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**Angelus reflections**

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**Cardinal Pell’s appeal rejected**

**Holy See Statement**

While reiterating its respect for the Australian judicial system, as stated on 26 February after the first instance verdict was announced, the Holy See acknowledges the court’s decision to dismiss Cardinal Pell’s appeal. As the proceedings continue to develop, the Holy See recalls that the Cardinal has always maintained his innocence throughout the judicial process and that it is his right to appeal to the High Court. At this time, together with the Church in Australia, the Holy See confirms its closeness to the victims of sexual abuse and its commitment to pursue, through the competent ecclesiastical authorities, those members of the clergy who commit such abuse.

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**Chirograph of the Holy Father**

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**Archbishop emeritus of Jalapa**

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**American novelist**

**Toni Morrison**

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**The mindset of sharing vs hypocrisy and one’s own interests**

Pope continues catechesis on the Acts of the Apostles

At the General Audience, on Wednesday, 21 August, Pope Francis resumed his catechesis on the Acts of the Apostles, highlighting the importance of communion and solidarity in building up the Christian family. Falling short of the sincerity of sharing and of love, he warned, “means cultivating hypocrisy, distancing oneself from the truth, becoming selfish, extinguishing the fire of communion” and choosing “the frost of inner death”.

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**On the Solemnity of the Assumption**

**A Rosary for Peace in Syria**

On Thursday, 15 August, Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, after praying the Angelus, the Holy Father stressed the need to pray the Rosary for “peace in the Middle East and throughout the entire world”. Speaking to the many faithful who had gathered in Saint Peter’s Square, he added that “prayer recited with faith, is powerful”. On this feast day, the Pope blessed 6,000 Rosaries that will be given, as a sign of his closeness, to Catholic families in Syria who have suffered during the war or have lost their loved ones. The Rosaries are part of an initiative sponsored by Aid to the Church in Need, and were made by the Carmelite Sisters in Bethlehem. They will be distributed over the weekend of 14-15 September in parishes where Christians have been killed or kidnapped.
Renewed fidelity to its original mission

ANDREA TORNIELLI

The renewal of the Statutes of the Vatican Institute for the Works of Religion may appear an important step in the process of adaptation to meet the highest international standards. More importantly, it signifies renewed fidelity to the original mission of the Institute for the Works of Religion.

It is not by chance that one of the most significant innovations in this sense is the definition of the role of the Prelate. This is a key figure for maintaining contact with each component of the Institute, for ensuring the circulation of information, and for fostering relations. In fact, the Prelate now “maintains constant exchanges with administrators and employees”, as well as “protecting the ethical dimension of their work” and keeping “the archive of the Commission of Cardinals”.

Other important signs are: the greater emphasis on the practice of the IOR being subject to canonical norms, and its being set in the renewed legislative context, called for by Benedict XVI and completed by Pope Francis, with regard to financial transactions, transparency, and anti-money laundering.

Furthermore, significant attention is focused on employees who are also required to adhere to a Code of Ethics approved by the Board of Superintendence as well as to clear rules that prevent them from holding dual roles, providing consultancy or engaging company shareholding. Therefore, employees must have an exclusive working relationship with the Institute.

The renewed Statutes show greater attention to guaranteeing the renewal of management responsibilities, control, and supervision. Members of the Commission of Cardinals and the Board of Superintendence cannot be re-appointed more than once, whereas the Director, who according to previous regulations could remain in office either for a fixed term or indefinitely, will have to retire at the age of 70, without the possibility of re-appointment. While the previous Statutes provided for a fixed term and confirmed only once, the following are agencies of the Institute:

1. The Commission of Cardinals — The Prelate
2. The Board of Superintendence — The Directorate
3. The following is agencies of the Institute:
   - The Commission of Cardinals
   - The Prelate
   - The Board of Superintendence
   - The Directorate
4. The Commission of Cardinals is composed of five Cardinals appointed by the Supreme Pontiff (ad quinuennium) (for a five-year term) which can be renewed only once.
5. It oversees the Institute’s adherence to statutory norms in accordance with the procedure provided for in the Statutes.
6. The Prelate, appointed by the Commission of Cardinals, monitors the Institute’s work, serves as Secretary of the meetings of the Commission, and attends the meetings of the Board of Superintendence.
7. The Board of Superintendence is responsible for the administration and management of the Institute, and for overseeing and supervising its financial, economic operations.

The Board is composed of seven members appointed by the Commission of Cardinals, each of whom is appointed for a five-year term and confirmed only once.

For any dispute that may arise, the competent, authorized court is that of the Vatican City State.

The following is a translation of the Chirograph signed by the Holy Father for the two-year renewal “ad experimentum” of the Statutes of the Institute for the Works of Religion (IOR).

With a Chirograph dated 27 June 1942, my Venerable Predecessor of venerated memory Pope Pius XII established the Institute for the Works of Religion in Vatican City and granted it juridical personality. The Institute incorporated the pre-existing “Administration for the Works of Religion”, whose Statutes had been approved by the same Supreme Pontiff on 17 March 1941, which had originated in the “Commissio ad pias causas” established by Pope Leo XIII in 1887.

With a further Chirograph dated 24 January 1944, Pope Pius XII issued new regulations for the Institute, leaving it to the Supervisory Commission of Cardinals to propose amendments to the Statutes of 17 March 1941 that might prove necessary for the Chirograph to enter into force.

Now, in order to coordinate and update the Institute’s organization and activities to meet current needs, particularly drawing on the cooperation and sense of responsibility of competent lay Catholics, I wish to renew ad experimentum for two years the Statutes of the Institute for the Works of Religion, to which Saint John Paul II, with the Chirograph of 1 March 1986, had given a new framework, while retaining its name and finality.

