

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH

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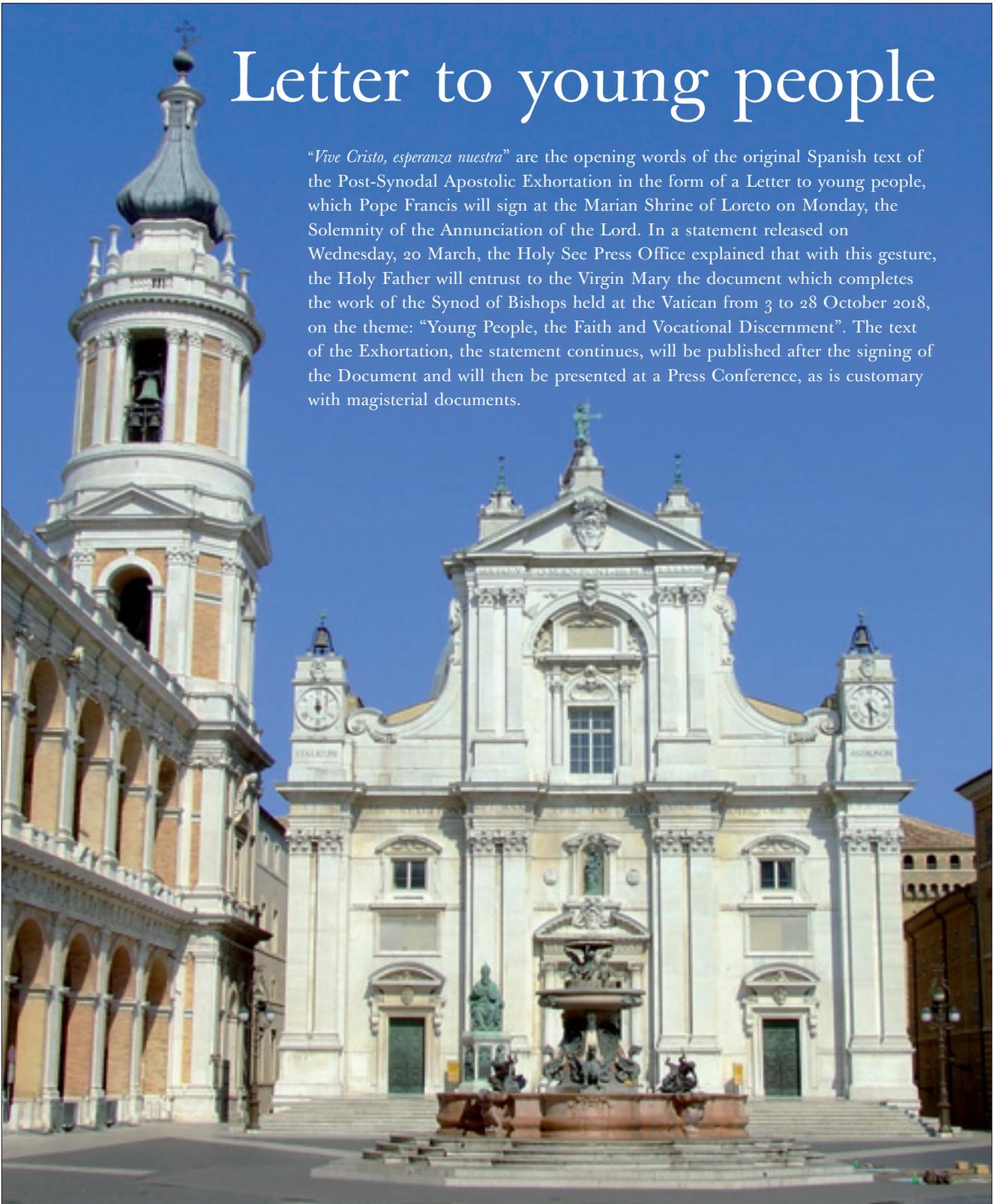
Vatican City

Friday, 22 March 2019

Holy Father to sign Apostolic Exhortation in Loreto on Monday, 25 March

Letter to young people

“Vive Cristo, esperanza nuestra” are the opening words of the original Spanish text of the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation in the form of a Letter to young people, which Pope Francis will sign at the Marian Shrine of Loreto on Monday, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. In a statement released on Wednesday, 20 March, the Holy See Press Office explained that with this gesture, the Holy Father will entrust to the Virgin Mary the document which completes the work of the Synod of Bishops held at the Vatican from 3 to 28 October 2018, on the theme: “Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment”. The text of the Exhortation, the statement continues, will be published after the signing of the Document and will then be presented at a Press Conference, as is customary with magisterial documents.



VATICAN BULLETIN



AUDIENCES

Saturday, 16 March

H.E. Mr Salva Kiir Mayardit, President of the Republic of South Sudan, with his entourage

Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life with Archbishop José Rodríguez Carballo, OFM, titular Archbishop of Belcastro, Secretary; Cardinal Kevin Joseph Farrell, Prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, with Fr Alexandre Awi Mello of the Schönstatt Fathers, Secretary

Members of the Confederation of Italian Cooperatives

Monday, 18 March

Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, Archbishop of Lyon, France

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

Prof. Ignacio Sánchez Díaz, Rector of the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile

Officials of the Court of Auditors

Wednesday, 20 March

Archbishop Gianfranco Gallone, titular Archbishop of Mottola, Apostolic Nuncio in Zambia, with his relatives

Thursday, 21 March

H.E. Mrs Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of the Republic of Malta, with her husband and her entourage

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

H.E. Mr Omer Ahmed Karim Berzini, Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq, on a farewell visit

Mr Carlo Messina, Managing Director of Intesa Sanpaolo Bank

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Francesco Biasin of Barra do Pirai-Volta Redonda, Brazil (13 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Luiz Henrique da Silva Brito as Bishop of Barra do Pirai-Volta Redonda. Until now he has served as titular Bishop of Zallata and Auxiliary of São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (13 Mar.).

Bishop da Silva Brito, 51, was born in São Gonçalo, Brazil. He was ordained a priest on 14 December 1991. He was ordained a bishop on 12 May 2012, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Zallata and Auxiliary of São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro.

The Holy Father appointed as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan, the Philippines, Father Fidelis B. Layog from the clergy of the said Archdiocese, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Girus Tarasii. Until now he has served as parish priest of Our Lady of Purification. (18 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Layog, 50, was born in Dagupan, the Philippines. He studied biblical theology at the Saint Thomas Pontifical University in Rome. He was ordained a priest on 29 April 1996. On his return to the Philippines he served in parish ministry and as: prefect of discipline at Mary Help of Christians High School Seminary in Dagupan City; vicar forane of Saint Peter and Paul Parish; director of Mapandan Catholic School.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Nikola Kekić of the Eparchy of Krizevci, Croatia for Byzantine Rite faithful (18 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed Father Milan Stipić as Apostolic Administrator *sedes vacante et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* of the Eparchy of Krizevci for Byzantine Rite faithful. Until now he has served as parish priest of the Transfiguration of the Lord parish in Jastrebarsko (18 Mar.).

Fr Stipić, 40, was born in Bosanski Novi, Bosnia and Herzegovina. He studied at the Major Greek Catholic Seminary in Zagreb. He was ordained a priest on 18 September 2003. He has served in parish ministry and as: Archpriest for the pastoral care of Greek Catholics in Dalmatia.

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of Menongue, Angola, Fr Leopoldo Ndakalako from the clergy of Ondjiva, Angola. Until now he has served as vicar general of Ondjiva (19 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Ndakalako, 50, was born in Ohakaonda, Angola. He was ordained a priest on 14 December 1997. He holds a doctorate in philosophy. He has served in parish ministry and as: vice-rector and then rector of the propaedeutic seminary; episcopal vicar for pastoral care.

