New steps toward full communion

Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew meet in Rome

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The Holy Father receives Bishops of India on ‘ad limina’ visits

The Holy Father with members of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India on their visit ‘ad limina Apostolorum’ on Friday morning, 23 September

Pope Francis with members of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India on their visit ‘ad limina Apostolorum’ on Tuesday morning, 17 September

VATICAN BULLETIN

AUDIENCES

Thursday, 12 September
Cardinal Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, sj, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
H.E. Mr Aleksandar Vučić, President of the Republic of Serbia, with his entourage

Friday, 13 September
Members of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India, on a visit ‘ad limina Apostolorum:
- Archbishop Albert D’Souza of Agra
- Bishop Raphy Manjaly of Allahabad
- Bishop Ignatius D’Souza of Bareilly
- Bishop Oswald Lewis of Jaipur
- Bishop Peter Parapullil of Jhansi
- Bishop Gerald John Mathias of Lucknow
- Bishop Francis Kalist of Meeanur
- Bishop Desparas John Gana, SVD, of Udaipur
- Bishop Eugene Joseph of Varanasi
- Archbishop Leo Cornelio, SVD, of Bhopal
- Bishop Joseph Thykkatil of Gwalior
- Bishop Chacko Thottumarickal, SVD, of Indore
- Bishop Gerald Almeida of Jabalpur
- Bishop Basil Bhiurya, SVD, of Jhabea
- Bishop Alangaram Arokia Sebastian Duraraj, SVD, of Khamduwa
- Fr Isaac Puthenangady, Diocesan Administrator of Balasore, with Bishop emeritus Thomas Thiruthalil, CSI
- Bishop Sarat Chandra Nayak of Berhampur
- Bishop Aplinar Senapati, CMI, of Rayagada
- Bishop Vishal Kumar Kujur of Rourkela
- Bishop Niranjan Sualsingh of Sambalpur
- Archbishop Sebastian Kalupura, Coadjutor of Patna, Apostolic Administrator of Buxar
- Bishop Peter Sebastian Goveas of Bettiah
- Archbishop Kurien Valikandathil of Bhubaneswar
- Archbishop Cajetan Francis Osta of Muzaffarpur
- Bishop Angelus Kujur, SJ, of Purnea
- Archbishop Victor Henry Thakur of Raipur
- Bishop Emmanuel Kerketta of Jashpur
- Bishop Paul Toppo of Rairagh
- Archbishop Felix Toppo, SJ, of Ranchi, with the Auxiliaries: Bishop Telephon Bilung, SVD, titular Bishop of Jharkhand; Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas, SFX, titular Bishop of Lisyia
- Bishop Anand Jojo of Hazaribag, Apostolic Administrator “sede vacante et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis” of Daltonganj
- Bishop Julius Marandi of Dumka
- Bishop Paul Alois Lakra of Gumla
- Bishop Binay Kandhula of Khunti
- Fr Visvasam Selvaraj, Diocesan Administrator of Port Blair, with Bishop emeritus Alexio das Neves Dias, SFX
- Bishop Vincent Barwa of Simdega

Saturday, 14 September
Cardinal Marc Ouellet, PSS, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops
Monday, 16 September
H.E. Mr George Vella, President of the Republic of Malta with his wife and entourage

Members of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM):
- Archbishop Héctor Miguel Cabreros Vidarte, OFM, of Trujillo, Peru, President of CELAM, with: Cardinal Otilio Pedro Scherer, Archbishop of São Paulo, Brazil, first Vice President; Archbishop Regelio Cabrera López of Monterrey, Mexico, President of the Council for Economic Affairs and Bishop Juan Carlos Cárdenas Toro, titular Bishop of Nova, Auxiliary of Cali, Colombia, Secretary General
- H.E. Mr Marco Vinicio Vargas Pérez, Ambassador of Costa Rica, on a farewell visit
- H.E. Ms Teitana Izhdevska, Ambassador of Ukraine, on a farewell visit

CONCLUDED ON PAGE 8
Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

Let us continue the catechesis on the Acts of the Apostles. To the Jews’ prohibition against teaching in the name of Christ, Peter and the Apostles bravely respond that they cannot obey those who wish to impede the Gospel’s journey in the world.

The Twelve thus demonstrate their possession of that “subdien-cence of faith” that they will then bring about in all men (cf. Rom 1:5). Beginning at Pentecost, indeed, they are no longer men “alone”. They experience that special synergy that makes them decentralize themselves and enables them to say: “we and the Holy Spirit” (cf. Acts 5:32) or “to the Holy Spirit and to us” (Acts 15:8). They feel they cannot say “I” alone; they are men decentral-ized from themselves.

Strengthened by this alliance, the Apostles do not allow anyone to intimidate them. They have tremendous courage! Let us re-member that these men were cow-ards: everyone ran away; they fled when Jesus was arrested. But, from cowards they became so courageous. Why? Because the Holy Spirit was with them. The same thing happens to us: if we have the Holy Spirit within, we have the courage to go forth, the courage to win many battles, not by ourselves but by the Spirit who is with us. They do not re-gress in their march as intrepid witnesses to the Risen Jesus, like the martyrs of all times, including ours. Martyrs give their lives; they do not hide being Christian.

And truly, this determination causes trepidation in the Jewish “religious system”, which feels threatened and responds with vio-lence and death sentences. The persecution of Christians is al-ways the same: people who do not want Christianity feel threat-ened and thus they condemn Christians. But in the middle of the Sanhedrin, the voice of a dif-ferent Pharisee is heard, one who chooses to curb the reaction of his people. His name was Gama-liel, a prudent man, “a teacher of the law, held in honour by all the people”. At his school, Saint Paul had learned to observe “the law of our fathers” (Acts 22:3). Gama-liel takes the floor and shows his brothers how to prac-tise the art of discernment when faced with situ-ations that go beyond the usual context.

