

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH

Unicuique suum Non praevalerunt

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In his Message for World Food Day Pope Francis relaunches the objective of a 'ZeroHunger' world

It is a cruel and unjust reality that not everyone has access to food

On the occasion of World Food Day, celebrated this year on Wednesday, 16 October, with the theme "Our Actions Are Our Future. Healthy Diets for a #ZeroHunger World", the Pope sent a letter to the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The following is the English text of the Holy Father's Letter.



To His Excellency
QU DONGYU
FAO Director-General

The yearly celebration of *World Food Day* makes us hear the dramatic plea of those of our brothers and sisters who suffer from hunger and malnutrition. Despite efforts made in recent decades, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable*

Development is yet to be implemented in many parts of the world. As a way of responding to this plea of our brothers and sisters, the theme chosen by FAO this year – "Our Actions Are Our Future. Healthy Diets for a #ZeroHunger World" – points to the distorted relationship between food and nutrition.

We are in fact witnessing how food is ceasing to be a means of subsistence and turning into an avenue of personal destruction. 820 million of the world's people suffer from hunger, while almost 700 million are overweight, victims of improper dietary habits. The latter are no longer simply a by-product of the diet enjoyed by "peoples blessed with abundance" (cf. PAUL VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 3); they are

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For rights of the indigenous

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Canonization of five new Saints

'Kindly lights' amid the encircling gloom

On Sunday, 13 October, the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, on the parvis of the Vatican Basilica, the Holy Father celebrated Mass and presided at the Rite of Canonization of five Blessed: John Henry Newman (1801-1890), Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, Founder of the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri in England; Josephine Vannini (1859-1911), Foundress of the Daughters of Saint Camillus; Mariam Theresia Chiramel Mankidiyan (1876-1926), Foundress of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family; Dulce Lopes Pontes (1914-1992), Sister; Marguerite Bays (1815-1879), lay woman and Franciscan tertiary.

During his homily the Holy Father quoted from one of Newman's best-known hymns, "Lead, Kindly Lights", and urged the faithful to be "kindly lights" amid the encircling gloom". Francis also drew parallels between what he called the difficult Christian "journey of faith" and the troubles experienced by Newman at the moment of his



conversion. Following the Holy Mass and the recitation of the Angelus the Holy Father appealed to the International Community to commit "with sincerity, with honesty and with transparency to seek effective solutions on the path of dialogue" in light of the tragic events taking place in Syria.

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VATICAN BULLETIN



CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Anthony Randazzo as Bishop of Broken Bay, Australia. Until now he has served as titular Bishop of Quiza and auxiliary of the Archdiocese of Sydney (7 Oct.).

Bishop Randazzo, 53, was born in Sydney, Australia. He was ordained a priest on 29 November 1991. He was ordained a bishop on 24 August 2016, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Quiza and Auxiliary of Sydney.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Adam Odzimek, titular of Tadamata, from his office as auxiliary of Radom, Poland (7 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Bartolomeus (Bart) van Roijen as Bishop of Corner Brook and Labrador, Canada (7 Oct.).

Bishop-elect van Roijen, 54, was born in Diemen, The Netherlands. He holds degrees in philosophy and

in Divinity. He was ordained a priest on 25 April 1997. He has served in parish ministry and as: president of the Diocesan Office for religious education, and of the presbyteral council; diocesan director of vocations; member of the Diocesan Office for Catholic schools.

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of Helena, USA, Fr Austin Vetter from the clergy of the Diocese of Bismarck, USA. Until now he has served as rector of Holy Spirit Cathedral in Bismarck (8 Oct.).

Bishop-elect Vetter, 52, was born in Linton, USA. He was ordained a priest on 29 June 1993. He has served in parish ministry and as: episcopal vicar for the permanent diaconate; director of permanent formation of the clergy; spiritual director at the Pontifical North American College, Rome.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Luís Gonzaga Silva Pepeu, OFM Cap., from his office as Archbishop of Vitória da Conquista, Brazil (9 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Josafá Menezes da Silva as Metropolitan Archbishop of Vitória da Conquista. Until now he has served as Bishop of Barreiras, Brazil (9 Oct.).

Archbishop Menezes da Silva, 60, was born in Salinas da Margarida, in the State of Bahia, Brazil. He was ordained a priest on 14 May 1989. He was ordained a bishop on 10 March 2005, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Gummi in Byzacena and auxiliary of São Salvador da Bahia. On 15 December 2010 he was appointed Bishop of Barreiras.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop John J. Jenik, titular of Druas, from his office as auxiliary of the Archdiocese of New York, USA (10 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed the following as Auxiliary Bishops of the Archdiocese of New York:

– Fr Edmund J. Whalen from the clergy of the said Archdiocese, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Cemerinianus. Until now he has served as vicar for the clergy (10 Oct.).

Bishop-elect Whalen, 61, was born on Staten Island, USA. He obtained a licence in moral theology and subsequently a doctorate. He was ordained a priest on 23 June 1984. He has served in parish ministry and as: teacher; private secretary to the late Archbishop of New York, Cardinal John Joseph O'Connor; professor and vice-rector of Saint Joseph's Major Seminary; rector of the minor seminary of the Saint John Neumann Residence, the Bronx; dean of the Monsignor Farrell High School, Staten Island.

– Fr Gerardo J. Colacicco, from the clergy of the said Archdiocese, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Erdonia. Until now he has served as parish priest of Saint Joseph-Immaculate Conception Parish, Millbrook, USA (10 Oct.).

Bishop-elect Colacicco, 64, was born in Poughkeepsie, USA. He holds a licence in canon law. He was ordained a priest on 6 November 1982. He has served in parish ministry and as: private secretary to the late Archbishop of New York, Cardinal John J. O'Connor; faculty member and director of pastoral formation at Saint Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers; administrator of Saint Joseph Parish, Millbrook; Defender of the Bond; judge of the Metropolitan Tribunal.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Stephen Athipozhiyil of Alleppey, India. He is succeeded by Bishop James Raphael Anaparambil, coadjutor of the said diocese (11 Oct.).

Bishop Anaparambil, 57, was born in Kandakadavu, India. He was ordained a priest on 17 December 1986. He was ordained a bishop on 11 February 2018, subsequent to his appointment as coadjutor of Alleppey.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Francisco Javier del Río Sendino of the Diocese of Tarija, Bolivia (11 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Jorge Ángel Saldías Pedraza, OP, as Bishop of Tarija. Until now he has served as titular of Phelbes and aux-

iliary of the Archdiocese of La Paz, Bolivia (11 Oct.).

Bishop Saldías Pedraza, 51, was born in Buena Vista-La Arboleda, Bolivia. He was ordained a priest on 25 May 2001. He was ordained a bishop on 5 June 2014, subsequent to his appointment as titular of Phelbes and auxiliary of La Paz.

ORIENTAL CHURCHES

The Holy Father raised the Apostolic Exarchate of Sofia for Catholic faithful of Byzantine-Slavic Rite resident in Bulgaria to an Eparchy, assigning to it the name of "Eparchy of Saint John XXIII of Sofia for Catholics of Byzantine-Slavic Rite in Bulgaria" (11 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Christo Proykov, as its first Eparchial Bishop. Until now he has served as Exarch and titular of Briula (11 Oct.).