1. The aim of the Institute is to provide for the custody and administration of moveable or immovable goods transferred or entrusted to the same Institute by physical or juridical persons, and intended for works of religion or charity.
2. The Institute enjoys juridical personality and has its offices in Vatican City State.

For the President of the Board of Superintendence is also the legal representative of the Institute.

8. The Directorate is made up of the Director General and possibly of a Vice-Director, both of whom are appointed by the Board of Superintendence with the approval of the Commission of Cardinals.

The Director General can be appointed for either a definite or indefinite term. He is responsible for all the Institute’s operational activities and is accountable to the Board of Superintendence.

9. The legal auditing of accounts is carried out by an external auditor appointed by the Commission of Cardinals proposed by the Board of Superintendence for a mandate of three consecutive years which can be renewed only once.

I hereby declare that this Chirograph be published in the daily L’Osservatore Romano newspaper together with the new Statutes of the Institute for the Works of Religion, which, following my approval ad experimentum for two years, will enter into force immediately from the date of publication and contemporaneously both texts will be inserted in the Acta Apostolicae Sedis.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter’s, on 8 August in the year 2019, the seventh of my Pontificate.

Chirograph of the Holy Father

New statutes of the Institute for the Works of Religion

VATICAN BULLETIN

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Cardinal Polycarp Pengo, Archbishop of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. He is succeeded by Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Ruwa’ichi, O.F.M.Cap., Co-adjutor of the said Archdiocese (15 Aug.).

Archbishop Ruwa’ichi, 65, was born in Mulo-Kilema, Tanzania. He was ordained a priest on 25 November 1981. He was appointed a bishop on 16 May 1999, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Mbulu, Tanzania. He was appointed Bishop of Dodoma, Tanzania, on 15 January 2005. He was appointed Archbishop of Mwanza on 10 November 2007. On 21 June 2018 he was appointed Co-adjutor Archbishop of Dar-es-Salaam.

SPECIAL ENVOY

The Holy Father appointed Cardinal Francesco Monterisi, Archpriest emeritus of the Papal Basilica of Saint Paul Outside-the-Walls, as his Special Envoy to the ceremony for the enthronement of the Emperor of Japan His Imperial Highness Naruhito, to take place this Sunday (State Hall) in Tokyo on 22 October 2019 (10 Aug.)

NECROLOGY

Bishop Bernard Unahali of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, was at age 62 (10 Aug.)
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Christian community is born from the superabundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit and it grows thanks to the virtue of sharing among brothers and sisters in Christ. There is a dynamism of solidarity which builds up the Church as the family of God, for whom the experience of koinonia is central. What does this strange word mean? It is a Greek word which means “pooling one’s goods”, “sharing in common”, being a community, not isolated. This is the experience of the first Christian community, that is, “communality”, “sharing”, “communicating, participating”, not isolation. In the primitive Church, this koinonia, this communality, refers primarily to participation in the Body and Blood of Christ. This is why when we receive Holy Communion, we say that “we communicate”, we enter into communion with Jesus, and from this communion with Jesus we reach a communion with our brothers and sisters. And this communion in the Body and Blood of Christ that we share during Holy Mass translates into fraternal union and, therefore also into what is most difficult for us: pooling our resources and collecting money for the mother Church in Jerusalem (cf. Rm 15:28, 2 Cor 8-9) and the other Churches. If you want to know whether you are good Christians, you have to pray, try to draw near to Communion, to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. But the sign that the heart has converted is when conversion reaches the pocket, when it touches one’s own interests. That is when one can see whether one is generous to others, if one helps the weakest, the poorest. When conversion achieves this, you are sure that it is a true conversion. If you stop at words, it is not a real conversion.

Eucharistic life, prayer, the preaching of the Apostles and the experience of communion (cf. Acts 2:44) turn believers into a multitude of people who – the Book of the Acts of the Apostles says – are of “one heart and soul” and who do not consider their property their own, but hold everything in common (cf. Acts 4:32). It is such a powerful example of life that it helps us to be generous and not miserly. This is why the Book says, “there was not a needy person among them, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid at the apostles’ feet; and distribution was made to each as any had need” (Acts 4:32-35). The Church has always had such a gesture of Christians who stripped themselves of the things they had in excess, the things that were not necessary, in order to give them to those in need. And not just money: also time. How many Christians – you for example, here in Italy – how many Christians do volunteer work? This is beautiful. It is communion, sharing one’s time with others to help those in need. And thus: volunteer work, charity work, visits to the sick; we must always share with others and not just seek after our own interests. In this way, the community, or koinonia, becomes the new way of relating among the Lord’s disciples. Christians experience a new way of being and behaving among themselves. And it is the proper Christian method, to such an extent that Gentiles would look at Christians and remark: “Look at how they love each other!” Love was the method. But not love in word, not false love: love in works, in helping one another, concrete love, the concreteness of love. The Covenant with Christ establishes a bond among brothers and sisters which merges and expresses itself in the communion of material goods too. Yes this method of being together, of loving this way, “up to the pocket”, also brings one to strip oneself of the hindrance of money and to give it to others, going against one’s own interests. Being the limbs of the Body of Christ makes believers share the responsibility for one another. Being believers in Jesus makes us all responsible for each other. “But look at that one, the problem he has, I don’t care, it’s his business”: No, among Christians we cannot say: “poor thing, he has a problem at home, he is going through this family problem”. But “I have to pray, I take him with me, I am not indifferent”. This is being Christian. This is why the strong support the weak (cf. Rom 15:1) and no one experiences poverty that humiliates and disfigures human dignity because they live in this community: having one heart in common. They love one another. This is the sign: concrete love.