Referring to several people who passed themselves off as the Messiah, he demonstrates that every human plan may enjoy a consensus at first and then fail, whereas all that comes from on High and bears God’s “signature” is destined to endure. Human designs always fail. They have a season, like us. Think of the many political projects, and how they change from one side to the other in all countries. Think of the great empires; think of the dictators of the last century. They felt very powerful; they thought they could dominate the world. And then they all collapsed. Think today too, of today’s empires. They will collapse if God is not with them because the power that men have within them is not long-lasting. Only God’s power endures. Let us think of the history of Christians, even the history of the Church with the many sins, the many scandals, with many bad things, throughout these two millennia. And why did she not fall? Because God is there. We are sinners and often we too cause scandal. But God is with us. And God saves us first, and then them, but the Lord always saves. The strength is “God with us”. Referring to some characters who had passed themselves off as the Messiah, Gamaliel demonstr-ates that every human project can enjoy consensus at first and then fail. Therefore, Gamaliel conclud-es that if the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth believed in an impostor, they were destined to disappear into nothing; if instead they follow one who comes from God, it is better to quit fighting them; and he admonishes: “You might even be found opposing God!” (Acts 5:39). He teaches us to make this discernment.

They are calm andfas-tighted words that allow us to view the Christian advent in a new light, and they offer parameters that “echo the Gospel” because they invite us to recognize the tree by its fruits (cf. Mt 7:16). They touch our hearts and achieve the desired effect: the other members of the Sanhedrin follow his advice and con-cludes that if the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth believed in an impostor, they were destined to disappear into nothing; if instead they follow one who comes from God, it is better to quit fighting them; and he admonishes: “You might even be found opposing God!” (Acts 5:39). He teaches us to make this discernment.

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Let us ask the Holy Spirit to act within us so that both person-ally and communally, we may achieve the habitus of discern-ment. Let us ask him to help us always be able to recognize the unity of salvation history through the signs of God’s passage in our time and on the faces of those who are near us so we may learn that time and human faces are messengers of the Living God.

APPEAL AND SPECIAL GREETINGS

This upcoming 9 September is World Alzheimer’s Day, a disease that affects many men and women who, due to this disease, are often victims of violence, mistreatment and abuse that infringe upon their dignity. Let us pray for the conversion of hearts and for those who suffer from Alzhei-mer’s, for their families and for those who lovingly care for them. I also join in my prayer the memory of those who are affected by cancer, that they too may al-ways be more supported, both in the prevention and in the care of this disease.

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today’s Audience, especially those from England, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Japan, Malaysia, the Philip-pines, Vietnam, Canada and the United States of America. In par-ticular, I greet the members of the American Academy of Neurological Surgeons present in Rome for their annual meeting. Upon you and your families, I invoke the joy and peace of the Lord. May God bless you!

I address a particular thought to young people, the elderly and newfowl. Next Saturday is the Feast of Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist. May you imitate his willingness to promptly follow Jesus. May his conversion be an example for all, so that like him we may live as true disciples of the Lord, able to abandon worldly calculations.
Euthanasia is not a choice of freedom but of death

To members of the Italian Association of Medical Oncology

Euthanasia is a choice that seems to encourage personal freedom, in reality it is based on a utilitarian view of the person, who becomes useless or is regarded as an expense if, from the medical point of view, he or she has no hope of improvement or can no longer escape pain. The Holy Father emphasized this to the members of the Italian Association of Medical Oncology (AIOOM) when he received in audience on Monday morning, 2 September, in the Clementine Hall. The following is a translation of the Holy Father’s address, which he delivered in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Good morning!

I offer my cordial greeting to you all: to the President, whom I thank for her words, to the doctors and patients present at this meeting, and to all the members.

Since 1973, the Italian Association of Medical Oncology has played a valuable role in the healthcare sector, encouraging research and prevention, striving to improve diagnosis and treatment, and developing numerous training and updating initiatives for doctors and other workers in the field of oncology. Your statute illustrates the aims of your non-profit Association which seeks “to promote progress in the clinical, experimental and social welfare field” (Art. 2), with active collaboration among doctors of different disciplines, bodies and institutions. You are committed to “fostering relationships” and to “establishing scientific and collaborative relationships” (ibid.) within the scientific and healthcare world, endeavouring to encourage the sharing of achieved goals and multidisciplinarity, which is often hampered by the jealous safeguarding of knowledge.

In a world like ours, often thrust into contention in every sphere of human coexistence, creating and fostering relationships is a commitment essential for the building of the common good. The conscious and often tiring choice to adopt a style of uniting rather than dividing is represented, in all aspects of the life of AIOOM, by its care for relationships with patients, and today it is manifested precisely by the presence of some patients among you. The choice to participate in this meeting together, sitting side by side, presents a strong message and an eloquent sign not only for the world of healthcare, but for the whole of society, called to renew itself in a fraternal style of solidarity.

The National Congress, which you will hold in a few weeks, will be dedicated precisely to attention to the individual patient, to the “best care for each patient”, based on each one’s biological and clinical characteristics. This is how the oncology of precision, which you promote, also becomes an oncology of mercy, because the effort involved in personalizing care shows attention not only to the disease, but to the patient’s specificities, to the way in which he or she reacts to medications, to the most painful information, to suffering. This form of oncology goes beyond the implementation of protocols and demonstrates the employment of technology at the service of people.