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of Soroti, Uganda Fr Joseph Eciru Oliach from the clergy of the said Diocese. Until now he has served as professor and formator at St. Mary's National Major Seminary of Ggaba (19 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Oliach, 48, was born in Gweri, Uganda. He was ordained a priest on 9 August 2003. He holds a licence in Sacred Scripture and a doctorate in biblical theology. He has served in parish ministry and as: teacher of Latin, of Sacred Scripture; formator and professor of Sacred Scripture and Hebrew; head of the Bible desk at the Secretariat of the Episcopal Conference.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Flavio Calle Zapata of Ibagué, Colombia (19 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed as Auxiliary Bishop of Santa Rosa, Argentina, Fr Luis Dario Martin from the clergy of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Bisenzio. Until now he has served as parish priest of Nuestra Señora de Luján de los Patriotas Parish (20 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Martín, 58, was born in General Pico, Argentina. He was ordained a priest on 17 March 1990. He has served in parish ministry and as: dean and member of the Presbyteral Council; principal of the Coun-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

With the President of the Republic of South Sudan

On Saturday morning, 16 March, the Holy Father received in audience H.E. Mr Salva Kiir Mayardit, President of the Republic of South Sudan, 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 were highlighted, as well as the contribution of the Catholic Church in the fields of education and healthcare, and in the process of reconciliation and the reconstruction of the nation. Attention then turned to matters regarding the implementation of the agreement recently reached by various political actors, with a view to a definitive solution to the conflicts, the return of refugees and displaced persons, and the integral development of the country.

In this context, Pope Francis expressed the wish to ascertain the conditions for a possible visit to South Sudan, as a sign of closeness to the population and of encouragement for the peace process.



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GENERAL AUDIENCE

At the General Audience in Saint Peter's Square on Wednesday, 20 March, Pope Francis continued his series of catecheses on the Lord's Prayer. He explained to the faithful that it is "a courageous, even militant prayer, because there are many, too many realities in the world that are not in accordance with God's plan". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's catechesis, which he shared in Italian.



Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning,

Continuing our catechesis on the Lord's Prayer, today we will pause on the third invocation: "thy will be done". It should be read together with the first two – "hallowed be thy name" and "thy Kingdom come" – so that they jointly form a triptych: "hallowed be thy name", "thy Kingdom come", "thy will be done". Today we will speak about the third.

Before man's care for the world, there is the tireless care God employs for man and for the world. The whole Gospel reflects this inversion of perspective. The sinner Zacchaeus climbs up a tree because he wants to see Jesus but he does not know that, much earlier, God had sought him. When Jesus arrives, He says to him: "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today". And at the end He states: "the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost" (Lk 19:5-10). This is *God's will*, what we pray to be done. What is God's will, incarnated in Jesus? To seek and to save the one who is lost. And in prayer, we ask that God's seeking may be successful, that his universal plan of salvation may be accomplished, firstly in each of us, and then in the entire world. Have you thought about what it means that God seeks me? Each one of us can say: "But does God seek me?" – "Yes! he seeks you! He seeks me": he seeks each one of us, personally. But God is great! How much love there is behind all this.

God is not ambiguous. He never conceals himself behind enigmas. He did not plan the world's future in an incomprehensible way. No. He is clear. If we do not understand this, then we also risk not understanding the meaning of the third expression of the "Our Father". Indeed, the Bible is filled with expressions that tell us about God's positive will for the world. And in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, we find a collection of quotes that bear witness to this faithful and patient divine will (cf. nn. 2821-2827). And in his First Letter to Timothy, Saint Paul writes: God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2:4). This, without a shadow of a

The Holy Father continues the series of catecheses on the Lord's Prayer

Courage to trust in God

doubt, is God's will: the salvation of man, of mankind, of each of us. God knocks upon the door of our heart with his love. Why? To attract us, to attract us to him and to carry us forward on the path of salvation. God is close to each of us, with his love, to lead us by the hand to salvation. How much love there is behind this!

Therefore, by praying "thy will be done", we are not called to subserviently bow our head as if we were slaves. No! God wants us to be free; his love frees us. Indeed, the "Our Father" is the prayer of children, not of slaves; but of children who know their father's heart and are certain of his loving plan. Woe to us if, in uttering these words, we should shrug our shoulders as a sign of surrender to a destiny we find repellent and that we are unable to change. On the contrary, it is a prayer that is filled with ardent trust in God who wants good, life and salvation for us. A courageous, even militant prayer, because there are many, too many realities in the world that are not in accordance with God's plan. We all know them. Paraphrasing

the prophet Isaiah, we could say: "Here, Father, there is war, abuse of power, exploitation; but we know that you want our good. You want our good, therefore we implore you: thy will be done! Lord, overturn the world's plans, transform swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks: so that no one may learn the art of war any more" (cf. 2:4). God wants peace.

The "Our Father" is a prayer which kindles in us the same love as Jesus' love for the Father's will, a flame that spurs us to transform the world with love. The Christian does not believe in an inescapable "fate". There is nothing un-

planned in Christian faith. Rather, there is a salvation waiting to manifest itself in the life of each man and woman, and to be fulfilled in eternity. When we pray, we believe that God can and wants to transform reality by overcoming evil with good. It makes sense to obey and to surrender oneself to this God, even at the hour of the most difficult trial.

So it was for Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane when he experienced anguish and prayed: "Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Lk 22:42). Jesus is crushed by the evil of the world. However, he trustingly surrenders himself to the ocean of love of the Father's will. The martyrs, too, were not seeking death in their trials. They were seeking the "after-death", the resurrection. Out of love, God can lead us to walk along difficult paths and to experience wounds and painful thorns, but he will never forsake us. He will always be with us, beside us, within us. For a believer this is more than a hope, it is a

certainty: God is with me. The same that we find in the parable in Luke's Gospel regarding the need to always pray. Jesus says: "will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will vindicate them speedily" (18:7-8). Such is the Lord. This is how he loves us. This is how he cares for us. But now I would like to invite you to pray the "Our Father" all together. And those who do not know Italian can pray it in their own language. Let us pray together.

[Our Father ...]

APPEAL FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

In these days, great floods have caused mourning and destruction in various regions of Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi. I express my sorrow and my closeness to these dear peoples. I entrust the victims and their families to God's mercy and I implore him to comfort and support those struck by this calamity.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, especially those from England, Belgium, Croatia, Norway, Nigeria, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America. With prayerful good wishes that this Lent will be a time of grace and spiritual renewal for you and your families, I invoke upon all of you joy and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

I offer a special greeting to *young people, the elderly, the sick and newlyweds*. May the Lenten journey we are undertaking be an opportunity for authentic conversion for each one of us, so that we may reach full maturity of faith in Christ, yearning to spread his Gospel in every area of life in which we find ourselves.



Former Primate of Belgium

Cardinal Godfried Danneels dies

Following a protracted illness, Cardinal Godfried Danneels, Archbishop emeritus of Mechelen-Brussel (Malines-Brussels), died on Thursday morning, 14 March, at his residence in Mechelen. He was 85 years old. After receiving news of the Cardinal's passing, Pope Francis expressed his condolences in a telegram addressed to Cardinal Jozef De Kesel, current Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussel. The following is a brief biography, accompanied by a translation of the Holy Father's telegram, which was written in French.



Cardinal Godfried Danneels passed away the day after the sixth anniversary of the conclave in which Pope Francis was elected, an assembly in which he had been a protagonist. As Proto-presbyter, in fact, the late Archbishop had been among the main celebrants of the Mass *Pro eligendo Romano Pontifice* of 12 March 2013. The following evening, he was among those closest to Pope Francis when the newly elected Bishop of Rome made his first appearance at the central loggia of the Vatican Basilica. Several days later, during the Mass for the beginning of Francis' Petrine ministry on 19 March, Cardinal Danneels led the prayer following the imposition of the Pallium.

Born in West Flanders on 4 June 1933, Godfried Danneels attended secondary school at the College of St Joseph in Tielt. He obtained a licence in theology in 1954 from the Higher Institute of Philosophy at the Catholic University of Louvain. In 1961, he obtained a degree in theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He was ordained a priest for the clergy of Bruges on 17 August 1957, and two years later was appointed spiritual director of the Diocese's Major Seminary. Ten years later he became a professor of Theology at the Flemish Catholic University of Louvain. At the end of 1977 he was appointed Bishop of Antwerpen (Antwerp), by Pope Paul VI. During the two years in which he led the Diocese, he de-

voted much of his time to the spiritual direction of priests and pastoral leaders, increasing the cooperation between the clergy and the laity. Shortly after being elected to the Pontificate in 1978, John Paul II appointed him President Delegate – along with Cardinal Willebrands – of the Particular Synod for the Netherlands held in January 1980.