Bishop Proykov, 73, was born in Sofia, Bulgaria. He was ordained a priest on 23 May 1971. He was ordained a bishop on 6 January 1994, subsequent to his appointment as titular of Briula and coadjutor to the Apostolic Exarch, Metodi Strateiev, AA.

APOSTOLIC NUNCIO

The Holy Father appointed Archbishop Bernardito C. Auza, titular of Suacia, as Apostolic Nuncio in Spain and in the Principality of Andorra. Until now he has served as Holy See Permanent Observer at the United Nations Organization in New York, (1 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Archbishop Alberto Ortega Martín, titular of Midila, as Apostolic Nuncio in Chile. Until now he has served in Jordan and Iraq (7 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Archbishop Giampiero Gloder, titular of Telde, as Apostolic Nuncio in Cuba. Until now he has served as President of the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy (11 Oct.).

VATICAN CITY STATE

The Holy Father appointed as President of Vatican City State Tribunal Mr Giuseppe Pignatone (3 Oct.).

PONTIFICAL ECCLESIASTICAL ACADEMY

The Holy Father appointed Archbishop Joseph Marino, titular of Natchitoches, as President of the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy. Until now he has served as Apostol-

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Commandant Giani of the Vatican Gendarmerie Corps resigns

On Monday, 14 October, the Holy Father accepted the resignation of Domenico Giani as Commandant of the Gendarmerie Corps. In his farewell, Pope Francis thanked the Commandant for the "exceptional competence shown in the performance of his many sensitive tasks, also at the international level, and for the undisputed professionalism he has brought to the Vatican Gendarmerie Corps".

New Commandant of the Gendarmerie Corps appointed

The Holy Father has appointed Mr Gianluca Gauzzi Broccoletti as Director of the Directorate for Security Services and Civil Protection of the Vatican City State and Commandant of the Gendarmerie Corps. Until now he has served as deputy director and deputy commandant.

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Biographies of the newly canonized Saints

Mariam Thresia Chiramel Mankidiyan

Mariam Thresia Chiramel Mankidiyan was born on 26 April 1876 in Puthenchira, India, the third of five children in a Catholic family. She received a Christian education from her mother. Given her spiritual fervour, she received her First Communion at nine years of age, considered early in those days. Thresia wished to devote herself to the life of a hermit, but her family opposed it.

Gifted with a deep sensitivity and compassion for suffering humanity and for families in difficult situations, she dedicated herself to helping the poor, the sick, the dying and the excluded. She went out to meet people and families in need, visiting the homes of all, without distinctions based on caste or belief. Filled with deep love for the Lord, she experienced visions, ecstasies and the stigmata. Bishop John Menachery, understanding her desire to consecrate herself totally to God, gave her permission in 1913 to build a hermitage which became the seat of the "Congregation of the Holy Family", inaugurated on 14 May 1914. Thresia was named Mother Superior by the bishop.

The reputation of her holy life and her apostolate to the family attracted many young women to consecrate themselves, living in prayer and penance in the new Congregation which continued to grow over



time in number and vitality. People from all walks of life approached her, particularly concerning family problems. She died on 8 June 1926 due to complications of diabetes. Mother Mariam Thresia's reputation for holiness spread rapidly and her tomb became a pilgrimage destination. She was beatified on 9 April 2000 by Saint John Paul II. Her intercession is invoked by families in difficult circumstances and by childless couples.

Marguerite Bays

Marguerite Bays was born on 8 September 1815 at La Pierraz de Siviriez in the canton of Fribourg, Switzerland. When she was eight years old she received Confirmation and at 11 her First Communion. Around age 15, she was apprenticed as a seamstress, a trade she practiced all her life. Having set aside the possibility of consecration in religious life, Marguerite preferred to remain single, dedicating herself to her family and her parish.

Every day Marguerite attended Holy Mass, the most important moment of her day. On Sundays, she never failed to spend time in adoration, to contemplate the Way of the Cross and to recite the Rosary. With great zeal she dedicated herself to religious education both of children, teaching them the catechism and forming them in the religious and moral life, and of young girls, preparing them for their future as wives and mothers. In 1853, at the age of 35, she underwent an operation for intestinal cancer. Dismayed by the type of care required, she begged the Virgin Mary to heal her or allow her to suffer in such a way that she could share in Jesus' Passion. Her prayer was answered on 8 December 1854, the very day on which Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Con-



ception. From that day forward, Marguerite's life was linked to the suffering Christ. The five wounds of Christ Crucified appeared on her body at three o'clock every Friday afternoon, and for all of Holy Week, Marguerite relived the sufferings of Jesus from Gethsemane to Calvary. In accordance with her desire, she died on the feast of the Sacred Heart, 27 June 1879. She was beatified by John Paul II on 29 October 1995.

Josephine Vannini

Josephine Vannini, foundress of the Congregation of the Daughters of Saint Camillus, was born in Rome, Italy, on 7 July 1859. She was baptized Giuditta Adelaide Agata the following day in the Church of Sant'Andrea delle Fratte. An orphan by the age of seven, Giuditta found a home with the Daughters of Charity. Attracted by the voice of God, which she experienced on the day of her First Communion, she desired to consecrate her life to him but was unable to enter the convent due to poor health.

A providential meeting with Camillian Father Luigi Tezza (now Blessed) opened the way for Giuditta to abandon herself totally to the Lord. On 17 December 1891, she confided to the retreat master her distress at her vocational failure. Father Tezza suggested that she found a religious institute dedicated to the service of the sick. After two days of prayer, Giuditta agreed, adding that she was capable of nothing but wanting to abandon herself with filial confidence to Divine Providence.

On 2 February 1892, in the chapel and chambers where Saint Camillus had died, the Congregation of the Daughters of Saint Camillus was born. Giuditta received the name Sister Josephine and three years later, on 8 December 1895, she professed her perpetual vows and was elected Superior General of the new institute.



Mother Josephine Vannini died in Rome on 23 February 1911, and was proclaimed Blessed on 16 October 1994 by Saint John Paul II. The holy life of Josephine Vannini teaches us, even now, through the institute she founded, to bear witness in a simple and concrete way to the Lord's love and compassion for the poor, the sick and the suffering, in the certitude that "as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Mt 25:40).

Dulce Lopes Pontes

Dulce Lopes Pontes, in the world Maria Rita, was born on 26 May 1914 in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, to a well-off family with strong Christian convictions and dedicated to charitable works. From childhood she was known for her great sensitivity for the poor and the needy.

After completing her studies she embraced religious life with the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God, working as a teacher and nurse. Inspired by a deep missionary vocation, Sr Dulce was dedicated to teaching manual labourers, but above all to assisting and caring for the suffering and those most in need.

Sr Dulce solidified her charitable works by founding a social work cooperative and with the construction of a welcome centre, "Albergue Santo Antônio". Her charity was tender and maternal. Her devotion to the poor was rooted in the supernatural, and she drew energy and resources from on High in order to carry out her service to the least.

In the final months of her life she was afflicted by illness, which



she confronted with calm and complete abandonment into the arms of the Lord. On 13 March 1992, Sr Dulce passed away in São Salvador de Bahia, well known for her holiness. On 3 April 2009 Pope Benedict XVI recognized her heroic virtue, and her Beatification was celebrated on 22 May 2011.