Technology is not at the service of man when it reduces him to a “thing”, when it distinguishes between those who still deserve to be treated and those who do not, because they are deemed a burden, and sometimes even a waste. The practice of euthanasia, which is already legal in several states, only seemingly aims to encourage personal freedom; in reality it is based on a utilitarian view of the person, who becomes useless or is regarded as an expense if, from the medical point of view, he or she has no hope of improvement or can no longer escape pain. On the contrary, the commitment to accompany patients and their loved ones throughout all stages of the journey, seeking to alleviate their suffering through palliative care or by offering a family environment in hospices, which are increasingly numerous, contributes to creating a culture and practice more attentive to the value of each person. Never lose heart as a result of the lack of understanding you may encounter, or in the face of the persistent suggestion of more radical and hasty paths. If one chooses death, in a sense problems are solved; but how much bitterness there is behind this reasoning, and what rejection of hope is involved in the decision to give up everything and break all ties! Sometimes, we are in a sort of Pandora’s box: everything is known, everything is explained, everything is resolved, but only one thing is hidden: hope. And we have to go and look for this; how to translate hope, or indeed, how to provide it in the most extreme cases.

Thus, your service also becomes a task of raising awareness in a society that is not very aware and at times is even distracted. In many ways you bring to its attention the importance of prevention, understood both as early diagnosis, which can significantly reduce the dangerous nature of oncological diseases, and in terms of respecting the body and its needs. Indeed, the best and truest prevention is a healthy environment and a lifestyle that respects the human body and its laws. As we know, this does not depend on individual choices alone, but also on the places where we live, which, especially in large centres, subject the body to constant stress due to the rhythms of life and exposure to pollutants. This draws our attention back to the care of the natural environment, our common home which we must respect, so that it may also respect us. Protection of the environment and the fight against cancer thus become two sides of the same problem, two complementary aspects of the same battle of civilization and humanity.

In your commitment to the sick, to the healthcare system and to society as a whole, I invite you to always keep in mind the example of Jesus, who was mankind’s greatest teacher, to inspire your gestures and make him your own travelling companion. May he — whom one can never tire of contemplating, so great is the light that emanates from him — inspire the sick and help them to find the strength not to break the bonds of love, to offer their suffering for brothers and sisters, to keep alive their friendship with God. May he — who in a certain way is deemed your colleague, as a physician sent by the Father to heal humanity — inspire doctors to always seek the good of others, to expend themselves generously, to fight for a more supportive world. May he inspire everyone to be close to those who are suffering. Closeness, that very important and much needed attitude. The Lord also implemented it, closeness, in our midst. May he inspire everyone to be close to those who suffer, above all to the little ones, and to put the weak in first place, so that they may nurture a more human society and relationships characterized by gratuitousness, rather than opportunism.

I invoke God’s blessing upon all your activities, and I entrust you to the Virgin Mary, so that with the affection of a mother she may watch over you, doctors and all the sick. As I assure you that I accompany you with my prayer, I ask you too to pray for me. Thank you!
Today the Church asks us to contemplate the glorious Cross of Our Lord. Though He was God, Christ humbled Himself by becoming a servant. This is the glory of the Cross of Jesus! (Pontifex)

Particularisms are a danger when they become populisms

The Pope to Eastern Catholic Bishops of Europe

"Particularisms that become populisms and seek to dictate and make everything uniform" are "a danger of the present time in our civilization," Pope Francis emphasized in an address to the Eastern Catholic Bishops in Europe whom he received in audience in the Consistory Hall on Saturday morning, 14 September. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's discourse.

Your Eminences, Your Beatitude, Dear Brother Bishops,

I thank Cardinal Ragnasco for his greeting on your behalf. I am happy to welcome you at the end of your annual gathering, which takes place this year. Your meeting, organized under the aegis of the Episcopal Conferences of Europe, is a sign of the rich ritual variety of the Catholic Church on this continent, which is not limited to the Latin tradition. Among you, I see many who represent the different Churches of the Byzantine tradition and many from beloved Ukraine. Present, too, are representatives from the Middle East, India and other regions, who have found a welcome in European countries. As the Second Vatican Council observed, “variety within the Church in no way harms its unity; rather it manifests it” (Orientalium Ecclesiarum, 3). In fact, Christian unity is not uniformity. Uniformity is the destruction of unity; Christian truth is not monotonomous, but “symphonic”, otherwise it would not come from the Holy Spirit.

A few months ago, during my Apostolic Journey to Romania, I celebrated the beatification of seven bishop-martyrs of the Romanian Greek Catholic Church. It was an occasion that demonstrated how much the entire Catholic Church and the Successor of Peter are grateful for the witness of fidelity to communion with the Bishop of Rome offered again and again throughout history, at times even to the shedding of blood. This fidelity is a precious gem in your treasury of faith, a distinctive and indelible sign. One of the Romanian martyrs reminds us of this. To those who demanded that he abjure his Catholic communion, he said, “My faith is my life”. Catholic communion is part of your particular identity, yet in no way detracts from that identity. On the contrary, it contributes to its full realization, for example, by protecting it from the temptation of closing in on itself and falling into national or ethnic particularisms that exclude others. And this is a danger of the present time in our civilization: particularisms that become populisms and seek to dictate and make everything uniform.

It is precisely the intercession of the saints and holy martyrs, who experience the perfect communion of heaven, that impels us to undertake a constant path of purification of ecclesial memory and to aspire to ever greater unity with all who believe in Christ. That “they may all be one” (John 17:21) is the ardent desire that amid his passion Jesus bore in his heart, pierced for all on the Cross. Both the Second Vatican Council and the Code of Canon Law for the Eastern Churches remind us that you are entrusted with a specific mission on the journey of ecumenism. In these days, you have reflected on the meaning of your ecumenical mission in the present time.