Meanwhile, at the end of 1979, Pope Wojtyła appointed him Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussel (Malines-Brussels) – thus succeeding Cardinal Suenens as Primate of Belgium – in which capacity he continued to serve until 18 January 2010. In the Consistory of 1983, he was created Cardinal with the title of Sant'Anastasia. He later became a member of the Council of the Second Section of the Secretariat of State, and of the Congregations for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, for the Evangelization of Peoples, for Catholic Education and for the Oriental Churches.

He served as President of the Bishops' Conference of Belgium

Sadly having learned of the death of Cardinal Godfried Danneels, Archbishop emeritus of Mechelen-Brussel, I offer my deepest condolences to you, as well as to his family, to the Bishops of Belgium, the clergy, the consecrated persons and all the faithful mourning this loss. This zealous pastor served the Church with dedication, not only in his Diocese, but also at the national level as President of the Bishops' Conference of Belgium, and at the same time, as member of various Roman Dicasteries. Attentive to the challenges of the contemporary Church, Cardinal Danneels also played an active role in various Synods of Bishops, particularly those of 2014 and 2015 on the family. He has now been called to God at this time of purification and of journeying toward the Resurrection of the Lord. I implore Christ, victor over evil and death, to welcome him in His peace and in His joy. As a pledge of consolation, I impart a special Apostolic Blessing upon you, and upon the relatives of the deceased Cardinal, the pastors, the faithful and all those who will take part in the funeral.

FRANCISCUS PP.

from the beginning of 1980 until the end of 2009, and as Military Ordinary for more than 30 years, beginning on 15 September 1980. During that time, he also participated in the April 2005 conclave which elected Pope Joseph Ratzinger.

As Primate of Belgium he welcomed John Paul II on the occasion of his pastoral visit from 16 to 21 May 1985. He again welcomed Pope Wojtyła on 3 and 4 May 1995, when the Pontiff returned for the second time to Belgium to beatify Father Damian de Veuster, a missionary who had consecrated himself to lepers in Molokai. On 10 December 1989, Cardinal Danneels also participated in the Canonization of Muziano Maria Wiaux in the Vatican Basilica, leading a large delegation of the Belgian Church. He authored various articles, studies and essays of considerable theological and ecclesial significance. He also often spoke on the theme of the family and on the pastoral commitment of the Church in Europe in the transition between the two millennia.

He attended numerous Synods of Bishops, including: the Fifth Ordinary General Assembly, on the family (1980); the Sixth Ordinary General

Assembly, on reconciliation and penance (1983); the Second Extraordinary General Assembly, 20 years after the Second Vatican Council (1985), in which he was a speaker; the Seventh Ordinary General Assembly, on the laity (1987); the Eighth Ordinary General Assembly, on priests (1990); the First Special Assembly for Europe (1991); the Ninth Ordinary General Assembly, on consecrated life (1994); the Second Special Assembly for Europe (1999); the Tenth Ordinary General Assembly, on the bishop (2001); and, during the Pontificate of Benedict XVI, the Eleventh Ordinary General Assembly, on the Eucharist (2005) and the Twelfth Ordinary General Assembly, on the Word of God (2008).

On several occasions he served as a member of the General Secretariat of the Synod, and was nominated by Pope Francis to participate in the Third Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the pastoral challenges of the family in the context of evangelization (October 2014) and in the Fourteenth Ordinary General Assembly, on the vocation and mission of the family in the Church and in the contemporary world (October 2015).

VATICAN BULLETIN

CARDINAL TAKES POSSESSION

On Sunday, 10 March, Cardinal Pedro Ricardo Barreto Jimeno, SJ, Archbishop of Huancayo, Peru, took possession of the Title of Santi Pietro e Paolo a Via Ostiense, Rome.

NECROLOGY

Bishop René Arnold Valero, Titular Bishop of Vicus Turris, Auxiliary Bishop emeritus of Brooklyn, USA, at age 88 (10 Mar.)

Bishop Joachim Mbadu Kikhela Kupika, titular Bishop of Belesasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, at age 87 (12 Mar.)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

cil of Schools of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires.

CONGREGATION FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES

The Holy Father has given his assent to the canonical election by the Synod of Bishops of the Patriarchal Church of Antioch for Greek Melkites of Fr Youssef Matta as Archbishop of Akka for Greek Melkites, Israel (18 Mar.).

The Synod of Bishops of the Patriarchal Church of Antioch for Greek Melkites, which met last 5 to 9 November in Raboueh, Lebanon,

elected him Archbishop of Akka for Greek Melkites.

Archbishop-elect Matta, 50, was born in Nazareth. He was ordained a priest on 19 June 1999. He holds a doctorate in Eastern canon law. He has served in parish ministry and as: private secretary to Archbishop Pierre Mouallem and to Archbishop Elias Chacour; formator at the Greek Melkite Seminary of Saint Anne in Raboueh, Lebanon.

APOSTOLIC NUNCIO

The Holy Father appointed as Apostolic Nuncio in South Sudan,

Archbishop Hubertus Matheus Maria van Megen, titular Archbishop of Novaliciana and Apostolic Nuncio in Kenya (19 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed as Apostolic Nuncio in Mozambique, Archbishop Piergiorgio Bertoldi, titular Archbishop of Spello. Until now he has served as Apostolic Nuncio in Burkina Faso and in Niger (19 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed as Apostolic Nuncio in Slovenia and Apostolic Delegate in Kosovo, Archbishop Jean-Marie Speich, titular Archbishop of Sulci. Until now he has served as Apostolic Nuncio in Ghana (19 Mar.).

With the tenderness of a mother

Camillians' mission to accompany the sick

"Be close to those who are suffering, with the tenderness and devotion of a mother". Pope Francis entrusted this mission to the men and women religious of the Camillian Charismatic Family, whom he received in audience in the Clementine Hall on Monday morning, 18 March. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's discourse, which he delivered in Italian.

Dear Sisters and dear Brothers,

It is with joy that I welcome all of you, representatives of the various expressions of the *Camillian Family*! I greet you with affection and I thank Fr Pessini for his words. And I ask the Lord to preserve his sense of humour: you will never have a gastric ulcer! You are constantly engaged in giving lovingly and generously to the sick, carrying out a valuable mission, in the Church and in society, at the side of the suffering. When illness disturbs and at times overturns our lives, we then feel the strong need to have a compassionate and also competent brother or sister beside us, who consoles us, supports us and helps us to recover the precious benefit of health, or who accompanies us to the threshold of our final meeting with the Lord!

The entire Church as a whole has received from her Master and Lord the mandate to pro-

one who receives them, but for the use of the People of God. If a charism ... serves instead as self-affirmation, then it is doubtful that we are dealing with an authentic charism or one faithfully lived out. The charisms are special graces, given to some for the good of many others" (*Catechesis*, 6 November 2013). They always have a transitive nature: they are orientated towards others. Over the years, you have made efforts to embody your charism faithfully, expressing it in a multitude of apostolic works and in pastoral service to the benefit of suffering humanity throughout the world.

In line with this mission, which some members of your religious families have lived heroically by becoming models of holiness, you are called to continue your service in a prophetic way. It is a matter of looking to the future, open to new forms of apostolate which

claim the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick (cf. Lk 9:2), in imitation of him, the Good Shepherd, the Good Samaritan, who passed through this earth "benefiting and healing all those who were prisoners of evil" (*Common Preface VIII*). But God bestowed upon Saint Camillus de Lellis in particular, and upon all those who follow his example, the gift of reviving and witnessing to Christ's merciful love for the sick. The Church has recognized it as an authentic charism of the Spirit. You live it in an exemplary way, expressing it in life along the twofold path of directly assisting the sick, especially the poorest, in their bodily and spiritual needs, and of teaching others the best way to serve them, for the benefit of the Church and of humanity.