Biography of the newly canonized Saint

John Henry Newman

John Henry Newman was born in London on 21 February 1801. His family were members of the Church of England but without a strong religious commitment. From an early age, John Henry loved the Bible and enjoyed reading it. In 1808 he was enrolled at Ealing School and it was there at the age of 15 that he underwent a profound religious conversion to what can fairly be described as evangelical Christianity with a strong anti-Catholic bias.

In 1817 at the age of 16 he entered Trinity College, Oxford, as an undergraduate. Five years later he was elected to a Fellowship at Oriel College. Thereafter, he was ordained to the Anglican clergy and worked first as a curate in the Oxford parish of Saint Clement's, and later became vicar of the Oxford university church of Saint Mary the Virgin. There he had substantial spiritual influence on parishioners and members of the university, especially through his preaching.

When studying the history of the early Church Fathers, Newman was dismayed to discover that the doctrinal position of the Anglican Church in his own day bore a close resemblance to some of the heretical currents that had emerged in the theological controversies of the early centuries. He was even further troubled several years later when a number of Anglican bishops and scholars denounced some of his own writings. He began to question his membership in the Church of England and his leadership of its Oxford Movement.

He withdrew from Oxford in order to think and pray. Together with a few companions he



moved to modest lodgings in the village of Littlemore just outside Oxford. He lived there for three years, praying for guidance. By 1845 his mind was clear, and on 9 October that year he was received into the Roman Catholic Church by Father (now Blessed) Dominic Barberi.

Newman went to Rome to study for the Catholic priesthood and to discern his future. He was attracted to the Oratory of Saint

Philip Neri, a Congregation of priests and brothers that the 16th-century Saint had founded in Rome. Father Newman became an Oratorian and in 1848 he established the first English Oratory at Maryvale near Birmingham, moving soon thereafter to Alcester Street near the town centre, where he converted a defunct gin distillery into a chapel. Three years later the new Oratorian community moved to its present home in Edgbaston.

When Newman returned to England his life was not easy. He faced many misunderstandings, at times was the object of resentment, and was even accused of doctrinal unorthodoxy. In his old age he continued to live quietly in the Birmingham Oratory which he had founded, devoting his time to preaching, writing, and spiritual direction. In 1879 when Father Newman was 78, Pope Leo XIII created him a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church. He had endured many personal sleights and had been the object of rash judgements during the years following his conversion. Thus, the news that he was to become a Cardinal came as a definitive vindication of his orthodoxy and loyalty to the Catholic Church, and he declared that 'the cloud is lifted for ever'. He died of pneumonia in the Birmingham Oratory on 11 August 1890.

On 22 January 1991, John Henry Newman was proclaimed 'Venerable' in a decree by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints under Pope John Paul II. On 19 September 2010, Pope Benedict XVI beatified him at Cofton Park in Birmingham.

It is a cruel and unjust reality that not everyone has access to food

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now found in poorer countries too, where they eat little but increasingly poorly, since they imitate dietary models imported from developed areas. Due to poor nutrition, pathologies arise not only from the imbalance caused by "excess", often resulting in diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and other forms of degenerative diseases, but also by "deficiency", as documented by an increasing number of deaths from anorexia and bulimia.

This reality calls for a conversion in our way of living and acting, and nutrition represents an important starting point. Our lives depend on the fruits of creation (cf. *Ps* 65:10-14; 104:27-28); these cannot be reduced to mere objects to be recklessly handled and used. Nutritional disorders can only be combated by the cultivation of lifestyles inspired by gratitude for the gifts we have received and the adoption of a spirit of temperance, moderation, abstinence, self-control and solidarity. These virtues, which have accompanied the history of humanity, summon us to a more simple and sober life, and unflinching concern for the needs of those around us. By adopting such a lifestyle, we will grow in a fraternal solidarity that seeks the common good and avoids the individualism and egocentrism that serve only to generate hunger and social inequal-

ity. Such a lifestyle will enable us to cultivate a healthy relationship with ourselves, with our brothers and sisters, and with the environment in which we live.

Here the family has a primary role to play; for this reason, FAO has devoted special attention to protecting rural families and promoting family farming. Within the family, and thanks to the particular sensitivity and wisdom of women and mothers, we learn how to enjoy the fruits of the earth without abusing it. We also discover the most effective means for spreading lifestyles respectful of our personal and collective good.



At the same time, the increasing interdependence of nations can help to set aside special interests, while fostering trust and relationships of friendship between peoples (cf. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 482). It is my hope that this year's theme will remind us that many continue to eat in an unhealthy way. It is a cruel, unjust and paradoxical reality that, today, there is food for everyone and yet not everyone has access to it, and that in some areas of the world food is wasted, discarded and consumed in excess, or destined for other purposes than nutrition. To escape from

this spiral, we need to promote "economic institutions and social initiatives which can give the poor regular access to basic resources" (*Laudato Si'*, 109).

The battle against hunger and malnutrition will not end as long as the logic of the market prevails and profit is sought at any cost, with the result that food is relegated to a mere commercial product subject to financial speculation and with little regard for its cultural, social and indeed symbolic importance. Our first concern should always be the *human person*: concrete men, women and children, especially those who lack daily food and have a limited ability to manage family and social relationships (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 112-113). When priority is given to the human person, humanitarian aid operations and development programs will surely have a greater impact and will yield the expected results. We must come to realize that we are accumulating and wasting is the bread of the poor.

Mr Director General, in offering you these reflections for the celebration of World Food Day, I pray that God may bless all associated with the work of FAO and prosper your efforts to promote peace by serving the authentic and integral development of the whole human family.

From the Vatican, 16 October 2019

FRANCIS

John Henry Newman: The harmony of difference

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE OF WALES

When Pope Francis canonises Cardinal John Henry Newman tomorrow, the first Briton to be declared a saint in over forty years, it will be a cause of celebration not merely in the United Kingdom, and not merely for Catholics, but for all who cherish the values by which he was inspired.

In the age when he lived, Newman stood for the life of the spirit against the forces that would debase human dignity and human destiny. In the age in which he attains sainthood, his example is needed more than ever – for the manner in which, at his best, he could advocate without accusation, could disagree without disrespect and, perhaps most of all, could see differences as places of encounter rather than exclusion.

At a time when faith was being questioned as never before, Newman, one of the greatest theologians of the nineteenth century, applied his intellect to one of the most pressing questions of our era: what should be the relation-

Britain's Prince Charles was one of the dignitaries attending the Canonisation Mass presided by Pope Francis in Saint Peter's Square on Sunday, 13 October. On the eve of the liturgy, His Royal Highness wished to share with L'Osservatore Romano's readers this reflection on the figure of his countryman, John Henry Newman.

ship of faith to a sceptical, secular age? His engagement first with Anglican theology, and then, after his conversion, Catholic theology, impressed even his opponents with its fearless honesty, its unsparing rigour and its originality of thought.

Whatever our own beliefs, and no matter what our own tradition may be, we can only be grateful to Newman for the gifts, rooted in his Catholic faith, which he shared with wider society: his intense and moving spiritual autobiography and his deeply-felt poetry in 'The Dream of Gerontius' which, set to music by Sir Edward Elgar – another Catholic of whom all Britons can be proud – gave the musical world one of its most enduring choral masterpieces.