Today, while all too many inequalities and divisions threaten peace, we feel called to be artisans of dialogue, promoters of reconciliation and patient builders of a civilization of encounter that can preserve our times from the incivility of conflict. While so many people allow themselves to be caught up in a spiral of violence, in a vicious circle of demands and constant mutual retributions, the Lord wants us to be meek sowers of the Gospel of love. In the Christian family, you are the ones who, looking to “the God of all comfort” (2 Cor 1:3), are committed to healing the wounds of the past, overcoming prejudices and divisions, and offering hope to all as you walk side by side with your non-Catholic brothers and sisters. I have had the grace of sharing some powerful moments with them. I think of the prayer for peace in the Holy Land in the Vatican Gardens, the meeting with refugees on the island of Lesbos, the dialogue for peace in the Middle East held in Bari, preceded by common prayer under the protection of Saint Nicholas and of the Holy Mother of God who “shows the way”. I feel that the way shown to us from on high is made up of prayer, humility and love, not of regional or even tradi- tionalist claims; no. The way is prayer, humility and love. By walking together, by doing something together for others and for our common home, let us rediscover, at the heart of our catholicity, the ancient signifi- cance attributed to the Roman See, called to “preside over the whole assembly in charity” (Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Letter to the Romans, Prologue), and to the Bishop of Rome as servant of the servants of God.

Living your ecclesial traditions to the full leads you to draw from the same springs of spirituality, liturgy and theology as the Orthodox Churches. It is beautiful to be wit- nesses together of such great riches! In the academic world, too, it is possible to promote common pro- grammes of study and cultural exchange, involving young priests in particular, so that they can be trained to have an open mind. Most of all, and in everything, let us help each other to live in love with all. Love knows no canonical or jurisdic- tional boundaries. It pains me to see, even among Catholics, squabbles about jurisdictions. Please… As the Apostle Paul, who gave his life in this City reminds us, love always has primacy and will never end (cf. 1 Cor 13). When we bend over a suffering brother or sister, when we become neighbours to those who endure loneliness and poverty, when we put at the centre the marginalized – children who will not see the light of day, young people deprived of hope, families tested by being broken, or sick or elderly persons who are cast aside – we are already walking together in the love that heals divisions.

In this way, we prepare to dwell in the one heaven to which we have been called. There the Lord will not need an account of which or how many territories remained under our jurisdiction. He will not ask how we contributed to the development of our national identities. Instead, he will ask how much we loved our neighbour, every neighbour, and how well we were able to proclaim the Gospel of salvation to those we met along the road of life. So let us ask for the grace to desire this. For only in loving do we find joy and spread hope. It is by loving that we give second place to those secondary realities to which we are still attatched – to money too, which is poisonous the devil comes in through our pockets; don’t forget! – and give pride of place to the only things that remain forever: God and our neighbour.

Have courage, dear brothers, go forward in the spirit of communion! I assure you of a constant remembrance in my prayers. You have a place in my heart, and I ask you, please, to pray for me because I need it. Thank you!
A milestone on the path to unity

The gift of the relics was accompanied by a letter from the Pope that was widely publicised in September, the day the Lateran Church celebrates the memory of its patron, Saint John the Baptist, a Father of the Church renowned for his faithfulness to God. In this letter, Pope Francis called this “a prophetic sign of the restoration of the Church of Rome to the service of Christian unity and communion. This gift from our brother Pope Francis is a powerful gesture of Saint Peter to our Church by our Patriarch’s delegation to the Vatican Basilica dedicated to Saint Peter when you received Pope Francis’ gift of the relics of the Apostle Peter that I presented to Your Holiness through the distinguished delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate led by Archbishop Job of Telmessos which took part in the pastoral visit of the Church of Rome.

More than 50 years ago, your predecessor, Patriarch Athenagoras, devoted to Saint Peter in 1967 in a then-debated event, Pope John Paul II decided to undertake excavations beneath the Basilica of St. Peter to discover the exact burial place of the Apostle Peter. The results led to the discovery of a sarcophagus, which in the present context take on a very particular dimension. “Let us remember this visit one more time from a pure heart, born anew, not from prejudice but from imperishable wealth through the living and alluring word of God” (Petr 1:21).

The Catholic Church is about to celebrate a Synod dedicated to the Patris-Basques Region, a great feast for our Mother Church. The gift of the relics of the Apostle Peter, the Church of Constantinople over which you preside with such devotion.

Conversion steps toward full communion

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These past weeks, I have often thought of writing to you to explain more fully the gift of some fragments of the relics of the Apostle Peter that I presented to Your Holiness through the distinguished delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate led by Archbishop Job of Telmessos which took part in the pastoral visit of the Church of Rome.

Pope Francis' letter to Patriarch Bartholomew

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Holy Father receives the President of Malta

On Monday, 16 September, the Holy Father received in audience H.E. Mr George Vella, President of Malta, who subsequently met with Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, accompanied by Msgr Antoine Camilleri, Apostolic Nuncio and Undersecretary for Relations with States. During the discussions, which took place in acordial atmosphere, satisfaction was expressed for the good relations between Malta and the Holy See, and emphasis was placed on the importance of religious values in the culture and life of the Maltese people, highlighting the contribution of the Catholic Church in the field of education.

In this context, the Parties took into consideration some of the challenges that the country must face, particularly with reference to the phenomenon of migration toward Europe, to which the Church and the government are deeply committed, as well as environmental protection. Lastly, there was an exchange of views on various regional situations, with particular reference to the Mediterranean.