James, Peter and John, the three Apostles who were the “pil- lars” of the Church in Jerusalem, take a decision in common that Paul and Barnabas would evangelise the Gentiles while they evangelised the Hebrews, and they only asked Paul and Barnabas for one condition: not to forget the poor, to remember the poor (cf. Gal 2:9-10) Not only the material poor, but also the poor in spirit, the people with difficulty who need our closeness. A Christian always begins with himself/herself, from his/her own heart and approaches others as Jesus approached us. This was the first Christian community.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8
Cardinal Sergio Obeso Rivera, Archbishop emeritus of Jalapa, Mexico, died on Sunday evening, 22 August. He was 87 years old. After learning of the Cardinal’s passing, Pope Francis expressed his condolences in a telegram addressed to Archbishop Hipólito Reyes Larios of Xalapa. Cardinal Obeso Rivera’s health had recently deteriorated to such an extent that on 2 August, the Archbishop called for prayers for his predecessor who was admitted to hospital. Born in Xalapa on 31 October 1932, Sergio Obeso Rivera became a priest on 31 October 1954. Appointed Bishop of Puebla on 26 February 1979, he was created a Cardinal by Pope Francis in the Consistory of 28 June 2018. The following is a brief biography of the late Cardinal, accompanied by a translation of the Holy Father’s telegram.

In announcing the death of Cardinal Obeso Rivera, the General Secretariat of the Mexican Bishops’ Conference recalled his 48 years of episcopal ministry and 65 years of priesthood. As President of the Bishops’ Conference for three terms, the Cardinal had been a point of reference during significant moments in Mexico’s recent history. In particular, the Mexican Bishops emphasize his role in the peace and reconciliation negotiations that led to the Accords of San Andrés on indigenous rights and culture, signed on 16 February 1996, and from any voluntary contact whatever. They encouraged to “keep his arms open to all, without distinction”. As President of the Bishops Conference (2001-2003) and was later elected for the 2004-2006 term.

At the age of 87, he received the news that the Pontiff wished to raise him to the College of Cardinals in 2018. “Pope Francis wants to tell me: continue to serve the Church with your gifts, few or many”, he confided to his people, pointing out that “the example that the Pope gives us goes beyond his intellectual Magnificat”. He assured the faithful that he would embrace the cardinalate as an encouragement to “keep his arms open to all, without distinction”. And so, despite his precarious state of health, he continued his mission, with the Constitutional reform of Article 190. Of no less importance was his work in the episcopal commissions for social pastoral work and for the clergy, as well as his efforts to further the canonization process of Saint José Luis Rodriguez Vélez (1879-1935), former Bishop of Veracruz, Xalapa, beatified by John Paul II in 1995 and canonized in 2006 by Benedict XVI.

The late Cardinal’s funeral was celebrated today in the Cathedral of Xalapa, where he was buried.

To oververtectar for sex abuse

Cardinal Pell’s appeal rejected

To overturn verdict for sex abuse

Cardinal Sergio Obeso Rivera

President of the Mexican Bishops’ Conference for three terms

Cardinal Sergio Obeso Rivera dies

Upon receiving the news of the death of Cardinal Sergio Obeso Rivera, Archbishop emeritus of Jalapa (Xalapa), I express to your Excellency my sorrow, asking you kindly to transmit this also to the relatives of the deceased and to those who form part of the Archdiocese.

Remembering this selfless pastor who, for years and with fidelity, gave his life to the service of God and the Church, I pray for the eternal repose of his soul. May the Lord Jesus grant him the crown of glory that never fades. To all, I impart my Apostolic Blessing.

FRANCIS PP.

The Pope expresses closeness to victims of monsoon rains in India

Upon learning of the tragic loss of life following the recent monsoons and flooding in Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat, India, Pope Francis shared his condolences on Monday, 12 August, in a telegram addressed to local authorities. In the telegram, signed on behalf of the Holy Father by Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Pope expresses his sadness “to learn of the tragic loss of life from recent monsoons and, “mindful of all those who have lost homes and livelihood”, assures his closeness to “the relatives of the deceased and injured”. The Pope, Cardinal Parolin writes, also “prays for the relief efforts underway, and upon the nation he willingly invokes the divine blessings of strength and perseverance”.

According to official sources, the recent floods have claimed the lives of more than 200 people and forced hundreds of thousands of others to flee their homes to take shelter in relief camps. The torrential rains have caused landslides throughout the region, hampering rescue and relief efforts. Officials have warned of widespread fuel shortages in districts cut off from larger cities and that hundreds of villages are lacking drinking water and electricity.

In India, seasonal monsoon rains usually begin in June and are essential for the nation’s agricultural production. Each year, however, the rains are blamed for catastrophic disasters throughout the country and for the deaths of hundreds of people.
The feast of the Assumption of Mary is a call to each of us, especially those who are afflicted by doubt and sadness, and live with their gaze turned down, unable to raise their glance. Let us look up. Heaven is open. It does not insulate fear. It is no longer distant because on the threshold of Heaven, a mother, our mother, is awaiting us. She loves us, she smiles at us and she thoughtfully assists us. Like every mother she wants the best for her children and she says to us: “You are precious in God’s eyes; you were not made for the small satisfactions of the world, but rather for the great joy of heaven”. Yes because God is joy, not boredom. God is joy. Let us allow Our Lady to take us by the hand. Each time that we hold the Rosary in our hands and pray to her, we are taking a step forward, towards the great destination of life.

Let us allow ourselves to be attracted by true beauty. Let us not be befuddled by the trivialities of life, but rather let us choose the greatness of Heaven. May the Holy Virgin, Gate of Heaven, help us daily to trustfully and joyfully look to where our true home is, where she is awaiting us like a mother.

After praying the Angelus, Pope Francis continued as follows:

Dear brothers and sisters, I express my closeness to the people of several countries in Southern Asia that have been severely affected by monsoon rains. I pray for the victims and the displaced, for all the homeless families. May the Lord give strength to them and to those who have come to their aid.