At the climax of 'The Dream of Gerontius' the soul, approaching heaven, perceives something of the divine vision:

*a grand mysterious harmony:
It floods me, like the deep and solemn sound
Of many waters.*

Harmony requires difference. The concept rests at the very heart of Christian theology in the concept of the Trinity. In the same poem, Gerontius says:

*Firmly I believe and truly
God is three, and God is One;*

As such, difference is not to be feared. Newman not only proved this in his theology and illustrated it in his poetry, but he also demonstrated it in his life. Under his leadership, Catholics became fully part of the wider society, which itself thereby became all the richer as a community of communities.

Newman engaged not merely with the church, but with the world. While wholeheartedly committed to the Church to which

he came through so many intellectual and spiritual trials, he nonetheless initiated open debate between Catholics and other Christians, paving the way for later ecumenical dialogues. On his elevation to the Cardinalate in 1879, he took as his motto *Cor ad cor loquitur* ('heart speaks to heart'), and his conversations across confessional, cultural, social and economic divides, were rooted in that intimate friendship with God.

His faith was truly catholic in that it embraced all aspects of life. It is in that same spirit that we, whether we are Catholics or not, can, in the tradition of the Christian Church throughout the ages, embrace the unique perspective, the particular wisdom and insight, brought to our universal experience by this one individual soul. We can draw inspiration from his writings and his life even as we recognise that, like all human lives, it was inevitably flawed. Newman himself was aware of his failings, such as pride and defensiveness which fell short of his own ideals, but which, ultimately, left him only more grateful for the mercy of God.

His influence was immense. As a theologian, his work on the development of doctrine showed that our understanding of God can grow over time, and had a profound impact on later thinkers. Individual Christians have found their personal devotion challenged and strengthened by the importance he attached to the voice of conscience. Those of all traditions who seek to define and defend Christianity have found themselves grateful for the way he reconciled faith and reason. Those who seek the divine in what can seem like an increasingly hostile intellectual environment find in him a powerful ally who championed the individual conscience against an overwhelming relativism.

And perhaps most relevantly of all at this time, when we have witnessed too many grievous assaults by the forces of intolerance on communities and individuals, including many Catholics, because of their beliefs, he is a figure who stood for his convictions despite the disadvantages of belonging to a religion whose adherents were denied full participation in public life. Through the whole process of Catholic emancipation and the restoration of the Catholic Church hierarchy, he was the leader his people, his church and his times needed.

His capacity for personal warmth and generous friendship is shown in his correspondence. There exist over 30 collected volumes of his letters, many of which, tellingly, are not addressed to the fellow intellectuals and prominent leaders but to family, friends and parishioners who sought out his wisdom.

His example has left a lasting legacy. As an educator, his work was profoundly influential in Oxford, Dublin and beyond, while his treatise, *The Idea of a University*, remains a defining text to this day. His often overlooked labours on behalf of children's education are testimony to his commitment to ensuring those of all backgrounds shared the opportunities learning can bring. As an Anglican, he guided that church back to its Catholic roots, and as a Catholic he was ready to learn from the Anglican tradition, such as in his promot-

ing the role of the laity. He gave the Catholic Church renewed confidence as it re-established itself in a land in which it had once been uprooted. The Catholic community in Britain today owes an incalculable debt to his tireless work, even as British society has cause for gratitude to that community for its immeasurably valuable contribution to our country's life.

That confidence was expressed in his love of the English landscape and of his native country's culture, to which he made such a distinguished contribution. In the Oratory which he established in Birmingham, and which now houses a museum dedicated to his memory as well as an active worshipping community, we see the realisation in England of a vision he derived from Rome which he described as 'the most wonderful place on Earth'. In bringing the Oratorian Congregation from Italy to England, Newman sought to share its charism of education and service.

He loved Oxford, gracing it not only with passionate and erudite sermons, but also with the beautiful Anglican church at Littlemore, created after a formative visit to Rome where,



seeking guidance on his future spiritual path and pondering his relationship with the Church of England and with Catholicism, he wrote his beloved hymn, 'Lead Kindly Light'. When he finally decided to leave the Church of England, his last sermon as he said farewell to Littlemore left the congregation in tears. It was entitled 'The Parting of Friends.'

As we mark the life of this great Briton, this great churchman and, as we can now say, this great saint, who bridges the divisions between traditions, it is surely right that we give thanks for the friendship which, despite the parting, has not merely endured, but has strengthened.

In the image of divine harmony which Newman expressed so eloquently, we can see how, ultimately, as we follow with sincerity and courage the different paths to which conscience calls us, all our divisions can lead to a greater understanding and all our ways can find a common home.



Canonization of five new Saints

'Kindly lights' amid the encircling gloom

During Mass in Saint Peter's Square on Sunday morning, 13 October, Pope Francis celebrated the Rite of Canonization, proclaiming five new Saints: John Henry Newman, Josephine Vannini, Mariam Thresia Chiramel Mankidiyan, Dulce Lopes Pontes and Marguerite Bays. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's homily.

Your faith has saved you" (Lk 17:19). This is the climax of today's Gospel, which reflects the journey of faith. There are three steps in this journey of faith. We see them in the actions of the lepers whom Jesus heals. They cry out, they walk and they give thanks.

First, they cry out. The lepers were in a dreadful situation, not only because of a disease that, widespread even today, needs to be battled with unremitting effort, but also because of their exclusion from society. At the time of Jesus, lepers were considered unclean and, as such, had to be isolated and kept apart (cf. Lev 13:46). We see that when they approach Jesus, they "kept their distance" (Lk 17:12). Even though their condition kept them apart, the Gospel tells us that they "called out" (v. 13) and pleaded with Jesus. They did not let themselves be paralyzed because they were shunned by society; they cried out to God, who excludes no one. We see how distance is overcome: by not closing in on ourselves and our own problems, by not thinking about how others judge us, but rather by crying out to the Lord, for the Lord hears the cry of those who find themselves alone.

Like those lepers, we too need healing, each one of us. We need to be healed of our lack of confidence in ourselves, in life, in the future; the

need to be healed of our fears and the vices that enslave us, of our introversion, our addictions and our attachment to games, money, television, mobile phones, to what other people think. The Lord sets our hearts free and heals them if only we ask him, only if we say to him: "Lord, I believe you can heal me. Dear Jesus, heal me from being caught up in myself. Free me from evil and fear". The lepers are the first people, in this Gospel, of a man called on the name of Jesus. Later, a blind man and a crucified thief would do so: all of them needy people calling on the name of Jesus, which means: "God saves". They call God by name, directly and spontaneously. To call someone by name is a sign of confidence, and it pleases the Lord. That is how faith grows, through confident, trusting prayer. Prayer in which we bring to Jesus who we really are, with open hearts, without attempting to mask our sufferings. Each day, let us invoke with confidence the name of Jesus: "God saves". Let us repeat it: that is prayer; saying "Jesus" is prayer. And prayer is essential! Indeed, prayer is the door of faith; prayer is medicine for the heart.