With the President of the Republic of Serbia

On Thursday, 12 September, the Holy Father received in audience H.E. Mr Aleksandar Vucic, President of the Republic of Serbia, who subsequently met with Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, accompanied by Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States. During the cordial and open discussions, satisfaction was expressed over the existing good relations between the Holy See and Serbia, as was appreciation for the contribution that the Catholic community continues to offer for the good of the entire Nation, especially in the social field.

Subsequently, the situation in the country and the steps taken towards European integration were discussed. Subjects of common interest in the regional context were addressed, with particular attention to the importance of promoting fruitful cooperation between peoples in the service of peace, and to the positive role that religions can play in the process of reconciliation.
Tradition and innovation

in the new programme

Interview with the President of the Pontifical John Paul II Institute

ADRIANA MASOTTI

number 38, Friday, 20 September 2019
L’OSSERVATORE ROMANO page 9

First meeting of the Higher Committee
Toward achieving the goals of the Document on Human Fraternity

On Wednesday morning, 11 September, the first meeting of the Higher Committee for achieving the goals contained in the Document on Human Fraternity for Peace and Living Together, established in August this year, was held in the Casa Santa Marta. The date was chosen as a sign of the will to build life and fraternity where others have sown death and destruction.

The Committee is made up of 7 members. The Holy See is represented by Bishop Miguel Angel Ayuso Guixot, MDC, President of the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Interreligious Dialogue, and by Msgr Yoannis Lahzi Gaid, Personal Secretary of the Holy Father. The United Arab Emirates are represented by H.E. Mohamed Khalifa Al Moharak, Chairman of Abu Dhabi Culture, Yasser Saeed Abdulla Harch Almuhairi, writer and journalist, and Sultan Faisal Al Khalifa Aliremshi as members of the Executive Board. They also worked on the text of the Statutes that will regulate the Committee’s activity.

The Committee expressed its gratitude to Pope Francis, for his welcome and encouragement, to Grand Imam Al-Tayyib for his encouraging words, and to His Highness Muhammed Ben Zaid, for the support he has offered the Committee.

The Committee then identified several concrete steps to initiate its activity. These include a proposal to be made to the United Nations, to define a date between 5 and 5 February, to be proclaimed Day of Human Fraternity, and the decision to invite representatives of other religions to take part in the Commit-tee.

Can you highlight some aspects of the programme of studies for the new academic year?

A first significant element is the identification of a fundamental course, to lay the theological foundation of this horizon, which is called “Theology of the Christian family”, and it is a fundamental theology of the faith – because one must begin here – which pays particular attention to teaching the elements of development and of correlation with other disciplines that concern the relationship between faith and “the justice of affections”, that is, the strict order of affections, the human interpretation of affections whose cornerstones lie in marriage and in the family, but which concern all relationships of the human community. So, this concentration on faith and on the man of faith, on the woman of faith, which is first and foremost interpreted in light of the advent of God’s plan for marriage – “living together as family. I think, is a novel element. Attention is placed on individual canonical, moral, legal problems, etc., toward this broader horizon. Other additions include a fundamental obligation of the Institute on ecclerics, and, on the level of dialogue with human studies and with cultural novelties, are represented by several courses that focus on the relationship between marriage and civil community, marriage and religious plurality, marriage and comparative law and family in the context of the economic, political, social dimension, which at this moment has this reality, which is certainly – with respect to the tradition of our parents and grandparents – transformed and implicated in a totally new way; and thus this attention is part of the expertise also requested of the theologian. Therefore, there is no replacement of theological foundations – it is, rather, a theological oversight that is concerned with integrating the competencies that up to this point, in the field of theology, have only been introductory or perhaps even a bit marginal.

Might the publication of the programme of study restore peace of mind to the Institute’s academic community, in particular to the students who reacted with concern to what happened in July?

This, certainly, because the reaction, which happened after the simple news of the approval of the Statutes, reflected some fear, the thought: “With this change we will no longer have this, we will have difficulty continuing our studies...”. It was fundamentally a conjectural concern, because, without having a study plan available, the imagination takes leaps; it is fearful. The clarification of some things has to assuage fears; it needs to show that these conjectures were unfounded, that the tradition of the Institute is respected, that the innovation is nothing devastating, but rather, an added value... This should eliminate the fanciful fears.

You dedicated a large part of your life to theology and to teaching. What are your hopes and dreams for the John Paul II Institute?

My hope is that with this step, although difficult, the Institute may start to become an institution of excellence of the Holy See. But, true, there are many institutes and many universities, many theological faculties that are duly engaged in these themes, but this is that of the Holy See, which represents – so to speak – a response coordinated with the supreme Magisterium of the Church and therefore it must develop expertise that measures up to this relationship.
Cardinal Pimiento Rodríguez died on 14 June 1955 he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Pasto by PiusXII. His ordination was celebrated on 28 February 2015 in the Primatial Cathedral of Bogotá, during a ceremony presided by Archbishop Ettore G. de Monza Bolívar, President of the Colombian Bishops’ Conference.

With the proceedings on 16 and 17 September, the Promoter of Justice of the Tribunal of Vatican City State requested that Fr. Alvaro Martínez, another priest be remanded for justice: Martínez, for alleged acts of sexual abuse in the San Pio X Preseminary in years prior to 2012. Radice, then Rector of the Preseminary, was also accused of aiding and abetting.

In a communiqué issued on Tuesday, 17 September, the Holy See Press Office announced that the investigations began in November 2017 in the wake of news reports. Although the alleged acts date back to years in which the laws in force prohibited the pursuit of charges unless a complaint by the injured party was presented within one year of the alleged acts, the charge was made possible by a 29 July provision by the Pontifex which removed the prohibition.