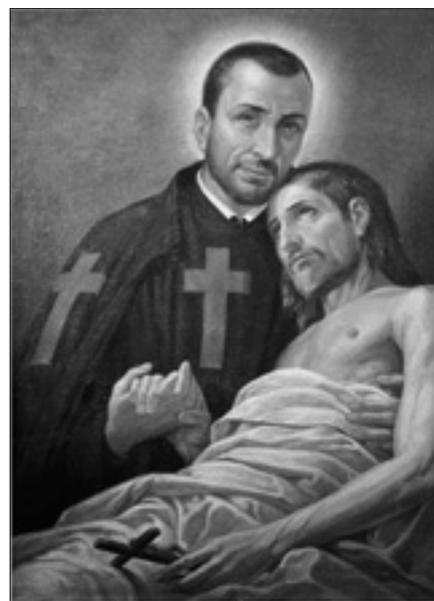


claim the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick (cf. Lk 9:2), in imitation of him, the Good Shepherd, the Good Samaritan, who passed through this earth "benefiting and healing all those who were prisoners of evil" (*Common Preface VIII*). But God bestowed upon Saint Camillus de Lellis in particular, and upon all those who follow his example, the gift of reviving and witnessing to Christ's merciful love for the sick. The Church has recognized it as an authentic charism of the Spirit. You live it in an exemplary way, expressing it in life along the twofold path of directly assisting the sick, especially the poorest, in their bodily and spiritual needs, and of teaching others the best way to serve them, for the benefit of the Church and of humanity.

All charisms "are gifts that the Holy Spirit gives us ... Gifts given not to be hidden but to be shared with others. They are not given for the benefit of the

the Spirit inspires in you and which the signs of the times and the needs of the world and of the Church require. The great gift you have received is still current and necessary also for this age of ours, because it is founded on love that will never end (cf. 1 Cor 13:8). As a living part of the Church, sent to spread the Gospel so that people "may have life, and have it abundantly" (Jn 10:10), you have the wonderful opportunity to do so precisely through the gestures of caring for life and for integral *salus*, so necessary in our time too.

From the charism initially inspired in Saint Camillus, various ecclesial bodies have gradually been constituted, which today form a single constellation, that is, a "charismatic family" composed of men and women religious, secular consecrated persons and lay faithful. None of these realities is the sole depositary or single holder of the cha-



Saint Camillus de Lellis, Patron Saint of the sick

risms, but each one receives it as a gift and interprets it and updates it according to its specific vocation, in the various historical and geographical contexts. The original charism remains at the centre, as a perennial source of light and inspiration, which is understood and embodied dynamically in the various forms. Each one of them is offered to the others in a reciprocal exchange of gifts that enriches everyone, for the common benefit and in view of the implementation of the same mission. What is it? To witness in every time and place to Christ's merciful love for the sick.

Saint Camillus de Lellis, whom you all recognize as "Father", lived in an age in which the possibility of active consecrated life for women had not yet matured, but only that of the contemplative and monastic type. He therefore constituted an Order of men only. However, he had clearly understood that care of the infirm also had to be practised with attitudes that are typical of the female soul, such that he asked his religious to serve the sick "with that affection that a loving mother usually has for her only sick child" (cf. *Rules of the Company of the Servants of the Sick*, 1584, xxvii). The two women's Congregations established in the 19th century and the secular Institutes born in the last century have given completeness to the expression of the charism of mercy toward the sick, enriching it with the distinctly feminine qualities of love and care. In this, the Virgin Mary, Health of the Sick and Mother of the consecrated, accompanies you and guides you. From her we learn how to be close to those who are suffering, with the tenderness and devotion of a mother. I would like to pause a moment on this word "tenderness". It is a word that today risks being removed from the dictionary! We must reclaim it and put it into practice once more. Christianity without tenderness does not work. Tenderness is a truly Christian attitude; it is also the "marrow" of our encounter with people who are suffering.

Dear brothers and sisters, I encourage you to always cultivate communion among your-

selfs, in that *synodal style* that I have proposed to the entire Church, listening to one another, and all women and men listening to the Holy Spirit, so as to value the contribution that each individual offers to the one Family, thus to express more fully the multiple potentialities that the charism encompasses. Be ever aware that "it is in communion, even when this proves painful, that a charism is seen to be authentic and mysteriously fruitful" (*Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, 130). In fidelity to the initial inspiration of the Founder and the Foundress, and in listening to the many forms of suffering and poverty

The charisms are special graces, given to some for the good of many others....

The great gift you have received is still current and necessary also for this age of ours, because it is founded on love

of humanity today, you will know how to make the gift you received shine with an ever new light; and many young men and women throughout the world will be able to feel attracted by it and to join you, so as to continue bearing witness to God's tenderness.

Dear brothers and sisters, I ask the Holy Spirit to support this new phase of your journey as the *Camillian Charismatic Family*. I wholeheartedly bless all of you, your communities and the people you serve. And please, continue to pray for me too. Thank you.

IN MOROCCO

Human rights, political representation, theology

You spoke of a marvellous world that would come because we want it. In this world, you said, children will no longer know wretchedness, mothers will no longer abandon their children and women will no longer be beaten, despised or vilified. We are still and forever marching on like the insane and the condemned. When we arrived I was already dreaming. (Saïda Menebhi, 1952-1977).

MARTINA BIONDI

A seemingly marginal phenomenon, the political role played by women in Morocco is a long-standing reality that runs through the 20th century, from its early years to this day, animating the nationalist anti-colonial struggle and the nascent women's organizations, passing through the traditionally male political structures, challenging the censorship and repression of Hassan II's regime (1961-1999). From the 1940s women have mobilized themselves to obtain better recognition in terms of rights, while from the 1970s, among female groups too, the connection between Islamist and secular structures is taking shape. However this polarization is proving to be less marked in the new century, when theological elaboration and "movementist" practices are opening to the so-called "third way" which aims to harmonize the positions between a recognition of human rights and full adherence to Islam.

Nationalist women and anti-colonial mobilization

The first important female figure in contemporary Moroccan history is Malika al-Fasi (1919-2007). She was a nationalist who came from a well-to-do family in Fez. Her cousin and husband, Muhammad al-Fasi, was Rector of the al-Qarawiyyin, a prestigious university that is among the oldest in the world – founded in 859 by a woman, Fatima al-Fihri – while another cousin of Malika's, Allal al-Fasi, was the leader of the Istiqlal (Independence) Party and fought on the front line to liberate Morocco from the French Protectorate established in 1912 by the Treaty of Fez. From her childhood Malika received a solid education and very soon developed an anti-colonial awareness which drove her to side

against the French occupation, becoming the only woman among the 66 signatories of the *Manifesto for Independence* in 1944. At the age of 15 she published her first article in the *al-Maghrib* newspaper, under a pseudonym. In it she stressed the importance of women's education and, when Princess Lalla Aicha received a diploma in Primary Education, Malika acknowledged the symbolic value of this event in an article entitled *The Rebirth of Moroccan Women*, noting at the same time that girls were still barred from secondary education. With other women she then committed herself to passing on donations so that the al-Qarawiyyin would admit girls, an objective which in the end was achieved.

The establishment of the first Moroccan women's association was recorded in the 1940s. It gathered together women of the bourgeoisie of Fez close to the

Istiqlal Party. The Sisters of Purity became promoters of the first official document which demanded the abolition of polygamy, maternal custody of children in the case of divorce, and equality in the legal value given to men and women in the context of court testimony. In the 1950s, along with the mobilization of representatives of the bourgeoisie, there was a certain adherence of women to the armed combat against the French occupation. The subsequent issuing of 300 cards to women war veterans is a testimony of women's participation in the achievement of Morocco's independence, although it is estimated that women contributed in far greater number.