Many pilgrims are gathered in Częstochowa, Poland, today to celebrate the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and to observe the centenary of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Poland. I offer my greetings to those gathered at the feet of the Black Madonna and I exhort them to pray for the entire Church. And I also greet the Polish people who are here!

I offer a cordial greeting to all of you, pilgrims from Italy and from different countries. In particular, I greet the Donum Dei Missionary Family, the “Union Seglar de San Antonio Maria Claret”, the “Pestores de San Vicente” group from Venezuela who have cycled here from Valencia, and the youth from Novoli who are in an educational camp.

And now I ask you to accompany this gesture with prayer. I will bless a large number of Rosaries destined for our brothers and sisters in Syria. Six thousand Rosaries were made as part of an initiative of Aid to the Church in Need. They were made by the Carmelite Sisters in Bethlehem. Today on this great feast day of Mary, I will bless them and they will be distributed to the Catholic communities in Syria as a sign of my closeness, especially to the families who have lost someone due to the war. Prayer, recited with faith, is powerful! Let us continue to pray the Rosary for peace in the Middle East and throughout the world.

Let us make the blessing, but first pray the Hail Mary. (Recital of the Hail Mary and then Blessing)

I wish you all a happy Feast of the Assumption. Please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. Arrivederci!
Lydia: Leader of the first church in Philippi

Studies at Seton Hall University School of Theology. St. Paul's has also taught biblical exegesis and biblical languages and is the author of several books, including a commentary on Titus 3:3-7. He is a Fellow of the Centre for the Study of Women and Gender at Seton Hall University.


... Continued on Page 90

Lydia’s generosity extended beyond the offer of food and lodging to Paul and his missionary companions. Her house became the recognized seat of the earliest Christian community in Philippi ever since, as head of the household, she would have exercised leadership.

...Continued on the next page...
A practical example of sharing and communion of goods comes to us from the testimony of Barnabas. He owns a field and sells it in order to give the proceeds to the Apostles (Acts 4:36-37). But beside this positive example, there is another, that is disastrous and opportu-

nistic. After selling their land, Ananias and his wife Sapphira wished to keep only part of the proceeds to the Apostles and keep part of the proceeds for themselves (cf Acts 5:1-2). This deceit interrupts the chain of freely sharing, se-

rene and disinterested shar-
ing and the consequences are tragic. For Paul (Acts 5:3-9). The Apostle Peter exposes Ananias and his wife’s deceit and says to them: “why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? ... You have not lied to men but to God!“ (Acts 5:3-4). We could say that Ananias lied to God because of an isolated con- 

science, a hypocritical con-

science, that is due to an ec-

clesial belonging that is “ne-

glected”, partial and oppor-

tunistic. Hypocrisy is the 

worst enemy of this Christian community, of this Christian love: pretending 

to love each other but only seeking one’s own in-

terests.

Falling short of sincere sharing, indeed, falling short of the sincerity of love means cultivating hypocrisy, distancing oneself from the truth, becoming selfish, ex-

hausting the fire of communion and choosing the frost of inner death. Those who behave in this manner transit in the Church like a tourist. There are many tourists in the Church who are always passing through but never enter the Church. It is spiritual tourism that leads them to believe they are Christians whereas they are only tourists of the cata-

baths. No, we should not be tourists in the Church but rather one another’s brothers and sisters. A life based on drawing gain and advantages from situa-

tions to the detriment of others inevitably causes inner 

devastation. And how many people say they are close to the Church, friends of priests, of bishops, while they only seek their own in-

terests. Such hypocrisy destroys the Church!


general Audience

General Audience

May the Lord — I ask this for all of us — pour over us his Spirit of tender-

ness which vanquishes all hypocrisy and generates that truth that nourishes Christian fidelity, that far from being an activity of social work, is the inalienable mission of the Church, the most tender mother of all, especially of the poorest.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors 
taking part in today’s Audience, especially those from 
England, Malta, Japan and the United States of America. Upon you and your families, I invoke the joy and peace of the Lord. May God bless you!

I offer a special thought to young people, the elderly, the sick and newcomers. Following the example of the Holy Pontiff Pius X, whose feast day we celebrate today, I invite you to walk towards Jesus Christ by listening to his Gospel and through good works. May the Holy Spirit sustain you on your journey.

Lydia: Leader of the first house church in Philippi

Lydia: Leader of the first house church in Philippi

Continued from page 3

tial to compromise his freedom to preach the gospel as he saw fit, or his mobility. Nonetheless, he de-

pended on the financial support of patrons such as Lydia who provided significant material sup-

port and a roof over his head. Even more importantly, socially well-connected patrons like Lydia, with networks of business associ-

ates and clients, would have provided Paul with access to people and places in Philippi and elsewhere who were essential to the advancement of his mission. Moreover, Lydia’s generosity ex-

tended beyond the offer of food and lodging to Paul and his mission-

ary companions. Her house became the recognized seat of the nascent Christian community in Philippi over which, as head of the 
household, she would have ex-

ercised leadership.

The primacy of her house, and therefore her leadership role in the evolution of the church at Phil-

ippi, is mentioned in the letters to the end of Acts 16. After their mi-

raculous liberation from prison, Paul and Silas were united to the home of their jailer who had wit-

nessed everything. They catego-

rized land and sold it and en-

tire household thus forming a new cell of Christ-believers. When the local magistrates declared Paul and Silas free, and apologized to them for wrongful imprisonment, rather than remaining in the house of the jailer, they im-


ediateiy returned to Lydia’s house. It was there in her house that the newly formed family of brothers and sisters in Christ were gathered and where Paul gave the final exhortation to the Christian community of Philippi before leaving (Acts 16:40).

A final aspect of this story which should not be overlooked is that the church in Philippi was born among women and it was to Lydia and her household that Paul entrusted the life and growth of the nascent community of Christ-believers. Certainly, men joined the community and assumed various roles of leadership as well (cf Phil 1:1). However, wo-

men continued to play significant roles in the Philippian community.