In 2015, he celebrated his episcopal Golden Jubilee. For months he also served as Apostolic Administrator of Socorro y San Gil, his native Diocese, and then moved to the historic in Rome. He was therefore in charge of the Office of the Latin American Bishops’ Conference and the Diocesan Catholic Action. In 1995, at the age of 75, he visited the Church, working courageously for peace and love into our fractured world as evidence of the role and his pleasure in witnessing the signing of the historic declaration. "May God give each of us the strength and courage to bring harmony, hope, justice, and love into our fractured world as envisioned in the Human Fraternity Declaration and as demanded by our common faith in God," he said.

Cardinal José de Jesús Pimiento Rodríguez, archbishop emeritus of Manizales, Colombia, died on Tuesday, 3 September in Florida-blanca, Santander, Colombia. He was 100 years old. Upon hearing of the Cardinal's passing, Pope Francis addressed a telegram to Archbishop Gonzalo Restrepo, President of the Conference of the Latin American Bishops' Conference, expressing his condolences to the late Prelate’s family and to members of the Archdiocese.

The following is a brief biography of the late Cardinal and a translation of the Pontifex’s telegram, which was written in Spanish.

José de Jesús Pimiento Rodríguez was born in Zapatoca, Colombia on 18 February 1919 to Santander Aguas. Pimiento and Salomé Rodríguez. Despite limited finances, he managed to realize his dream of becoming a priest. He completed his ecclesiastical studies at the Seminary of San Gil and at the Major Seminary of Bogotá, and was ordained a priest of his native Diocese of Socorro y San Gil on 14 December 1941. He also served as substitute vicar in Zapatoca, then as prefect and professor at the Seminary, chaplain to the hospital of San Gil and coordinator of Social Action and the Diocesan Catholic Action. On 14 June 1955 he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Pasto by Pius XII. His ordination was celebrated on 28 February 1964 when he was appointed Bishop of Garzón on 30 December 1955.

In July 1972, he was elected President of the Episcopal Colombian Conference, a post he held for two terms until 1978. He had previously served as President of the Commission of Faith, Morals and the Committee for diocesan boundaries, taking part in various Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops. Between 1972 and 1973 he also served as advisor to the Apostolic Nuncio in Colombia for initial dialogue with Government representatives for the revision of the Concordat.

On 22 May 1975, Paul VI raised him to the archiepiscopal See of Manizales, where he served as pastor for 21 years. He energetically applied the decrees of the Second Vatican Council, paying special attention to the rôle of the youth and the pastoral work, without neglecting the world of education and academia. He promoted Conciliar renewal at the parochial level and within the Major Archdiocese. He also reorganized the social assistance fund for the clergy and dedicated particular care to the formation of priests, to updated formation courses for the clergy, and to vocations.

His episcopal ministry was marked by the achievement of various social works, both at the local and at the national levels: among these is the centre for evangelization and catechesis of the Archdiocese of Manizales, the hostel for young people and the youth orientation home. He was also involved in the restoration of the Cathedral’s bell towers which had been damaged in an earthquake in 1975, the same year in which he sponsored the restoration of the Minor Seminary, which later became the Major Seminary of the Archdiocese. Following the eruption of the Nevado del Ruiz volcano in 1985, Archbishop Pimiento Rodríguez provided aid to the people affected by making available 100 lodgings in the municipality of Chinchina.

In 1992, at the age of 75, he resigned as Archbishop of Manizales, and retired to Urra to carry out pastoral service in the Diocese of Apartadó, where, as Archbishop of Manizales, he had promoted a fraternal missionary experience.

In 2005 he celebrated his episcopal Golden Jubilee. For months he also served as Apostolic Administrator of Socorro y San Gil, his native Diocese, and then moved to the Archdiocese of Manizales, Colombia, died on Tuesday, 3 September in Florida-blanca, Santander, Colombia. He was 100 years old. Upon hearing of the Cardinal’s passing, Pope Francis addressed a telegram to Archbishop Gonzalo Restrepo, President of the Conference of the Latin American Bishops’ Conference, expressing his condolences to the late Prelate’s family and to members of the Archdiocese.

The following is a brief biography of the late Cardinal and a translation of the Pontifex’s telegram, which was written in Spanish. I have learned with sorrow the news of the death of Cardinal José de Jesús Pimiento Rodríguez, Archbishop emeritus of Manizales, and I express my condolences to your Excellency and beg you to convey them to the relatives of the late Prelate and to all those who are part of this Archdiocese. Count on me for the care of the flock entrusted to my charge, which was possible by a 29 July provision by the Pontifex which removed the prohibition.

Franciscus PP.
A man of deep faith and dialogue

Cardinal Roger Etchegaray passes away

Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, President emeritus of the Pontifical Councils for Justice and Peace and “Cor
unum”, Vice-Dean emeritus of the College of Cardinals, died on Wednesday evening, 4 September. The Cardinal passed away three weeks before his 97th birthday in Cambo-les-Bains, France, just a few kilometres from his native town Espelette, where he had retired in January 2017. Upon receiving word of the Cardinal’s death, Pope Francis expressed his condolences in a telegram addressed to Bishop Marc-Allier of Bayonne, France. The following is a translation of the Holy Father’s telegram, accompanied by a brief biography of the late Cardinal.

Roger Etchegaray was born to Jean-Baptiste Etchegaray and Aurélie Dalau on 25 September 1921, in Espelette, France. After completing his studies at the Minor Seminary of Ustariz from 1933 to 1938, he continued his spiritual and scientific studies at the Major Seminary and at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, obtaining a licence in sacred theology and a doctorate in canon law.

