on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. It was 4 April 1968. King was 39 years old. The assassination sparked a virulent reaction from the African American community. Riots broke out in more than 100 US cities. In Shaw, the historical African American neighbourhood a short distance from the White House, many buildings were razed to the ground. The Howard Theatre, which had been fundamental in the brilliant careers of Ella Fitzgerald and Duke Ellington, was set ablaze. Twelve people were reported dead. On the one hand, demonstrators had betrayed King's instructions not to react to violence with violence. On the other, in venting their anger and their pain through extreme gestures, they bore witness to the tragic awareness of having lost an enlightening and charismatic guide who left an unbridgeable void behind. However, that gunshot did not shatter the dream that was embodied in the victim. And in the years that followed, although marked by many episodes of racial discrimination (which, after all, is still widely seen today), significant progress has been made along the path of calm and peaceful coexistence between Blacks and Whites. Martin Luther King's legacy has not been lost, nor has the evocative echo of his words faded with time. And the dream lives on.

WORLD YOUTH DAY

With only a few days left, Panama is buzzing with enthusiasm as the country awaits the visit of the Holy Father to take part in the 2019 WYD. This event will focus on Mary's response to the Angel Gabriel's announcement that God had chosen her to bear the child Jesus.



Onward to WYD with Mary

The Holy Father's prayer intention for January

A passenger plane rumbles overhead with the approach of a road sign indicating the international airport of Panama City, the capital of the Central American country. A young man is seen collecting his backpack from the baggage carousel and he withdraws a rosary from it. A patch on his bag displays the symbol of World Youth Day 2019: Our Lady of Guadalupe. The video entitled "Young people and the example of Mary" – which presents Pope Francis' prayer intention for the month of January, entrusted to the Worldwide Prayer Net-

work, (www.thepopevideo.org) – leaves no doubt. The scenes revolve entirely around the celebration of WYD, which will take place in Panama from 22 to 27 January. This is the reason the Pontiff focuses his attention on the young generations, with the specific request: "Let us pray that young people, especially in Latin America, follow the example of Mary and respond to the call of the Lord to communicate the joy of the Gospel to the world".

Other young people gather up their backpacks and, recognizing that each is carrying the WYD logo, join together. The atmosphere is one of joy and peace: "You young people have, in the Virgin Mary, a reason for joy and a source of inspiration", the Pope says, inviting all those who will participate in person or via means of communication to "take advantage of the

World Youth Day in Panama to contemplate Christ together with Mary". And now, dozens of young backpackers are seen joyfully parading down the street. The invitation is to live this experience with one's gaze toward the Virgin and with a particular intention: peace in hearts and in the world. "We will pray the Rosary together for peace", the Pope says, "each of us in our own language. And ask for strength to dream and to work for peace". The video concludes as the flag of Panama draws ever closer until practically covering the screen, immersing the spectator in the world event.

Translated into nine languages, the video was prepared for the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network by La Machi agency, which handled production and distribution, in cooperation with Vatican Media, which recorded it.



Young people wave Panamanian flags after Pope Francis celebrated the 2016 World Youth Day closing Mass in Poland.

On the eve of World Youth Day, which will be celebrated in Panama from 22-27 January, the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life has announced an initiative related to the impact of the Synod of Bishops on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment.

The Dicastery notes on its website that, in addition to the preparatory phase (articles 5-10) and celebrative phase (articles 11-18), Pope Francis' latest Apostolic Exhortation *Episcopalis Communio* (15 September 2018) envisages an implementation phase by the Synod Assembly (articles 19-21). This latter phase refers to the reception and realization of the Assembly's conclusions which must be promoted both by the

particular Churches and the Bishops' Conferences, as well as by those bodies in the Roman Curia competent to deal with the Synod theme.

According to its Statutes, the Dicastery "expresses the particular concern of the Church for the young, promoting their agency in the midst of the challenges of today's world. It supports the initiatives of the Holy Father in the field of youth ministry and is at the service of the Episcopal Conferences, of international youth associations. Promoting their collaboration and organizing meetings on an international level. An important aspect of its activity is the preparation of the World Youth Days" (article 8).

Thus, even though the Dicastery has devoted much of its energy over the past months to preparations for World Youth Day, the Dicastery states on its website, its members are particularly eager that the conclusions of the last Synodal Assembly on Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment be received and realized, particularly in the context of youth ministry. In this regard, an International Youth Forum

Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life

International Youth Forum to be convened in June

will be held in Rome from 18-22 June 2019. The Forum will offer a space for community discernment, while maintaining the synodal missionary style promoted by the Synod (cf. *Final Document*, nn. 119-124).

Delegates of the Episcopal Conferences and the major ecclesial movements and communities will be invited to the international Youth Forum. It is hoped that several young Auditors from the last Synod (who were known as the "young synodals") can be present in order to pass on their experience, in addition to a number of youth ministry specialists at the international level.

The main objective will be to receive, at the international level, the impulses of the Synod, starting from the *Final Document* of the Synod of Bishops, and also from a post-synodal document that the Holy Father is likely to have published by that date. The upcoming Forum is viewed as a very concrete way to respond to the request of the Synodal Fathers: "that the activity of the Youth Office of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life be reinforced also by the creation of a representative body of young people at international level" (no. 123).