Between suppression and the defence of human rights

Following independence and the formation of the new Kingdom of Morocco in 1956, while women belonging to the elite were given positions in charitable associations for minors and the needy, the substantial removal of women's issues from party agendas and the approval of a "per-

sonal status code" (the *Mudawana*, 1957) which minimized women's civil rights, resulted in the formation of more radical movementist groups and the rise of women in the political arena. During the Moroccan "Years of Lead" (1962-1999) a multi-faceted female protagonism emerged: involving unions, students, associations and politics in the strict sense. Progressive-oriented parties opened the door to internal female representation, while the first Congress of the *Union Progressiste des Femmes Marocaines*, the women's section of the *Union Marocaine du Travail*, took place in Casablanca in 1962. The king responded by initiating the so-called "state feminism", which provided for several initiatives for women, firmly managed from above, with the help of the *Union Nationale des Femmes Marocaines*, founded in 1969 and presided by Princess Lalla Fatima.

In the 1970s, in the framework of the developing secular movementism, women were mobilized in associations in defence of human rights, such as the *Association Marocaine des Droits Humains*, founded in 1979. In this context,

following the increasingly ferocious repression by Hassan II's regime of any form of dissidence, numerous opponents, including women, were subjected to abduction and arbitrary detention. Saïda Menebhi's case is famous. A former leader of the student movement, Menebhi was a young teacher enrolled in the *Union Marocaine du Travail* and a militant member of the *Ille Al Amam* ("forward") movement. She was arrested in 1977 for her membership in the so-called "New Left", and was subjected to torture. In prison she wrote heart-rending poetical compositions on her condition as a prisoner, and died at the age of 25 following a 34-day hunger strike for prisoners' rights.

Like her, at the end of the 1970s Rabca Ftouh, Fatima Oukacha, Fatma El Bouih and Latifa Jbabdi took part in the student movement and were also placed under arrest, but managed to survive the regime's tortures. El Bouih also wrote her memoirs in prison (*Hadhith al-Atamah*, "Narratives from Obscurity"). After their release on 23 March, El Bouih and Jbabdi, both connected with the Marxist



Mouvement du 23 Mars, resumed their political and activist activities. Jbabdi (born in 1955) is one of the women who founded the *Union de l'Action Féminine*, to which El Bouih also belonged. After the changes in 1999 which followed the death of King Hassan II and Morocco's definitive emergence from the Years of Lead, Jbabdi became a founding member of the *Observatoire Marocain de la Vérité et la Justice*. Profiting from the recently introduced

quotas of women, she served as a Member of Parliament from 2007 to 2011 and was involved in the commission formed in 2004 to offer reparation to the victims of the Years of Lead and to their families. Former founder and editor-in-chief – from 1983 to 1994 – of the *8 Mars* newspaper, she is active in numerous human rights associations in Morocco and was also a founding member of the *Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc*.

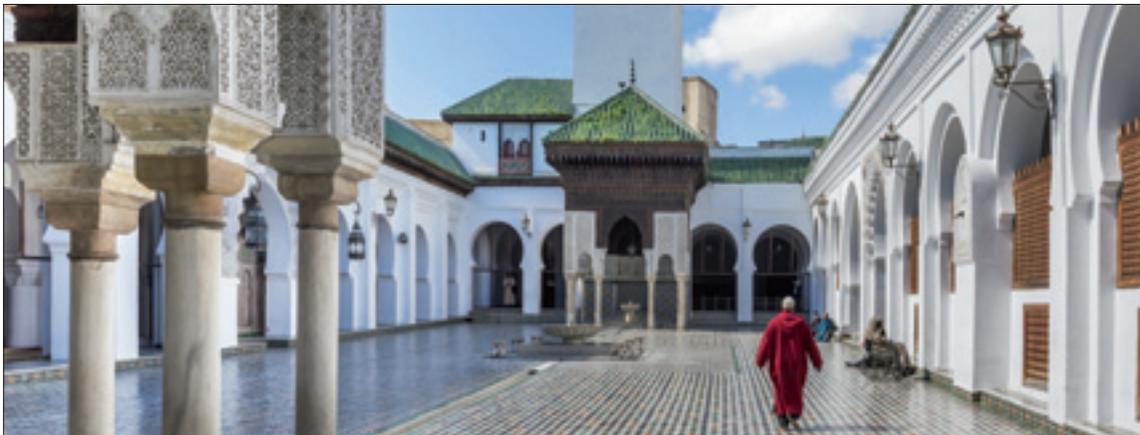
Once again in the context of parliamentary representation, in 1993 Badia Sqalli was the first woman to cross the threshold of the Moroccan Parliament along with Latifa Bennani-Smires of the Istiqlal, while Nouzha Sqalli, also active in the defence of human rights, was the first Moroccan woman to be appointed a minister in 2007. With regard to labour representation, Khadija Rhamiri (born in 1950) was a remarkable figure. A veteran trades unionist, Rhamiri fought for the acceptance of female representation in unions, with special reference to the sparsely unionized farming sector. Moreover in 1987 she founded the women's union section in the *Union Marocaine du Travail*, which today has an increasing female presence even in executive positions, such as that held recently by Amal El Amri, who in the first decade of the 21st century became a Member of Par-

liament in the *Parti du Progrès et du Socialisme*.

Lay and Islamist women toward convergence

As has been seen, for many women adherence to "associationism" and to the fight for human rights served as a trampoline to launch them into political participation and positions in parliament. In Morocco, the movementism of the past, aided by associationism, has two fundamental faces: the laical, just described, and the Islamic which, with regard to the feminine question, maintains that "Islam has already liberated women". Among the Islamists emerges the charismatic figure of Nadia Yassine, the leading spokesperson of the Justice and Spirituality group which, moving from the Sufi tradition, opposed both the Alawite regime of Hassan II and the secular political orientation which led Morocco to sign international conventions for human rights such as CEDAW, for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, to which Morocco subscribed with some reservations.

Yet today there is talk of a third way between secularism and Islamism, taken by those who, like Asma' Lamrabet, theologian and former director of Rabat's Centre for Studies and Research on Women in Islam, aim to reconcile the recognition of human rights with full adherence to Islam through a reinterpretation of the sacred texts. Furthermore, Lamrabet is collating the intellectual heritage of Fatima Nemissi (1940-2015), the famous Moroccan sociologist who, starting from lay positions, intended in her last work to recover the Islamic roots of equality and freedom thanks to a reinterpretation of the tradition of the *Sienna*, namely, the sayings and deeds of the Prophet. In Morocco the theologian is also a politician, as emphasized by Sara Borillo, author of *Femminismi e Islam in Morocco. Attività laiche, teologhe e predicatrici* (Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2017) ["Feminism and Islam in Morocco: Lay women activists, theologians and preachers"]. This theological challenge is significant, for it aims to make known the political and religious authority of a female voice and promises a real improvement in the living conditions of Muslim women who do not want to give up the fullness of life under the banner of faith.



Morocco's al-Qarawiyyin Library

Congregation for the Causes of Saints

Promulgation of Decrees

On Tuesday, 19 March, the Holy Father received in audience Cardinal Angelo Becciu, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. During the audience, the Supreme Pontiff authorized the Congregation to promulgate Decrees regarding:

– a miracle attributed to the intercession of the Venerable Servant of God Maria Emilia Riquelme y Zayas, Foundress of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and of the Blessed Virgin Mary Immaculate, born on 5 August 1847 in Granada, Spain and died there on 10 December 1940;

– the martyrdom of the Servants of God Valeriu Traian Frentiu, Vasile Aftenie, Ioan Suci, Tito Livio Chinezu, Ioan Balan, Alexandru Rusu, and Iuliu Hossu, bishops, killed in hatred of the faith at various locations in Romania between 1950 and 1970;

– the martyrdom of the Servant of God Alfredo Cremonesi, professed priest of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions, born in Ripalta Guerina, Italy on 16 May 1902 and killed in hatred of the faith in the village of Donokù, Myanmar (Burma) on 7 February 1953;



Maria Hueber

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Francesco Maria Di Francia, diocesan priest, Founder of the Congregation of Capuchin Sisters of the Sacred Heart, born

in Messina, Italy on 19 February 1853 and died in Roccalumera, Italy on 22 December 1913;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Maria Hueber, Foundress of the Congregation of the Tertiary Sisters of Saint Francis, born on 22 May 1653 in Bressanone (now Italy) and died there on 31 July 1705;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Maria Teresa Camera, Foundress of the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of Pietà, born on 8 October 1818 in Ovada, Italy and died there on 24 March 1894;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Maria Teresa Gabrieli, Co-Foundress of the Congregation of the Poverelle Sisters - Palazzolo Institute, born on 13 September 1837 in Bergamo, Italy and died there on 6 February 1908;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Giovanna Francesca dello Spirito Santo (in the world: Luisa Ferrari), Foundress of the Institute of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Word Incarnate, born in Reggio Emilia, Italy on 14 September 1888 and died in Fiesole, Italy on 21 December 1984.