In his letter to this community, Paul mentions two of them, Euc-

dia and Syntyche who are described as his closest collaborators in the work of the gospel (Phil 4:3). Though limited, there is evi-

dence that women continued in prominent roles at least until the 5th century CE. 

Today scholars agree that whether Lydia was an actual his-

torical person, or simply a figure fashioned by Luke to represent the affluent, independent, ideal woman whose attraction to Christianity he wished to highlight in his narrat-

ive. Whether she existed or not, in the story of earliest Christianity, Lydia, were attracted to earliest Christianity and were influential in the growth and development of the first Christian cells of believers.

The fact that Lydia is mentioned only here in the entire New Testament speaks to the central role of women in the nascent community, coupled with the general in-

attention to women that character-

ized past biblical scholarship, probably explains why she had 

been passed over as a minor figure in the story of earliest Christianity. However, it is no exaggeration to say that without the partnership and resources of Lydia, or a wo-

man like her, Paul’s initial evangel-

izing efforts may have never given rise to the flourishing community of Christ-believers at Philippi, who remained a source of encourage-

ment and support to him throughout his ministry.

Renewed fidelity to its original mission

Continued from page 4

Deputy Director, the new one now describes this position as “possible.”

Finally, there are two important structural innovations. The IFS’s current five bodies have been reduced to four.

The internal auditors, who previously held a three-year mandate renewable for an unspecified time, no longer appear on the list. On the other hand, the Statutes provide for an external auditor to be appointed by the Commission of Cardinals at the proposal of the Board of Superintend-

cence. The external auditor will carry out his or her assign-

ment for a period of three consecutive years, with the pos-

sibility of a single renewal. The choice of an external audit-

or, which formalizes the Institute’s regular praxis to con-

form to international standards, eliminates any possible conflict of interest present in the 1990 Statute which provided for the Board of Superintendence to appoint three auditors.

The second new feature is an increase in the number of members of the Board of Superintendence: previously made up of five members it will now be composed of seven. This decision makes it easier for the members of the Board to fulfill their responsibilities, even if they are di-

vided into advisory committees according to the matter dealt with. The Board’s work is also facilitated by the pos-

sibility of participating in meetings even in absentia, if nec-

essary, using telecommunications.

Furthermore, it introduces the position of Secretary for the Commission who is charged with the report of the Commission and with the custody of the relative minutes. This decision is in line with bank practice, and, with re-

spect to the provision of the 1990 Statute, avoids any in-

volveinent, in such a sensitive area, by directors who might face a conflict of interest.

With the new Statutes now in force, the Institute is pre-

paring to draw up a new internal regulation aimed at fully describing and strengthening its management with in-

creased transparency.

Pope meets Indian filmmaker

At the General Audience on Wednesday, 7 August, the Holy Father met Mr Antony Albert, a filmmaker from the Indian movie industry, who is currently working on a film production with the support of the Catholic non-governmental organization 26/325.
A

though there was no lack of African American writers before her, it was Toni Morrison who was able to suc-
cessfully make African American fic-
tion emerge from its genre, conforming upon it a central role in US literature. And so, reading her work, page after page, one draws closer to understanding the past and present of this enormous and complex country.

It is not possible to understand the United States of America, both at its best and at its worst, without listening to the voices of the slaves and the generations that passed down from them. Throughout the decades, Toni Morrison’s writing “gave voice” to these voices through her “unique, unprecedented and auda-
cious” language, as Marisa Bulgheroni de-
scribes in her essay introducing a new collec-
tion dedicated to Morrison’s work [Ed. pub-
lished in Italy by Meridiani-Mondadori, “Ro-
mano”, 2018].

Toni Morrison

CAROLA SUSANI

Toni’s physical presence alone chal-
 lenges those who behold her, because of that mixture of provocation, bene-
volence and irony. Indeed, her gaze and posture emanate a strength that can be discerned even in photographs.

Speaking on the Italian radio programme “Faleenheit”, Alessandro Portelli reflected on the statement: “I write for my people” made by Toni Morrison – who died on 5 August at the age of 88 and in 1993 was the first African American woman to win a Nobel Prize for Lit-
erature. According to Portelli, this statement is anything but a closure: “From the start, Toni Morrison grasped that the definition of what it means to be human can only be attributed by those whose humanity was questioned”. I am not sure whether I completely agree; I am not sure I agree with that ‘only’, but it is true in that in speaking to “her people”, Toni Morrison speaks of the human with a clarity and force rarely heard before.

And it is true that attempting to define ‘hu-
man’ can only be undertaken in certain radical conditions and that Toni Morrison abides in those conditions. In “The Origin of Others” (Harvard University Press, 2017), Toni Morris-
on recounts a visit by her great-grandmother Millecent MacTeer, who is held in high regard and venerated by everyone; the great-grand-
mother enters, sees the girls playing on the floor and says: “Your children have been tampered with”. Only from her mother’s reac-
tion did Morrison realize that “tampered with” did not mean anything good. She “was look-
ing at us as soiled, mixed. Not pure”, Morris-
on explained, adding that she owed her grand-
mother a debt for provoking the question welling up within her: “why tampered with?”, a question which was to influence a large part of her writing.

What I learned from Toni Morrison, which I submit to you as essential, has to do with chil-
dren. From “The Bluest Eye” (1970) to “God Help the Child” (2011), children, and more precisely girls, are at the forefront of her nar-
rative. What interests her about children? She is interested in their relationship with power.