The second word is to walk. It is the second stage of faith. In today's brief Gospel, there are several verbs of motion. It is quite striking that the lepers are not healed as they stand before Jesus; it is only afterwards, as they were walking. The

Gospel tells us that: "As they went, they were made clean" (v. 14). They were healed by going up to Jerusalem, that is, while walking uphill. On the journey of life, purification takes place along the way, a way that is often uphill since it leads to the heights. Faith calls for journey, a "going out" from ourselves, and it can work wonders if we abandon our comforting certainties, if we leave our safe harbours and our cosy nests. Faith increases by giving, and grows by taking risks. Faith advances when we make our way equipped with trust in God. Faith advances with humble and practical steps, like the steps of the lepers or those of Naaman who went down to bathe in the river Jordan (cf. 2 Kings 5:14-17). The same is true for us. We advance in faith by showing humble and practical love, exercising patience each day, and praying constantly to Jesus as we keep pressing forward on our way.



There is a further interesting aspect to the journey of the lepers: they move together. The Gospel tells us that, "as they went, they were made clean" (v. 14). The verbs are in the plural. Faith also means walking together, never alone. Once healed, however, nine of them go off on their own way, and only one turns back to offer thanks. Jesus then expresses his astonishment: "The other nine, where are they?" (v. 17). It is as if he asks the only one who returned to account for the other nine. It is the task of us, who celebrate the Eucharist as an act of thanksgiving, to take care of those who have stopped walking, those who have lost their way. We are called to be guardians of our distant brothers and sisters, all of us! We are to intercede for them; we are responsible for them, to account for them, to keep them close to heart. Do you want to grow in faith? You, who are here today, do you want to grow in faith? Then

take care of a distant brother, a faraway sister.

To cry out. To walk. And to give thanks. This is the final step. Only to the one who thanked him did Jesus say: "Your faith has saved you" (v. 19). It made you both safe, and sound. We see from this that the ultimate goal is not health or wellness, but the encounter with Jesus. Salvation is not drinking a glass of water to keep fit; it is going to the source, which is Jesus. He alone frees us from evil and heals our hearts. Only an encounter with him can save, can make life full and beautiful. Whenever we meet Jesus, the word "thanks" comes immediately to our lips, because we have discovered the most important thing in life, which is not to receive a grace or resolve a problem, but to embrace the Lord of life. And this is the most important thing in life: to embrace the Lord of life.



It is impressive to see how the man who was healed, a Samaritan, expresses his joy with his entire being: he praises God in a loud voice, he prostrates himself, and he gives thanks (cf. vv. 15-16). The culmination of the journey of faith is to live a life of continual thanksgiving. Let us ask ourselves: do we, as people of faith, live each day as a burden, or as an act of praise? Are we closed in on ourselves, waiting to ask another blessing, or do we find our joy in giving thanks? When we express our gratitude, the Father's heart is moved and he pours out the Holy Spirit upon us. To give thanks is not a question of good manners or etiquette; it is a question of faith. A grateful heart is one that remains young. To say "Thank you, Lord" when we wake up, throughout the day and before going to bed: that is the best way to keep our hearts young, because the heart grows old and one adjusts poorly. This also holds true for families, and between spouses. Remember to say thank you. Those words are the simplest and most effective of all.

To cry out. To walk. To give thanks. Today we give thanks to the Lord for our new Saints. They walked by faith and now we invoke their intercession. Three of them were religious women; they show us that the consecrated life is a journey of love at the existential peripheries of the world. Saint Marguerite Bays, on the other hand, was a seamstress; she speaks to us of the power of simple prayer, enduring patience and silent self-giving. That is how the Lord made the splendour of Easter radiate in her life, in her humility. Such is the holiness of daily life, which Saint John Henry Newman described in these words: "The Christian has a deep, silent, hidden peace, which the world sees not... The Christian is cheerful, easy, kind, gentle, courteous, candid, unassuming; has no pretence... with so little that is unusual or striking in his bearing, that he may easily be taken at first sight for an ordinary man" (Parochial and Plain Sermons, v. 3).



At the Angelus Francis expresses concern for Ecuador

The Pope renews his appeal on behalf of tormented Syria

After reciting the Angelus on the parvis of Saint Peter's Basilica on Sunday morning, 13 October, Pope Francis appealed to the International Community to commit "with sincerity, with honesty and with transparency on the path of dialogue in order to seek effective solutions" in light of the tragic events taking place in Syria. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's appeal and greetings, which he shared in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Before concluding this Eucharistic Celebration, I would like to greet and thank all of you.

I thank my brother Cardinals and Bishops, as well as the priests, women and men religious who have come from every part of the world, especially those who belong to the spiritual families of the new Saints. I greet all the lay faithful who have gathered here.

I greet the official Delegations from the various countries, in particular the President of the Italian Republic and His Highness the Prince of Wales. Indeed, with their evangelical witness, these Saints fostered spiritual and social growth in their respective nations.

I offer a special thought to the Delegates of the Anglican Communion, with deep gratitude for their presence, and I also welcome you, dear brother, the new Bishop here in Rome.

I greet all of you, dear pilgrims, as well as those who have followed this Mass via radio and television. I address a special greeting to the faithful from Poland, who today are celebrating the Day of the Pope: I thank them for their prayers and for their constant affection.

And my thoughts go once more to the Middle East. In particular to the beloved and tormented Syria, from which tragic news is arriving once again regarding the fate of the populations in the North-East of the country, forced to abandon their homes due to military action: among these populations there are also many Christian families. To all the actors involved and also to the International Community: please, I renew my appeal to commit yourselves, with sincerity, with honesty and with transparency on the path of dialogue in order to seek effective solutions.

Together with all the members of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region, especially those from Ecuador, I am following with concern what has been happening in recent weeks in that country. I entrust it to common prayer and to the intercession of the new Saints, and I share in the grief for the dead, the injured and the missing. I encourage the search for social peace, with particular attention to the most vulnerable populations, to the poor and to human rights.

And now let us turn to the Virgin Mary, model of evangelical perfection, that she may help us to follow the example of the new Saints.

Saint Mariam Thresia: Patroness of Families

Sr DR ABHAYA ROSE, CHF

Saint Mariam Thresia was born to Thoma and Thanda in a renowned Catholic family, Chiramel Mankidiyan, on 26 April 1876 at Puthenchira, Thrissur, Kerala, India. From her childhood she had an admirable orientation towards God and interior life. She consecrated herself totally to God when she was three or four years old. In her early age she chose Jesus as her spiritual spouse, the Blessed Virgin Mother as her mother and Saint Joseph as her father. She was earnest to reflect upon the Passion of the Lord, to participate in the Holy Eucharist daily and to exercise austerity. From then on, she had various experiences of visions and revelations from the celestial world. Jesus would visit her as an Infant, Adult, Suffering One, Crucified, Eucharistic Lord, Sacred Heart, Judge, enthroned in Heaven and with celestial beings. These experiences led her to the mysteries of the whole Christ Event.

Despite the fact that she had only elementary schooling and hailed from a rural background, Mariam Thresia would exhibit a surprising sense of wisdom and precision in her thinking from a young age. She was actively involved in parish events and related compassionately with everyone. She sought passionately to enter into the religious way of life at the age of fifteen; however, God did not allow her to enter the existing religious congregations as he had unique plans for her. She made a few attempts to move to the woods to love God in solitude, which were also thwarted by the hidden hands of God. Subsequently, she engaged herself in various services in the parish.