Ordained a priest on 13 July 1947, he began his pastoral ministry in Bayonne as private secretary to Bishop Léon Albert Terrier, and served as head of Diocesan Pastoral Care. Beginning in 1966, he served as secretary of the Liaison Committee of the European Episcopal Conferences. He also created the Symposia of Rome, obtaining a licence in sacred theology and working simultaneously for the establishment of a secretariat for pastoral care. Beginning in 1966, he served as secretary of the Pontifical Councils for Justice and Peace and the European Episcopal Conferences.

From 1966 to 1970, Etchegaray served as Secretary General of the French Episcopal Conference, and was also an observer at the working sessions of Vatican II, which he described as “a neverending adventure”. He was ordained a Bishop on 27 May 1969, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Gemelae in Nium and Auxiliary of Paris, and in October of the same year, he participated in the first Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on “Cooperation between the Holy See and Episcopal Conferences”. He was appointed Archbishop of Marseille on 24 December 1970, and was re-elected on 27 October 1978. He was deeply involved with the problems of France and of the Church in France, often expressing his views in many different arenas. In the diocesan newsletter he addressed sensitive ecclesial and social issues such as unemployment and human rights. “Man without work is wounded”, he wrote in 1978, while speaking of the protection of human rights as a necessity of conscience. Also during his time in Marseille, he had begun an open and fruitful dialogue with the Muslim community.

Etchegaray’s pastoral activity was thus focused, as he himself explained, “on an inventive presence in contact with a world that is anxious about its future”. The protection of our natural environment has been a priority for the Ecumenical Patriarchate for more than 30 years. The reasons are ecological, but also theological. Creation is a gift from God to all humanity. It is in creation, in which human beings participate, that God’s saving Grace for the salvation of the world is realized. Thus, we have always been particularly attached to the idea that the destruction of Nature is above all a spiritual question and a sin. That is why the answer must also be spiritual.

We pray for Creation in every liturgy. We pray in particular for the protection of the environment every September 1st. Prayer is essential, but it is only the first step. Christians must commit themselves to the development of a spiritual ecology based on the theme of conversion. We often hear the question of conversion when we speak, for example, of the Sacrament of Confession. It is the same thing here. If the destruction of the environment is a sin, we cannot protect it without conversion. Because it is from the conversion of hearts that the awareness of our responsibility will come. In the Christian tradition, we have the means to think and influence the transformation of our ways of life: worship, asceticism, fasting and charitable actions.

The forests of the Amazon have recently been devastated by fires....

Let us pray with heartfelt intensity for the Amazon rainforest, the destruction of which is more than a catastrophe, it is a calamity. The impact of these huge fires could have consequences for generations, affecting the land, infrastructures and human beings. There is an urgent need to change our practices and way of life, because these extreme phenomena force us to consider the fundamental fragility of Nature, the limited resources of our planet, and the unique sacredness of Creation.

Upon learning with great sorrow of the death of Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, I would like to express to you my heartfelt condolences and my union in prayer. Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, whose heart is entrust to God’s mercy, marked the life of the Church in France and of the universal Church. From Bayonne, his native diocese, to Marseille where he was Archbishop, he was a zealous pastor who was loved by the people whom he was called to serve. In Rome, Saint John Paul II appointed him head of the Pontifical Councils for Justice and Peace and Cor Unum, and then Vice-Dean of the College of Cardinals. He was a heeded and esteemed advisor, especially in difficult situations for the life of the Church in various regions of the world. I have fond memories of this man of deep faith whose gaze was turned to the ends of the earth, who was always attentive when proclaiming the Gospel to today’s people. May the Lord welcome His Servant into His peace and everlasting joy! As a token of comfort, I impart My Apostolic Blessing to you, Your Excellency, and to the Bishops present, the relatives of the late Cardinal, his former faithful in the Diocese of Marseille and all those who will, in hope, take part in the funeral celebration.

Franciscus PP.

C H O T I O N T E D  F R O M  P A G E  6

You have always been particularly sensitive to the theme of safeguarding Creation. Why is it important that this sensitivity be safeguarded? And what can Christians do together to concretely help?

The protection of our natural environment has been a priority for the Ecumenical Patriarchate for more than 30 years. The reasons are ecological, but also theological. Creation is a gift from God to all humanity. It is in the realm, in which human beings participate, that God’s saving Grace for the salvation of the world is realized. Thus, we have always been particularly attached to the idea that the destruction of Nature is above all a spiritual question and a sin. That is why the answer must also be spiritual.

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The gift of Peter’s relics


He was created Cardinal Priest by Pope John Paul II in the Consistory of 30 June 1979, and on 24 June 1981 was appointed Cardinal Bishop, receiving the Title of the Suburbanian Church of Porto-Santo Ruffina.

On 8 April 1984 Etchegaray was called to Rome and appointed President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, which he led until 24 June 1988, and President of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, continuing until 2 December 1995. He was among the organizers of the first meeting for interreligious dialogue in Assisi on 27 October 1986. On 17 November 1988, John Paul II appointed him President of the Central Committee for the Jubilee Year 2000, and appointed him President of the Central Committee of the Jubilee. In 1997 Etchegaray was chosen to preach the Lenten spiritual exercises to the Pope and the Cardinals having his meditation on “Jesus true God and true man.”

The Cardinals of the Order of Bishops elected Etchegaray Vice Dean of the College of Cardinals, an election approved by Pope Benedict XVI on 30 April 2001.