Celebrations for Holy Week presided by Pope Francis

14 April

PALM SUNDAY OF
THE PASSION OF THE LORD

34th World Youth Day on the theme: "I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38)

Saint Peter's Square, 10:00 AM

The Holy Father will bless the palms and the olive branches. At the end of the procession, he will celebrate the Mass of the Passion of the Lord.

18 April

HOLY THURSDAY
CHRISM MASS

Vatican Basilica, 9:30 AM

The Holy Father will preside at the concelebration of the Chrism Mass with the Patriarchs, Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops and priests present in Rome.

19 April

GOOD FRIDAY
CELEBRATION OF THE
PASSION OF THE LORD

Vatican Basilica, 5:00 PM

The Holy Father will preside at the Liturgy of the Word, the Adoration

of the Cross and the Rite of Communion.

VIA CRUCIS

Colosseum, 9:15 pm

The Holy Father will preside at the "Via Crucis", at the end of which, he will address the faithful and impart his Apostolic Blessing.

20 - 21 April

EASTER SUNDAY OF THE
RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

EASTER VIGIL

Vatican Basilica, 8:30 PM

The Holy Father will bless the new flame in the atrium of Saint Peter's Basilica. After the processional into the Basilica with the Paschal candle, while chanting the hymn *Exsultet*, he will preside at the Baptismal Liturgy and the Eucharistic Liturgy, which he will concelebrate with the Cardinals and Bishops who so wish, and some priests.

HOLY MASS OF THE DAY

Saint Peter's Square, 10:00 AM

The Holy Father will celebrate Holy Mass. At the end of the celebration, he will impart the *Urbi et Orbi* blessing from the central balcony of the Basilica.

Pope's solidarity with New Zealand's Muslim community

Massacre in two mosques

On Friday, 15 March, terror struck the peaceful community of Christchurch, New Zealand when a terrorist opened fire on worshippers who had gathered for Friday prayer in two mosques. Fifty people were killed and at least 50 others wounded, many critically. Speaking to live cameras on "one of New Zealand's darkest days", Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern confirmed the attack as an act of terrorism.

Upon learning of the tragedy the Holy Father sent a telegram, signed by Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, which stated that the Holy Father "was deeply saddened to learn of the injury and loss of life caused by the senseless acts of violence at two Mosques in Christchurch". He assured "all New Zealanders, and in particular the Muslim community, of his heartfelt solidarity". The message also expressed Pope Francis' support to "security and emergency personnel" and assured his prayers "for the healing of the injured, the consolation of those who grieve the loss of their loved ones, and for all affected by this tragedy".

The gunman and three other suspects were arrested within 36 minutes after the first emergency calls were received. The shooter has been identified as an Australian citizen and a far-right extremist. On social media shortly before the attack, he allegedly posted a 74-page "manifesto" which railed against Muslims and immigrants.

Even more disturbing, the gunman streamed live video over the Internet as the attack unfolded. The images showed the terrorist arriving at the Al Noor mosque, where he killed 41 people. He then went on to the Linwood Islamic Centre, where he assassinated seven more worshippers. On Thursday, 21 March, less than a week after the attack, New Zealand government banned military-style weapons.



Lenten Spiritual Exercises conclude for Holy Father and Roman Curia

On Wednesday morning, 13 March, continuing his series of meditations with Pope Francis and members of the Curia for the Lenten week of Spiritual Exercises, Abbot Bernardo Francesco Maria Gianni focused his fifth meditation on God's "desire". In it, he referred to his own Benedictine spiritual tradition, and cited a passage from the *Rule* which speaks about God's desire *to be desired*, a passage which invites all the faithful to participate in this "experience of discovering that they are sought and desired by the Lord".

"If we are still able to learn to desire today, it is because we have been desired". This awareness is fundamental, especially in today's world when we face a concrete reality that appears to have lost the meaning of this memory. Rediscovering this desire seems to be the civil virtue needed to re-energize a self-satisfied, lacklustre society. And this perspective must be shared with young people who are not aware that they too have been desired. Expanding the boundaries of the young is everyone's responsibility, he pointed out, because, as Pope Francis said in *Gaudium et Spes*: the "future of humanity lies in the hands of those who are strong enough to provide coming generations with reasons for living and hoping".

Abbot Gianni then advised the assembly to conduct an examination of conscience and to ask themselves: "How successful are we in not betraying the desirability that the Lord has inscribed in his Gospel?". The Abbot singled out the Eucharist as the meeting point of two desires: the desire of man, who



On Thursday morning, 14 March, during his seventh meditation, Abbot Gianni delved deeper into the theme of welcoming. Returning to the subject of the new Jerusalem, he explained that the heavenly Jerusalem is not so much "an ideal city, but rather an ideal of a city" in which doors are opened wide "so that humanity can finally access, meet and experience God's great promise made real".

Abbot Gianni then suggested a number of questions for an examination of conscience. Inspired by Pope Francis' Letter *Humana Communitas* sent to the Pontifical Academy for Life on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of its foundation, the prelate suggested focusing on the "humanism of fraternity and solidarity", asking: "have we done enough to offer our own specific contribution as Christians to a vision of humanity capable of upholding the unity of the family of peoples in today's political and cultural conditions, or have we lost sight of its centrality [...]?"

The secret to taking action lies in the awareness of a salvific design. We must "root our gaze in Christ and in his love". Concluding his remarks, the Abbot noted that "we have much to learn about the need for a radically evangelical hospitality for the city, for the entire Church".

On Thursday afternoon, during his eighth and final meditation, Abbot Gianni praised creation, "the great gift the Lord gives to our heart", and called for a rediscovery of the importance of night. Nighttime, he said, provides that moment of silent vigilance in which, "if one only pays attention, even the tiny lights in the sky can finally be the sign, the clue, the trace of someone who is seeking us". He invited those present to get up off the ground and "look on high, to be silent in order to listen intently to that word which the Lord never tires of offering us". This gesture, he continued, is helpful for everyone, especially for young people. There is a "divine manifestation in the shining of the sun and the fall of night. By paying attention to this manifestation, the human being learns to recognize himself in relation to other creatures".

But cities are noisy and rarely can one find silence in them. Indeed, even men of the Church, Abbot Gianni noted, often lose themselves in superficiality and pay scarce attention, "worried about doing, taking action, planning". We should listen to "what is missing" and make room for silence. By "recollecting in silence and in solitude, man 'exposes' himself to the reality of his nakedness", the preacher stressed, in order instead, to experience fullness and God's presence which is the truest reality there is. He advised having "the humble courage" to bring young people and those who appear distant "into the heart of silence, into the nighttime heart", because only in this way can reality finally regain "a breath of the mystery and the sense of a special communion with God".

Remembrance of the future

At the 'Casa Divin Maestro' in Ariccia on Friday morning, 15 March, the Pope and the Roman Curia concluded their Lenten Spiritual Exercises. After Abbot Bernardo Francesco Maria Gianni completed the final meditation, Pope Francis expressed his thanks. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's words of appreciation, which he offered in Italian.

I would like to thank you, Brother Bernardo, for all your help in these days. I was impressed by your efforts to enable us to enter, as the Word did, the human realm; and to understand that God always makes himself present in mankind. He first did so in the Incarnation of the Word, wholly, but He is also present in the traces He leaves in mankind. Likewise, the Incarnation of the Word – *indivisible and incontrovertible* – is there. And our work is perhaps to go forward....

I thank you very much for your efforts. Thank you for speaking to us about remembrance: this "deuteronomical" dimension that we forget; for speaking to us about hope, work, patience, and for showing us the way to have that "remembrance of the future" which always leads us forth. Thank you!