By coming into the world, children find themselves within a system of power and im-
balanced values. For a working class African American girl, — as Toni Morrison was — this is particularly evident: there is [the fact of] be-
ing a girl, being entrusted to adults, being in their hands; there is the colour of the skin; there is the fact of being female, there are the financial means. Some things have value, oth-
ers a bit less. One of the first things that chil-
dren learn is their place in the family and so-
cial order. They learn whether they are worth a lot or whether they are worth little. They learn the desire to be worth more, to be better ap-
preciated, more loved. And they do not learn it from things that are spoken: they learn — Toni Morrison says — by example. If they learn the devaluation of their own person, they grow up in deformity and pain.

From the very beginning, Toni Morrison’s fortune was to perceive a tension between value systems, that of the “whites” which was domi-
ant and pervasive, and her great grand-
mother’s alternative one, a tension which al-
lowed her to read them as though through a transparent sheet of paper.

If racism is at the heart of Toni Morrison’s reflection — the system of power that makes you blindly rejected if your skin is very black (as in “I’m with the Child”) or that makes you wish for blue eyes because you have intro-
jected [this desire]; you have made it your flesh and blood (as in “The Bluest Eye”) — her ability to deconstruct allows us to see ourselves in the mirror, to see the human per-
sion adapting to that system with its thirst for love and its greed for recognition. It makes us aware that without a wedge to block the sys-
tem, without something to make its inflexi-
bility tremble, it will reproduce itself tragically.

For the oppressed certainly, but also tragic for those conditions. In “The Origin of Others”, Morrison recounts a visit by her great-grandmother Millecent MacTeer, who is held in high regard and venerated by everyone; the great-grandmother enters, sees the girls playing on the floor and says: “Your children have been tampered with”. Only from her mother’s reaction did Morrison realize that “tampered with” did not mean anything good. She “was looking at us as soiled, mixed. Not pure”, Morrison explained, adding that she owed her grandmother a debt for provoking the question welling up within her: “why tampered with?”, a question which was to influence a large part of her writing.

What I learned from Toni Morrison, which I submit to you as essential, has to do with children. From “The Bluest Eye” (1970) to “God Help the Child” (2011), children, and more precisely girls, are at the forefront of her narrative. What interests her about children? She is interested in their relationship with power.

By coming into the world, children find themselves within a system of power and imbalanced values. For a working class African American girl, — as Toni Morrison was — this is particularly evident: there is [the fact of] being a girl, being entrusted to adults, being in their hands; there is the colour of the skin; there is the fact of being female, there are the financial means. Some things have value, others a bit less. One of the first things that children learn is their place in the family and societal order. They learn whether they are worth a lot or whether they are worth little. They learn the desire to be worth more, to be better appreciated, more loved. And they do not learn it from things that are spoken: they learn — Toni Morrison says — by example. If they learn the devaluation of their own person, they grow up in deformity and pain.

The wedge that blocked the system

Toni Morrison and the automatism of power

Enriched not only by Bulgheroni’s essay, but also by another by Alessandro Portelli, the collection contains six of Morrison’s unforgettable novels, presented in mostly new [Ed. Italian] translations by Silvia Fornasiero, Chiara Spallino and Franca Cavagnoli who translated the first unforgettable editions for the Italian publisher Frassinelli.

Toni Morrison was born in Ohio in 1931 to a working class family. After graduating from university, she taught for some years, and then began working as an editor for Random House publishing, establishing herself as an expert in African American culture. It was an experience that greatly influenced her storytelling. Indeed, she found in African culture the perfect terrain to allow her words to flourish, winning her a Pulitzer prize in 1988 and a Nobel prize in 1993.

By the time she left Random House in 1983 to dedicate herself exclusively to writing, Toni Morrison had already written a number of novels. Her debut had come eight years earlier with “The Bluest Eye” which was translated and released in Italy in 1949 by the Frassinelli publishing house.

Describing Toni Morrison is not easy because what she was capable of doing on paper, weaving history and words together, is simply incredible. Through her legendary women — and some men —, more so than slavery itself, the writer presents us with the trauma and at-
trocities that it inflicted and imposed upon en-
tire generations, irreparably and deeply scar-
ring them. As if this were not enough, Morris-
on’s storytelling is narrated in a unique and in-
imitable prose that is founded on oral tradi-
tion, used throughout the centuries by the black community to pass on its history. Non-
evertheless, her fiction is based on a vast and highly attentive knowledge of literary tradition, African American and otherwise.

Indeed, they are stories, facts, events, ex-
ceptrs and secrets that women passed on from mother to daughter. Often they were stories, facts and secrets that were so atrocious as to appear almost unbelievable. As Bulgheroni wrote: “Morrison speaks ‘what mothers did not want or were unable to recount, retracing the two way journey that, from silence and the suppressed cries of slavery, leads to the guarded freedom of speech of recent times, challenging all censorship and risking scandal”.

The novel, “Beloved”, which along with “Jazz” and “Paradise” (which is not part of the Meridiani collection) makes up what Morrison herself had often defined as a trilogy of Afric-
an American history, reminds us of this “be-
loved” where, in order to spare her beloved daughter a destiny as a slave, the (child’s) mother chooses to kill her. The character, Sethe, the very essence of motherhood — nur-
turing — becomes intertwined with the idea of ownership which sustains the entire system of slavery. As Alessandro Portelli writes, this woman is only able to channel “love through pos-
session”, staining herself with such atrocious guilt.
DVA, the Association of Women in the Vatican
in support of Mozambican children

DVA, the Associazione Donne in Vaticano, or the Association of Women in the Vatican, has been raising funds and collecting school supplies and clothing for children in Mozambique in view of Pope Francis’ Apostolic Journey to the African nation from 4-6 September. The collection will benefit Renouveau, a Mozambican Association that cares for orphaned and vulnerable children, many of whose parents have died from AIDS.

In a note, DVA explains that many families, particularly in Mozambique’s southern region bordering South Africa, have been torn apart by HIV and the deadly form of the virus. Orphans often end up in the care of elderly grandparents struggling to make ends meet, or at the head of a family, even if they themselves are minors.