Like the great saints of the Church, Mariam Thresia was subjected to dreadful diabolic attacks, tempestuous temptations against faith, hope and purity, and various physical illnesses. In spite of these, she lived heroically the theological virtues of faith, hope and love, and other virtues like humility and submission to the divine will in an outstanding manner. It was in this period that she found a spiritual guide in the person of Fr Joseph Vithayathil, who played a vital and decisive role in her life. Mariam Thresia had the frequent interventions of Jesus, Mary and Joseph who guided and directed her all through the journey of life. Their constant accompaniment and close proximity were sealed by heaven, such that the hearts of Jesus, Mary and Joseph were given to her during the period of 1904-1906. She who would engross herself in the Passion of Christ began to evince the signs of his suffering in her body in 1905. She entered into the mystery of the Holy Eucharist wherein Jesus revealed to her that he himself is the Offeror and the Victim of the Holy Sacrifice. Jesus would celebrate the Holy Eucharist in her room when she was unable to come to the Church due to various sufferings.



Mariam Thresia visited, consoled, counselled, prayed and led every kind of family to God. The central vision of her family apostolate was to make families like the Holy Family by imparting Christ to them. Her visits to families with prophetic fortitude were scorned by some. She had to swim against the current to obtain acceptance of the family apostolate by the society and the hierarchy of the Church.

Through her visits to families, Mariam Thresia knew the persons who were irregular to the Sacraments. She prayed for them before the Blessed Sacrament, voluntarily

and compassionate works, impelled by love of God and neighbour. Many souls would appear before her, seeking her intercession for their release from the pains of purgatory. She not only offered prayers, plenary indulgences, Holy Eucharist, acts of sacrifices, sufferings and almsgiving, but also insisted that others do the same for their relief.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Pope Leo XIII and the succeeding Popes endorsed the Holy Family as the model for all families. They encouraged the people to imitate the Holy Family to lead a genuine family life on which the future of the society depends. By divine providence and the working of the

and compassionate works, impelled by love of God and neighbour.

After founding CHF, Mariam Thresia assumed her responsibility as Superior with much integrity. She was keen and meticulous on the spiritual and the physical welfare of the members, propagation of the charism, oneness of the community, establishment of new convents, maintenance, stewardship of the land, the vicinity and so on.

Mariam Thresia was a visionary who realized that education played a vital role in the formation of families. Therefore, she started schools with the assistance of Fr Joseph Vithayathil and the benefactors of her society. The first school was opened just a year after the establishment of CHF with the aim of imparting the knowledge of God. Her commitment to this cause was evident from her meticulous management of operations.

In the later years of her life, Mariam Thresia made an integrated and progressive move in her apostolate. She concentrated more on the development and spiritual growth of the society. She took the initiative to write to the Cochin Postal Department and set up a post box near the premises of the newly built school at Kuzhikkattussery in 1924. She never made distinctions on the basis of caste, creed or culture but visited people and served them compassionately. Her actions informed society that everyone had the right to be human in every sense. Many came forward to help her personally and financially. She made efforts to relieve fellow beings from the evils of ignorance, exploitation, poverty and discrimination.

Mariam Thresia not only offered education and extra educational activities like needle work, etc., to the women of her neighbourhood, but also provided them with opportunities to pray, study and work. She understood the importance of Sisters and students learning English and so made arrangements for it by opening a boarding house in Thrissur. She was convinced that the uplifting of women would transform the family and society.

Mariam Thresia was keenly aware of and consumed with nature. She worked hard and harvested crops, despite the scorching sun and heavy rain. She took care and admonished others too to keep the environment clean and not to throw waste in the premises. She appreciated nature and knew the medicinal and nurturing properties of plants. Such was her desire to be in touch with nature that at the time of her death she asked her Sisters to lay her on the ground that she might die feeling one with it.

Twelve years after founding CHF, at the time of her death on 8 June 1926, there were 55 Sisters, 30 boarders and 10 orphans under her care. She had established three convents, one boarding house, two schools and an orphanage. She was beatified by Pope John Paul II on 9 April 2000 and canonized by Pope Francis on 13 October 2019 in Saint Peter's Square in Rome.



*Today we give thanks to the Lord
for our new #Saints. They walked by faith and
now we invoke their intercession*

(@Pontifex)

took upon herself mortifications, visited and counselled them often to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, the Holy Eucharist and the Anointing of the Sick, in order to experience the love, compassion and grace of God.

Mariam Thresia never missed an occasion to care for the sick and the downtrodden as she had a unique aptitude for it. Through her God-given healing power and ardent prayers, she healed many from spiritual and physical ailments, including the Maharaja of Cochin. She would bring the untended sick to her home and nurse them like her kinsfolk. In the same way, she would bring the abandoned children to the convent, love them like a compassionate mother, and take care of their material, educational as well as spiritual needs.

One of the favourite acts that Mariam Thresia devoted herself to was praying for the souls in purgatory.

Holy Spirit, it is in this phase that Mariam Thresia entered families with the spirit of the Holy Family to resuscitate them in Christ.

The unique life of Mariam Thresia and her companions was appreciated by many. Her intense desire for a house for prayer and solitude eventually came to fruition on 7 October 1913. Mar John Menachery, the Vicar Apostolic of Thrissur, permitted her to stay in the house of solitude, which was built with the support of Fr Joseph Vithayathil and the parishioners. On 14 May 1914, the Bishop officially recognized this community as the Congregation of the Holy Family (CHF). Mariam Thresia made her perpetual vows and her three companions were received as Postulants on the same day. Her new life as a religious did not deter her from the unique apostolate but she carried it out with greater zeal and resolution. She discerned and undertook various social

Fifth and Sixth General Congregations

Greater commitment for rights of the indigenous



The Fifth and Sixth General Congregations were held on Wednesday, 9 October. In an overview, Vatican News reported that during the fifth assembly, held in the morning, discussions centred on the wellbeing of the Amazon, the capitalist model of development which is devouring the environment, the fires destroying the region, corruption, deforestation, and illegal cultivation, all of which endanger the health of both the land and peoples of this territory and of the entire planet.

Participants highlighted the need for an international ecclesial watch-dog for the protection of human rights and to care for the indigenous peoples who live in voluntary isolation, particularly the vulnerable and those exposed to genocide.

It was noted that there is also an urgent need for ecumenical and interreligious dialogue in order for the Church to better reach and assist local populations. Inter-culturality is a serious challenge in the multicultural Pan-Amazon region. In addition, it was emphasized that the Church must have an indigenous face and bring the peripheries to the centre.

There was an appeal for greater involvement of the laity in creating new ministries that correspond to the needs of the Amazonian peoples, and for inculturation in the liturgy to include the traditions and languages of the local peoples.

Discussion once again arose around the ordination of married men, an option that should not be ruled out; while it was likewise noted that today many desire to rediscover an awareness of the value of celibacy and chastity.

In light of the spread of violence against women, the idea of instituting a female lay ministry for evangelization was put forth, and it was stressed that the active participation of women be encouraged in the life of the Church.

Faced with the alarming consequences of climate change, the Synod was described as a moment of grace and a great opportunity for the Church to promote ecological conversion and integral education.

The issue of migration was discussed, along with its sociopolitical impact on the climate, economics, and ethnic persecution, and requires a specific pastoral approach. In this regard, the Church must become a promoter of urban pastoral ministry.

The value of indigenous theology was recognized with reference to the Pope's desire to form a Church with an indigenous face, in a way that

reproposes the essential elements of the Catholic universe with an indigenous hermeneutic.