And it made me laugh when you said that, in reading the titles of the meditations, someone might not have understood what the Curia were doing; perhaps they hired a tour guide who would take them to get acquainted with Florence and its poets.... And in the first meditation, I too was a little disoriented; then I understood the message. Thank you.

I thought a lot about a Council document – *Gaudium et Spes* – it is perhaps the document that has found the most resistance, even today. And in certain moments I have seen you this way: as with the courage of the Council Fathers when they signed that document. I thank you very much. Pray for us, who are all sinners, everyone, but we wish to go forth in this way, serving the Lord. Thank you very much, and convey greetings to the monks on my behalf and that of all of us. Thank you!

Fraternity and hospitality

"awaits Easter", and that of the Lord, "who ardently wants to share Easter with us". And it is from this "school of desires" that we are called to say something new about the dignity of mankind, and particularly about the poorest who in the Eucharist can come to understand that they were created not out of need but of desire.

Abbot Gianni's sixth meditation on Wednesday afternoon, was centred around the themes of fraternity and community. Addressing the Curia specifically, he said: you are "called to a cohesive fraternal way of life" with "fidelity and loyalty to our Pope" and his Magisterium.

However, the Abbot pointed out, fraternity and unity especially in the Church are "not at all a gift to be taken for granted". They must be implored in prayer and nourished by the Eucharist in the "awareness of the inalienable strength of cohesiveness". He explained that indeed, the liturgy itself reawakens in all of us the awareness of this marvelous gift of being part of a community. The Eucharistic experience leads directly to the "evangelical realism" of Jesus and makes us become "witnesses to salvation". Jesus wants us "to touch human misery, to touch the suffering flesh of others" with true eucharistic concern and involvement in the cities and the lives of mankind. This, the Abbot explained, is the way to "light the flame in the heart of the world". Today's cities are wracked by division and therefore, he stressed, it is all the more urgent to witness to an "evangelical urbanism".

T. S. Eliot

The common tradition of Christianity which has made Europe



Reading room in the Bodleian Library, Oxford

It is necessary to be clear about what we mean by "culture," so that we may be clear about the distinction between the material organisation of Europe, and the spiritual organism of Europe. If the latter dies, then what you organise will not be Europe, but merely a mass of human beings speaking several different languages. And there will be no longer any justification for their continuing to speak different languages, for they will no longer have anything to say which cannot be said equally well in any language: they will, in short, have no longer any-thing to say in poetry. [...]

Now when we speak of "European culture," we mean the identities which we can discover in the various national cultures; and of course even within Europe, some cultures are more closely related than others. Also, one culture within a group of cultures can be closely related, on different sides, to two cultures which are not closely related to each other. Your cousins are not all cousins of each other, for some are on the father's side and some on the mother's. Now, just as I have refused to consider the culture of Europe simply as the sum of a number of unrelated cultures in the same area, so I re-

fused to separate the world into quite unrelated cultural groups; I refused to draw any absolute line between East and West, between Europe and Asia. There are, however, certain common features in Europe, which make it possible to speak of a European culture. What are they? [...]

The dominant force in creating a common culture between peoples each of which has its distinct culture, is religion. Please do not, at this point, make a mistake in anticipating my meaning. This is not a religious talk, and I am not setting out to convert anybody. I am simply stating a fact. [...] I am talking about the common tradition of Christianity which has made Europe what it is, and about the common cultural elements which this common Christianity has brought with it. [...] If Asia were converted to Christianity tomorrow, it would not thereby become a part of Europe. It is in Christianity that our arts have developed; it is in Christianity that the laws of Europe have – until recently – been rooted. It is against a background of Christianity that all our thought has significance. An individual European may not believe that the Christian Faith is true, and yet what he says,

and makes, and does, will all spring out of his heritage of Christian culture and depend upon that culture for its meaning. [...] If Christianity goes, the whole of our culture goes. Then you must start painfully again, and you cannot put on a new culture ready made. You must wait for the grass to grow to feed the sheep to give the wool out of which your new coat will be made. You must pass through many centuries of barbarism. [...]

To our Christian heritage we owe many things besides religious faith. [...] I shall not elaborate this point. What I wish to say is, that this unity in the common elements of culture, throughout many centuries, is the true bond between us. No political and economic organisation, however much goodwill it commands, can supply what this culture unity gives. If we dissipate or throw away our common patrimony of culture, then all the organisation and planning of the most ingenious minds will not help us, or bring us closer together.

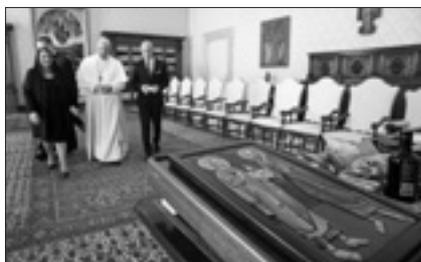
The unity of culture, in contrast to the unity of political organisation, does not require us all to have only one loyalty: it means that there will be a variety of loyalties. It is wrong that the only duty of the individual should be held to be towards the State; it is fantastic to hold that the supreme duty of every individual should be towards a Super-State. I will give one instance of what I mean by a variety of loyalties. No university ought to be merely a national institution, even if it is supported by the nation. The universities of Europe should have their common ideals, they should have their obligations towards each other. They should be independent of the governments of the countries in which they are situated. They should not be institutions for the training of an efficient bureaucracy, or for equipping scientists to get the better of foreign scientists; they should stand for the preservation of learning, for the pursuit of truth, and in so far as men are capable of it, the attainment of wisdom.

[From: T.S. Eliot, *Notes towards the Definition of Culture*, 1948. Reprint, Great Britain: R. MacLehose and Company Limited, The University Press Glasgow, 1951, passim]

With the President of Malta

On Thursday, 21 March, the Holy Father received in audience H.E. Mrs Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta, who subsequently met with Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, accompanied by the Msgr Antoine Camilleri, Undersecretary for Relations with States. During the cordial discussions, the parties evoked the constructive relations that unite the Holy See and the Republic of Malta, and the collaboration between Church and State in favour of the human, social, cultural and spiritual progress of the population, in particular the young, in the light of the centuries-long contribution that Catholicism has offered the country.

Attention then turned to themes of common interest, with particular reference to the prospects of European integration and issues relating to the situation in the Mediterranean area, such as the migratory phenomenon, cooperation in development, and interreligious dialogue.



Mary Magdalen announcing the Resurrection (Psalter of Saint Albano, XII century)

CATERINA CIRIELLO

Ecumenism, *tout court*, is the combination of action, thought and dialogue, addressed to the communion of Churches. After Paul VI, John Paul II made this an important point of his Pontificate, in which the courageous choice to publish his Encyclical Letter *Ut Unum Sint* (1995) is noteworthy. In 2010 Benedict XVI said that "dialogue among Christians is an imperative in our day and an irreversible option of the Church". Today Pope Francis has taken up with vigour and enthusiasm the legacy of his Predecessors, becoming a tireless advocate of Christian unity, of an ecumenism that, he confidently states, must speak "the common language of charity", actively taking the path of mercy, of which "Jesus Christ is the face" (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 1).

But does this unity, inspired by the Spirit and deeply desired in every sphere of Christianity, contemplate a specific role for women within the Church in the various confessions?

With reference to the Catholic Church, from the very beginning of his Pontificate Francis has firmly expressed his criticism of the status accorded women in the Church and in society. He recently stated: "The Church is 'woman' ... because she is mother, because she is able to 'beget children': her spirit is feminine because she is able to generate fruitful attitudes". But, this feminine spirit is mercilessly subjected to violence and exploitation; it is a cancer firmly rooted in the social fabric, due to the habit of

It would be constructive if Christians would meditate on the physical, psychological, moral and mortal pain that they inflict each day on women even with just a casual glance that expresses scorn and rejection.

trampling on women because, as such, they are not considered persons.