In Maputo, one of the first to take this situation to heart was Olinda Mugabe, a trained nurse, who together with other women aspirng to religious life, gave birth to Renoucro in the 1990s. The founders of the association remain attached to the Congregation of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary.

Since first reporting on Renoucro’s work assisting some 5,000 orphans and vulnerable children in the Mozambican capital and the province of Gaza, DVA’s Treasurer and Vatican Radio journalist Dulce Araujo has followed the association closely, producing a series for the Radio’s Portuguese/Africa programme. She notes that with the help of donors, Renoucro provides the children with an education, healthcare, food, psycho-social support, spiritual care and a loving family environment. A large network of volunteers scattered throughout the territory supervises and assists vulnerable children living in autonomous conditions.

Renoucro has also begun focusing fresh resources in Mozambique’s north-central region since devastating cyclones hit the area in March and April this year. For this reason, DVA hopes that the appeal of the association launched on 4 August will “ease the plight of the children and contribute to the construction of a brighter future” for them.

In a Tweet, the Pope recalls the compassionate efforts of female humanitarian workers

Women at the forefront of Humanitarian Day

"Today we remember all the brave women who go out to meet their brothers and sisters in difficulty," Pope Francis launched this Tweet on the occasion of World Humanitarian Day (19 August) which this year honours women humanitarian workers who serve on the front lines in their communities to help people in need. Each of these women, the Pontiff tweeted, “is a sign of God’s closeness and compassion”.

In a statement hailng the selfless contribution of female aid workers around the world, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the UN sponsored Day honours humanitarian workers “who risk their own lives to help save and improve the lives of others”.

This year, he added, “we pay special tribute to women humanitarians and the huge difference they make” to people in urgent need.

From supporting civilians caught up in crisis to addressing disease outbreaks, women humanitarians are on the front lines. Guterres observed, “Their presence makes aid operations more effective by increasing their reach. It also improves the humanitarian response to gender-based violence, which increases during emergencies.”

The UN Secretary-General invited individuals and organizations everywhere “to share their powerful stories through your online and social media platforms”. In doing so, he said, “we reaffirm our common commitment to strengthening the role of women in humanitarian operations”. Guterres also appealed to world leaders and all parties to conflict, to “ensure that humanitarians are protected from harm, as required under international law”. He noted the grim fact that “serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law continue around the world” and stressed that “they must be investigated and prosecuted”.

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Plastic waste builds schoolrooms in Ivory Coast

Ivory Coast is one African country where the environmental impact of plastic waste is of increasing concern. In Abidjan, Ivory Coast’s biggest city, 288 tons of plastic waste are produced each day. Just five per cent is recycled and the rest is taken to landfill sites where children and women in particular are exploited, often working for less than one dollar per day. The remaining plastic is collected in huge centres or discarded in inhabited areas raising the rate of pollution with all the detrimental effects this causes to public health.

Improper waste management is responsible for 60 per cent of malaria, diarrhoea and pneumonia, diseases that are among the leading causes of death among children.

To help tackle the growing mountains of plastic, the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has partnered with Conceptos Plasticos, a Colombian social business that transforms plastic waste into a resource that can give back to the community. The company collects and recycles plastic waste and transforms it into construction materials such as bricks, which under its partnership agreement with UNICEF, are being used to build 900 new model classrooms for some 25,000 children, a venture that is the first of its kind in Africa. UNICEF’s head of communications in Ivory Coast, Sophie Chavanel, explains that the easy-to-assemble, interlocking brick system “works like Lego” blocks.

No cement is used to manufacture the bricks which cost 40 per cent less than the traditional kind and are much lighter in weight. The bricks are also waterproof, fire and wind resistant and are considered good insulation in building construction.

More than two million children between the ages of six and 16 often do not attend school because many must travel great and at times, dangerous distances, to attend lessons in overcrowded, dark and poorly ventilated classrooms. It is also estimated that more than 30 per cent of minors between the ages of 5 and 17 are forced to work, often in plantations of cocoa, coffee and palm oil, and prevented from attending school. The West African country has a shortage of some 15,000 classrooms. Existing schools, whose classrooms can sometimes house over 100 children at a time, are built with mud bricks that erode in the sun and rain.

The UNICEF project therefore has a trifold objective: which includes stemming the rising tides of plastic waste and providing income for vulnerable families.

Nine classrooms have already been built in Gonzagueville, Divo and Toumodi. According to UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Ford, the initiative is fully operational with a brick-build- ing factory in place, it should be able to recycle 9,000 tones of plastic waste a year.
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Good Morning!

In today’s Gospel passage (cf. Lk 12:35-48), Jesus calls his disciples to be continually vigilant. Why? In order to understand God’s transition in one’s life because God continually passes through life. And he indicates the man- ners in which to live this vigilance properly: “Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning (v. 33). This is the way. First and foremost, “the loins girded”, an im- age that evokes the attitude of the pilgrim, ready to set out on a journey. It is a case of not putting down roots in comfortable and reassuring dwellings but rather to surrender oneself, to be open with simplicity and trust to God’s passage in our lives, to the will of God who guides us towards the next destination. The Lord always walks with us and often he takes us by the hand, to guide us so that we do not err on this journey that is so difficult. Indeed, those who trust in God know well that the life of faith is not something static, but rather dynamic! The life of faith is a continuous jour- ney towards ever new phases that the Lord himself points out to us day by day. Because he is the Lord of surprises, the Lord of novelty, indeed of true newness.