During the Sixth General Congregation on Wednesday afternoon, the tragedy and consequences of drug trafficking were discussed. In some areas of the Amazon region, the area devoted to the cultivation of coca has increased from 12 thousand to 23 thousand hectares, with devastating repercussions: rising crime rates and the upheaval of the natural equilibrium of a territory facing increased desertification.

Meanwhile, millions of hectares of land are being destroyed by authorized fires and the construction of hydroelectric dams, which have a disastrous environmental impact on some regions, altering ecosystems. Renewed calls for ecological conversion are necessary. It was said the Church



must speak with a prophetic voice in order to bring the issue of integral ecology onto the agenda of international bodies.

Other interventions reflected on the balance between inculturation and evangelization, offering Jesus as an example: his very Incarnation is the greatest sign of inculturation, because it is the Word of God taking on human form in order to make itself visible in his love; likewise the Church must become incarnate in peoples' daily lives just as it has been in the lives of missionaries in the Amazon.

It was suggested, for the good of both the peoples native to the region and for the good of the Church herself, that the Amazon should become a laboratory of permanent missionary synodality. Stress was also placed on the importance

of interculturality and on the enhancement of cultures and of indigenous populations, so as to help care for our common home.

There was more discussion regarding the challenges of priestly and religious vocations, the possibility of *virii probati*, and the need for lay deacons. The need for better priestly formation was again emphasized along with the need to value the responsibilities of the laity.

Popular piety was discussed as an aspect of evangelization that must not be ignored. It was described as one of the fundamental characteristics of the Amazonian peoples, to be safeguarded as a treasure reflecting Jesus Christ.

Attention was given to the theology of Creation and the importance of a major dialogue between this theology and positive sciences – as forgetting creation would amount to forgetting the Creator.

The importance of defending the rights of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon was also stressed, along with the importance of dialoguing with them and valuing them as worthy interlocutors endowed with the capacity for self-determination.

Auditors, fraternal delegates and special guests were also given the floor during the sixth congregation. The importance of promoting the role of women was particularly emphasized, and that their leadership within the family, society and the Church must be more highly valued. Also emphasized was the importance of recognizing the manner in which women of the Amazon proclaim the Gospel, as they are often silent yet deeply involved in society. It was suggested that gender synodality be strengthened in the Church.

The importance of interreligious dialogue was addressed, particularly in seeking to build trust and in seeing differences as opportunities. Ecumenical dialogue was also a focus and the importance of a common proclamation of the Gospel, and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples and Amazonian land were highlighted.

It was recognized that the Amazon is an authentic place in which many of the global challenges of our time are manifested. The sufferings of the Amazonian peoples, in fact, derive from an "imperial" lifestyle, in which life is considered a simple commodity and inequities abound. Instead, Indigenous peoples can help us understand the interconnectedness of things: global cooperation is both possible and urgent.

Seventh and Eighth General Congregations

The Special Assembly for the Pan-Amazon Synod of Bishops continued on Saturday, 12 October, with the Seventh and Eighth General Congregations. Vatican News offered an overview of the day's work. Themes discussed during the seventh assembly on Saturday morning included integral education, instruments of integration and promotion of the Amazonian people, sustainable development with equal access to information, and the move away from a throwaway culture.

Participants discussed the urgent need for an educational alliance within an ecological perspective and an Amazonian hermeneutic, as a way to promote "good life", "good coexistence" and "good action". Integral education has the aim of re-establishing the connection between the environment and humanity by forming individuals capable of caring for our common home from a consciousness of "ecological citizen-

ship", in contrast to threats of expansion and a "civilized world" that wants to exploit natural resources for purposes of wealth. Emphasizing the importance of moving away from homogenization, the Synod Fathers stressed that ecological integrity must become part of how one lives in the world. God desires a harmony of differences which is why the Amazon is a virtuous model, representing unity through its ecological system and the people living in the region.

One intervention focused on the interaction between ecology and work, often connected to technocratic and exploitative dynamics. A theology of creation is needed to build a non-predatory relationship towards the environment. In addition to the issue of youth unemployment, identified as the most serious form of exclusion and disenfranchisement of young people, the Synod Fathers highlighted the alarming

situation of slavery and child labour, and the need to promote workers' rights by re-launching a joint economy of local bio-economics and renewable energies.

As attention turned to the role of women the Synod Fathers recognized their highly active pastoral role among Amazonian communities and the versatility of their work, and emphasized that women should be considered on an equal footing with men in non-ordained ministries, particularly female congregations. Various auditors reflected on the experiences of consecrated life in the Amazon and identified the needs of consecrated people in the peripheries.

Participants again considered the issue of the shortage of vocations and the previously discussed themes of *virii probati* and a permanent diaconate. A suggestion was made to establish a Pan-Amazon commission on the formation of future priests that would take into account the fin-

ancial difficulties of individual dioceses and the shortage of educators. Closely linked to this theme was also a discussion on the Church's missionary work in the region. The need to bring the word of God to the Amazon through the language of love and prayer was highlighted as well as the need for the Church to be on the move, kerygmatic and a teacher of the faith, through dialogue and the appreciation of the values of different peoples.

Turning to the topic of migration the Synod Fathers highlighted the need for a pastoral attitude that is not only social but also spiritual, so that it can promote the true integration of migrants. Migrants, they stressed, are not just a psychological or political concern but also a theological concern that should move the Church to reflection in order to foster justice, respect for human



Ninth and Tenth General Congregations

Reviving missionary enthusiasm

On Monday, 14 October, the Synod on the Amazon entered its second week with the Ninth and Tenth General Congregations. During the morning session, participants and Pope Francis began by praying for Ecuador before getting down to the day's discussions which, a Vatican News overview reported, began with a reminder that the Synod is a *Kairos*, a time of grace. As the Church listens with empathy, and walks alongside the land's indigenous peoples: it is important to note that Creation is a 'green Bible' that reveals the Creator, and commitment to the environment finds its deepest foundation in the celebration of the Sacraments.

Religious congregations were asked to revive their missionary enthusiasm in light of the significant decrease in the number of religious communities, and to offer constant formation and catechumenate pathways based on grass-roots experience. In order to take on an Amazonian face, it is necessary to understand the signs and symbols of indigenous people in a perspective of dialogue and interculturality, encouraging the deepening of an *Indios* theology. This implies a dynamism, going beyond our structures and perspectives. Indeed in some cases an outgoing Church is already a reality in the Amazon with many examples of pastoral presence that aims to encourage indigenous peoples. In addition to not yielding to the temptation to provide an evangelization based solely on aid programmes, the Church is called to face the challenges posed by the proliferation of religious sects, and by a relativistic culture perpetuated by industrialized countries.

Called to make her voice heard, the Church in the Amazon is also urged to foster a circular economy that respects local wisdom and practices as well as the establishment of an international ecclesial observatory on the violation of the human rights of the Amazonian peoples. The responsibility of industrialized countries as the world's largest polluters was reiterated, as was the need for them to show greater solidarity towards countries with fragile economies. Also suggested was the establishment of a Pan-Amazonian ecosystem of ecclesial communication reflecting the

interconnectivity of humanity, to better reach the region's most isolated areas. The importance of helping people acquire a critical reading of information, unmasking manipulation, distortion or spectacularization was stressed.