In recognition of his commitment and tireless service in the promotion of peace, which took him to Baghdad, Jerusalem and Rwanda, Cardinal Etchegaray received numerous awards, including: an honorary degree in Theology and Canon Law from the University of Leuven on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights in 1998; UNESCO’s Houbouque-Boigny award in 2004; and the Felix Grand Cross of the Order of the Legion d’honneur in 2014. Served his Church, he was the longest serving Cardinal not to participate in a Conclave, offered his resignation in 2017 and, after taking his leave of Pope Francis and Benedict XVI, retired to live permanently with his sister in France.

The late Cardinal’s funeral, held in the Cathedral of Bayonne on Monday morning, 9 September, was presided by Cardinal Dominique Mamberti, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signature.

L’OSSERVATORE ROMANO page 11

number 38, Friday, 20 September 2019
We each have a place in God’s heart

Pope Francis appeals for lasting peace in Eastern Ukraine

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Good morning!

Today’s Gospel passage (Lk 15:11-32) begins with several people criticising Jesus, upbraiding him in the company of tax collectors and sinners, and they scornfully say: “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them” (v. 2). In reality, this statement turns out to be a marvellous announcement. Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. It is what happens to us at every Mass, in every Church: Jesus is happy to welcome us to his table where he offers himself for us. It is a statement that we could inscribe on Church doors: “Here Jesus welcomes sinners and invites them to his table”. And in response to those who were criticizing him, Jesus tells three parables, three wonderful parables that reveal his preference for those who feel distant from him. Today, it would be nice if each of you would take up the Gospel, the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 15, and read the three parables. They are wonderful.

The first parable says: “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it” (v. 3). What man of you? Not a person with good sense: he does the math and sacrifices the one to keep the ninety-nine. Whereas God does not give up. He cherishes precisely you who still do not know the beauty of his love; you who have not yet welcomed Jesus into the centre of your life; you who are unable to overcome your sin, you who, perhaps due to the bad things that have happened in your life, do not believe in love. In the second parable, you are that small coin that the Lord does not accept losing, and he searches relentlessly. He wants to tell you that you are precious in his eyes, that you are unique. No one can replace you in God’s heart. You have a place; you are you, and no one can replace you; nor me, no one can replace me in God’s heart. And in the third parable, God is the father who awaits the return of his prodigal son. God always awaits. He does not tire, he does not lose heart. Because we, each one of us is that son embraced once again, that rediscovered coin, that sheep caressed and put back upon his shoulder. He waits every day for us to perceive his love. And you say: “But I have done my share of things, I have done too much!” Do not be afraid. God loves you; he loves you as you are and knows that his love alone can change your life.

But this infinite love of God for us sinners, which is the heart of the Gospel, can be rejected. It is what the elder son in the parable does. He does not understand love in that moment and he has in mind more of a master than a father. It is also a risk for us; to believe in a more rigorous than merciful God, a god who defeats evil with power rather than with forgiveness. It is not so. God saves with love, not with force: he does not accept the father’s offering himself, not imposing himself. But the elder son, who does not accept the father’s mercy, withdraws; he makes a greater mistake. He thinks he is just; he1 presumes he has been betrayed and he judges everything on the basis of his concept of justice. Thus he becomes angry with his brother and rebukes the father: “You killed the fatted calf when this son of yours came” (cf. v. 30). This son of yours: he does not call him my brother, but rather, your son. He feels like an only child. We too are mistaken when we believe we are just, when we think the others are bad. Let us not think we are good, because on our own, without the help of God who is good, we do not know how to defeat evil. Today, do not forget to take up the Gospel and read the three parables of Luke, Chapter 15. It will do you good; it will be healthy for you.

How can we defeat evil? By welcoming God’s forgiveness and the forgiveness of our brothers and sisters. It happens each time we go to confession: there we receive the love of God, which conquers our sin. It no longer exists. God forgets it. When God forgives, he loses his memory, he forgets our sins, he forgets. God is so good to us! Unlike we who, after saying “it’s okay”, remember “with interest” the harm done to us, at the very first opportunity. No, God erases evil, he makes us new inside and thus enables joy to be reborn within us, not sadness, not darkness in our heart, not suspicion, but joy.

Brothers and sisters, take courage. With God, no sin has the last word. May Our Lady who unites the knots of life, free us from the presumption of believing we are just, and make us feel the need to go to the Lord who always awaits us to embrace us, to forgive us.

The parable of the Prodigal Son

After the Marian Prayer, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, last week a long awaited exchange of prisoners took place between Russia and Ukraine. I am happy for the people freed, who were able to once again embrace their dear ones, and I continue to pray for a swift end to the conflict and for lasting peace in Eastern Ukraine.

Yesterday in Forlì, Benedetta Bianchi Porro, who died in 1964 at just 28 years of age, was declared Blessed. Her whole life was marked by illness, and the Lord gave her the grace to bear it, indeed to transform it into a bright witness to faith and love. And today in Limburg, Germany, Fr Ricardo Henkes, a Pallotine priest killed in hatred of the faith in Dachau in 1944, was declared Blessed. May the example of these courageous disciples of Christ also support our path to sanctity. A round of applause for the new Blessed!

I warmly greet you all, people of Rome and pilgrims from various countries: families, parish groups and associations.

I greet the faithful from Honduras and Bolivia; the young African entrepreneurs committed to working together – hacânde – for the future of Africa; and the electric car pilgrimage from Poland.

I greet the military gathered in memory of the Servant of God Fr Gianfranco Chiti, the Oblate Sisters of the Most Holy Redeemer; the faithful from Montecchio Emilia with the Venezuelan friends; and the confrarmades from Crotone. I greet the group from UNITAIS and I bless the great national pilgrimage to Lourdes which will take place in the coming days.

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