And then – the first manner was “the loins girded” – next there is the request to keep the “lamps burning” in order to be able to light up the darkness of the night. Thus, we are invited to live an authentic and mature faith capable of illuminating the many “nights” of our lives. We know, we have all had some days which were real spiritual nights. The lamp of faith requires being con- tinuously nourished by the heart-to-heart encounter with Jesus in prayer and in listening to his Word. I return to something I have said to you many times: al- ways carry a small Gospel in your pocket, in your bag, to read. It is an encounter with Jesus, with Je- sus’ Word. This lamp of en- counter with Jesus in prayer and in his Word is entrusted to us for the good of all: thus nobody can pull back in an intimist way in the certainty of one’s salvation, not interested in others. It is a fantasy to think that one can illuminate oneself within, on one’s own. No, it is a fantasy. Real faith opens the heart to our neighbour and urges us towards concrete commu- nion with our brothers, especially with those in need.

And in order to help us under- stand this attitude, Jesus recounts the parable of the servants who await the return of their master from the marriage feast (v. 36-40), thus presenting another aspect of vigilance: being ready for the last and definitive encounter with the Lord. Each of us will encounter, will find him/herself in that day of encounter. Each of us has their own date for the definitive en- counter. The Lord says: “Blessed are those servants whom the mas- ter finds awake when he comes; ... If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those serv- ants” (v. 37-38). With these words the Lord reminds us that life is a journey towards eternity; therefore, we are called to employ all the talents that we have, without ever forgetting that “here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come” (Heb 13:14). In this perspective, every instant becomes precious, and thus we must live and act on this earth, while longing for Heaven: our feet on the ground, walking on the ground, working on the ground, doing good on the ground and the heart longing for Heaven.

We cannot truly understand in what this supreme joy consists. However, Jesus lets us sense it with the analogy of the master who, finding his servants still awake on his return “will find himself and have them sit at table, and he will come and serve them” (v. 37). The eternal joy in heaven is manifested this way: the situation will be reversed and it will no longer be the servants, that is, we who will serve God, but God himself will place him- self at our service. And Jesus does this as of now: Jesus prays for us, Jesus looks at us and prays to the Father for us. Jesus serves us now. He is our servant. And this will be the definitive joy.

The thought of the final en- counter with the Father, abund- ant in mercy, fills us with hope and stirs us to constant commit- ment, for our sanctification and for the building of a more just and fraternal world.

May the Virgin Mary support this commitment of ours through her maternal intercession.

After praying the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, tomor- row is the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, important international legal instruments that impose limitations on the use of force and are aimed at protecting civilians and prisoners in time of war. May this anniversary make States evermore aware of the essential need to protect the life and dignity of the victims of armed conflict. Everyone is bound to observe the limitations imposed by international human- itarian law, protecting the de- fenceless peoples and civil struc- tures, especially hospitals, schools, places of worship, refugee camps. And let us not forget that war and terrorism are always a great loss for all humanity. They are the great defeat of humanity!

I greet you all, people of Rome and pilgrims from different coun- tries: families, parish groups and associations.

Today too there are many young people. I greet you warmly! In particular, the teen- agers from Saccolongo and also those from Creola; and the youth pastoral group from Verona; and the young people from Cittadella.

I wish you all a happy Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. Arrivederci!
Dear Brothers and sisters,

In today’s Gospel passage (cf. Lk 12:49-53), Jesus warns the disciples that the time for decision has arrived. In fact, his coming into the world coincides with the time for decisive choices: the option for the Gospel cannot be delayed. And in order to make this call clearer, he alludes to the fire that he himself came to bring to earth. He says: “I came to cast fire that he himself came to bring.”

Jesus confides his most ardent desire to his friends and also to us: to spread the fire of God’s love on earth that enlightens life and through which mankind is saved. Jesus calls us to spread throughout the world this fire, thanks to which, we will be recognized as his true disciples. The fire of love, lit by Christ in the early days of Christianity: bearing witness to the Gospel spread like a beneficial fire, overcoming all forms of particularism and keeps charity wide open to all, regardless of the poorest and the excluded.

Adherence to the fire of love that Jesus brought to earth, envelopes our entire existence and requires the adoration of God as well as a willingness to serve others. Adoration of God and a will to serve others. First, the readiness to adore God, also means learning the prayer of adoration which we usually forget. This is why I invite everyone to discover the beauty of the prayer of adoration and to recite it often. And second, the willingness to serve others. I think with admiration of the many youth communities and groups, who during the summer, dedicate themselves to this service to the sick, the poor and people with disabilities.

In order to live according to the Gospel spirit, faced with the ever new needs that arise in the world, there is a need for disciples of Christ who know how to respond with new charitable initiatives. And so, with the adoration of God and service to others — the Gospel truly manifests itself as a fire that saves, that changes the world, beginning with a change in the heart of each one.

In this perspective, we can also understand Jesus’ other statement mentioned in today’s passage which, at first glance, may be disconcerting: “Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division” (Lk 12:51). He came to “separate with fire”. To separate with God from evil, the just from the unjust. In this sense he came to “divide”, to cause “unreality” — albeit in a healthy way — in the disciples’ lives, breaking the facile illusions of those who think they can combine Christian life with worldliness, Christian life with compromises of all kinds, piety with a hostile attitude to others. Combining, some think, true religiosity with superstitious practices: how many so-called Christians go to fortune tellers to have their palms read! And this is superstition. It is not God. One must not live in a hypocritical way but be willing to pay the price for choices that are consistent — this is the attitude that each of us should seek in life. (being) consistent — paying the price for being consistent with the Gospel. Being consistent with the Gospel. Because it is good to call ourselves Christian but above all it is necessary to be Christian in concrete situations, witnessing to the Gospel, which is essentially love for God and for our brothers and sisters.

May Mary Most Holy help us to allow our hearts to be purified by the fire brought by Jesus in order to spread it with our life through decisive and courageous choices.

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued as follows:

Dear brothers and sisters, I extend a cordial greeting to you all, faithful from Rome and pilgrims who have come from Italy and various countries.

In particular I greet the “Divine Love” group from Canada, the Scouts from Rio de Loha, Portugal, and the Polish faithful.

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