On the ecumenical level do women, as baptized persons, occupy the position they are entitled to? From the Catholic perspective the last Synod on the Family did not indicate to us any type of opening with regard to the now obsolete 'feminine genius'. However, one fact is certain: Christian women do not intend to stay silent. They began in the distant 1965, in the wake of Vatican II, and after the experience of women auditors, in Vicarello-Bracciano: the first of a series of meetings which, in subsequent years, developed from local to international, thus shifting the issue to a global level. In August 1978 there was the important Conference in Bangalore, India, organized by the Faith and Order Commission and by the WCC. One of the commissions declared that, in fact, the preparatory document was not 'inclusive' enough with respect to women and thus it was urgent to find a solution that would not once again accentuate the gap between man and woman in the Churches.

The work continued until last March,



The role of women in Christian Churches

There can be no unity if the body is divided

when it culminated in Christian women publishing the well-known "Manifesto for Women in the Church", in which all the distortions and nonsense regarding women in various Christian communities resurfaced: lack of respect; the impossibility of manifesting and bringing to fruition their own competencies; difficulties in relationships with priests; the complete lack of a more active ministry. No request for power exists if not that of "being fully recognized as daughters of God and members of the community on an equal footing with men". Yes, of course, with his teaching Jesus changed history and restored full dignity to women, marking a before and after of the female presence in the discipleship and in the Church.

However, Paul's words still resonate, as to whether, perhaps, the Body of Christ has been divided? (cf. 1 Cor 12).

What does it mean to be a woman today in the Christian Churches? Lucetta Scaraffia puts a flea in one's ear, or rather, insinuates a legitimate doubt: truly "before all evidence of the opening of the ministry to women within all the reformed denominations", are we to believe that "the Protestant world appears more open and respectful to women than the Catholic one?"

Historical and sociological inquiry shows us the presence of false myths within the Reform itself. For this reason the essay by Natalie Zemon Davis ("*Donne di città e mutamento religioso*") in *Le culture del popolo*, is worth reading, in order to realize that while, on the one hand, the Reform fervently wished that women would equally know Scripture, on the other hand, by abolishing the worship of saints, it deprived them of all that mechanism of piety and devotions, prayers, images, which were of great comfort to them especially at the moment of childbirth.

Hence, on the affective-religious level, women have been left alone, disoriented

also with respect to the figure of Mary: a privileged feminine image to turn to. In this regard, Kasper states that Mariology "constitutes an urgent request, barely perceived until today, for ecumenical dialogue" and that it is a great opportunity for ecumenism, since it would present a Church where one perceives the female and maternal dimension of God, not solely the male.

Among the various associations we must remember the EFCW (The Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women). Established in 1982, to date it has held 10 international meetings, the latest of which was held last August in Soko Grad, Serbia. Some 100 women from 24 countries prayed and debated together, proposing to challenge current national and European political laws harmful to the human dignity of women, working against traffickers and smugglers, against the rape, abuse and torture of women and discussing the importance of the female role in peace building. But the central point was the invisibility of women in the Churches. One who is invisible cannot be protected. Gender violence "is not only physical, but has more pervasive roots and, in the religious sphere, often assumes the form of spiritual abuse". Tragedy, slaughter, flagellation. It would be constructive if Christians, especially men, would substitute the flagellated Jesus with the figure of a woman, and would meditate on the physical, psychological, moral and mortal pain that they inflict each day on women even with just a casual glance that expresses scorn and rejection.

Saint Paul's teaching is clear: there can be no unity as long as we do not recognize that every part of the body is fundamental for the life of the Church. There can be no Church if women are excluded from her; there can be no unity in the body if it is mutilated: and women are an essential part of this body, even if in the majority of Christian – especially Catholic – Churches, we pretend that the problem does not exist.

ANGELUS

At the Angelus in Saint Peter's Square on Sunday, 17 March, Pope Francis reflected on the Transfiguration as recounted in the Gospel of Luke. After reciting the Marian prayer, the Pope invited the faithful to unite in both "prayer and gestures of peace to counter hatred and violence", as he expressed his sorrow in the wake of the deadly attack on Muslim worshippers in Christchurch, New Zealand. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's reflection, which he shared in Italian.



Raphael, "The Transfiguration", c. 1520

Gestures of peace to counter hatred and violence

Pope Francis prays for New Zealand

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

On this Second Sunday of Lent, the liturgy leads us to contemplate the event of the Transfiguration in which Jesus allows the disciples Peter, James and John a foretaste of the glory of the Resurrection: a glimpse of heaven on earth. Luke the Evangelist (cf. 9:28-36) reveals to us Jesus transfigured on the mountain, which is the place of light, a fascinating symbol of the unique experience reserved to the three disciples. They go up the mountain with the Master, they see him immersed in prayer and, at a certain point, "the appearance of his countenance was altered" (v. 29). Accustomed to seeing him daily in the simple appearance of his humanity, they are astonished as they face that new splendour that also envelops his entire body. And Moses and Elijah appear beside Jesus and speak with Him about his forthcoming "exodus", that is, of his Paschal death and Resurrection. It is a preview of Easter. Then Peter exclaims: "Master, it is well that we are here" (v. 33). He wished that that moment of grace would never end!

The Transfiguration occurs at a precise moment in Christ's mission, that is, after he has confided to his disciples that he would have to "suffer many things, [...] be killed, and on the third day be raised" (v. 21). Jesus knows that they do not accept this reality – the reality of the Cross, the reality of Jesus' death –, and so he wants to prepare them to withstand the scandal of the passion and death on the

Cross, so that they may know that this is the way through which the heavenly Father will lead his Son to glory; by raising him from the dead. And this will also be the way for the disciples: no one can reach eternal life if not by following Jesus, carrying their own cross in their earthly life. Each of us has his or her own cross. The Lord reveals to us the end of this journey which is the Resurrection, beauty: by carrying one's own cross.

Therefore, the Transfiguration of Christ shows us the Christian perspective of suffering. Suffering is not sadomasochism: it is a necessary but transitory passage. The point of arrival to which we are called is luminous like the face of Christ Transfigured: in him is salvation, beatitude, light and the boundless love of God. By revealing his glory in this way, Jesus ensures that the cross, the trials, the difficulties with which we struggle, are resolved and overcome in Easter. Thus this Lent, let us also go up the mountain with Jesus! But in what way? With prayer. Let us climb the mountain with prayer: silent pray-

er, heartfelt prayer, prayer that always seeks the Lord. Let us pause for some time in reflection, a little each day, let us fix our inner gaze on his countenance and let us allow his light to permeate us and shine in our life.

Indeed, Luke the Evangelist emphasizes the fact that Jesus was transfigured, "as he was praying" (v. 29). He was immersed in an intimate dialogue with the Father in which the Law and the Prophets – Moses and Elijah – also echoed; and as he adhered with his entire being to the Father's will of salvation, including the Cross, the glory of God flooded him, even shining on the outside. This is how it is, brothers and sisters: prayer in Christ and in the Holy Spirit transforms the person from the inside and can illuminate others and the surrounding world. How often have we found people who illuminate, who exude light from their eyes, who have that luminous gaze! They pray, and prayer does this: *it makes us luminous with the light of the Holy Spirit.*

Let us joyfully continue our Lenten journey. Let us make

room for prayer and for the Word of God which the liturgy abundantly offers us these days. May the Virgin Mary teach us to abide with Christ even when we do not understand or comprehend him because only by abiding with him will we see his glory.

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, in these days, sorrow for the victims of the horrible attack on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand has added to that which arises from the ceaseless wars and conflicts that afflict all of humanity. I pray for the deceased and the wounded and their relatives. I am close to our Muslim brothers and sisters and to that entire community. I renew my invitation to unite in prayer and gestures of peace to counter hatred and violence. Let us pray together in silence for our Muslim brothers and sisters who were killed.

I offer a cordial greeting to all of you here: faithful from Rome and from many parts of the world. I greet the pilgrims from Poland, those from Valencia, Spain and those from Cajazeiras, Brazil and Benguela, Angola. How many Angolans!

I greet the parish groups from Verona, Quarto in Naples and Castel del Piano in Perugia; the students from Corleone, the altar servers from Brembo in Dalmine and the "Uno a Cento" Association from Padua.

I wish everyone a happy Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci!*