As discussions turned to ministries, the importance of lay service was highlighted, including that of women and other pastoral leaders such as catechists, lectors, deacons, as was the importance of education in transmitting the faith to young people. Young people should be helped to integrate ancestral and modern knowledge so that both may contribute to "living well". Under the action of the Spirit, *cum Petrus and sub Petrus*, the Church is therefore urged to convert to an Amazonian perspective and to undertake discernment and reflection on the priesthood and on the introduction of permanent indigenous deacons.

In addition to the suggestion of ecologically friendly, intercultural Christian communities to teach new lifestyles reflecting care for our common home, participants denounced oil and logging companies for damaging the environment and undermining the existence of indigenous



peoples who reap no profit from them. Thus there is a need to expose this corruption, along with the threats posed by drug trafficking.

Also discussed was the issue of food sovereignty: every people has the right to choose what to cultivate, what to eat and how to guarantee access to food while respecting ecosystems. Because a significant portion of the agro-food biodiversity in the Amazon is still unknown and has been preserved by local populations, an appeal was made to ensure that this does not become exploited by the few, as has occurred in the past in the medical field where plants and active ingredients have enriched multinational pharmaceutical companies, and offered nothing to the people.

During the Tenth General Congregation in the day's afternoon session, participants highlighted one of the key challenges of the Church in the Amazon: rethinking ministry in light of synodality so that the Church might increasingly be formed by the Word of God. Because the Word of God underpins the challenge of integral ecology and can be a means for social, economic, cultural and political development and for a new humanism, there is the need for new ministers of the Word to provide responses to contemporary challenges. The Church must, therefore, invest in the formation of a well-prepared laity who, in a missionary spirit, will be capable of proclaiming the Gospel in every part of the Amazon. Thanks to the laity, the Church shows herself to be outward bound, distancing herself from clericalism. Participants heard the suggestion of the Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to address the issue of women's ministries and *virii probati*, two topics which have been widely discussed since the start of the Synod. With regard to women, the suggestion of the inclusion of women in non-ordained ministries was repeated, whereas, with regards to *virii probati*, a permanent diaconate, from which to form future priests, was put forth.

As attention turned to care for minors and vulnerable adults, participants heard that transparency and responsibility were the greatest challenges in preventing and fighting against pedo-

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Seventh and Eighth General Congregations

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rights and a just and inclusive economic system.

In the closing of the session, the Synod Fathers heard interventions from auditors who spoke of the importance of protecting indigenous territories from being expropriated, degraded and used as a commodity for the purposes of mineral extraction or hydroelectric centres. A proposal was made for local churches to create an aid fund with initiatives of ethno-ecology, agro-ecology and food safety, from an Amazonian mindset.

Among the themes discussed at the Eighth General Congregation on Saturday afternoon was the centrality of Christ in the Church's mission. Because evangelization is never undertaken alone, a suggestion was made to create a team to respond to the pastoral challenges in the region and to bear witness to the joy of evangelization.

Participants returned to the issue of vocations, addressing celibacy, new models of priesthood and the need to achieve an ordained min-

istry that comes from and remains in the Amazon, and a Church with a truly Amazonian identity. It was also suggested that the Synod could lay the foundation for a new step forward in faith in the Holy Spirit which must be stronger than the fear of making mistakes. Participants heard the testimony of an indigenous religious and the indigenous call to pursue in their own formation the discovery of connections between their indigenous heritage and Christian spirituality, thus contributing to an integral ecology.

Participants again considered the topic of women, requesting that they be given more decision-making roles since women have already acquired greater roles in Christian communities not only as catechists and mothers but also as people capable of assuming new ministries. Indeed the inclusion of women could be the answer to a less clerical Church.

Synod participants highlighted the importance of listening as the guiding and inspirational attitude on the path to an ecological conversion that is essential to counteract-

ing environmental destruction. Walking together means listening to the "agony of Mother Earth" and becoming aware of the "violence behind extractive ethnocide".

Participants heard about the importance of our connection to each other and to the earth, and of the fragmentation of human existence that leads to disparity in social conditions and is fuelled by "wild capitalism" and materialism facilitated by globalization. An appeal for a simpler lifestyle and an ecological conversion that embraces fair trade was suggested as a way to counteract the developed world's demands for cheaper products which the indigenous populations often pay for with their blood.

One of the interventions proposed the institution of a new regional structure to continue the momentum of the positive experience of the networks created in the pre-Synod process and the inspirations of the Spirit received during the Synod.

VATICAN BULLETIN

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ic Nuncio in Malaysia and East Timor and Apostolic Delegate in Brunei (11 Oct.).

NECROLOGY

Bishop Gérard Tremblay, PSS, titular Bishop of Trisipa, auxiliary emeritus of Montreal, Canada, at age 100 (28 Sept.)

Archbishop Enrico Masseroni, Archbishop emeritus of Vercelli, Italy, at age 80 (30 Sept.)

Bishop Ignacio Noguer Carmona, Bishop emeritus of Huelva, Spain, at age 88 (3 Oct.)

Bishop Thomas Joseph Flanagan, titular Bishop of Bavagaliana, auxiliary emeritus of San Antonio, USA, at age 89 (9 Oct.)

Archbishop Dominic Jala, SDB, Archbishop of Shillong, India, Apostolic Administrator *sede vacante* of Nongstoin, at age 68 (10 Oct.)

Eleventh and Twelfth Congregations

Pastoral action to defend mankind and the planet



In the morning and afternoon sessions held on Tuesday, 15 October, the Synod held its 11th and 12th General Congregations. Participants continued to offer ideas on new paths for the Church and integral human ecology in the region. Among the most urgent matters identified by Vatican News in an overview of the day's work was the creation of a permanent and representative episcopal structure coordinated by the Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM) together with the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM), in order to promote synodality and help implement the face of the Church in the Amazon. This joint pastoral action, to be elaborated synodally by all the Dioceses of the Pan-Amazon Region, has the aim of defending indigenous peoples' rights, establishing the integral formation of pastoral agents and instituting Amazonian seminaries.

Participants also examined problems stemming from colonization, internal migration and the advancement of predatory and colonialist economic models that kill and lead to the expropriation and eviction of communities from their territories. The needs of indigenous peoples on the move must be understood through specific pastoral care, so that their human and environmental rights can always be guaranteed. Among these rights is the right to be consulted and informed before any action takes place in their territories, and to that end, a permanent observatory for human rights and the protection of the Amazon was suggested.

Also discussed was the theme of inculturation: the need for the Church to be open to new paths in the rich diversity of Amazonian cultures with an approach of listening, service, solidarity, respect, justice and reconciliation. Highlighting the importance of improvement in indigenous education, participants asked what the Church can do as one of the most qualified and powerful institutions in the educational field. In response, suggestions were made to better coordinate offices with one another in order to offer improved services: Catholic universities could introduce a preferential option for the education of indigenous peoples, or generate economical strategies to support indigenous universities in such a way as to

protect cultural identity and safeguard the ancestral wisdom of indigenous Amazonian peoples.

As they reflected on the theme of violence, participants offered powerful examples of the region's martyred missionaries who gave their lives for the cause of the Amazonian people and their territory, among them, Bishop Alejandro Labaka, Sr Inés Arango and Sr Dorothy Stang. Suggestions were made to establish a national and international financial fund to strengthen missions in the region, especially in the areas of transportation and formation.

Missionary efforts must also be carried out from an ecumenical perspective. Because Christian evangelization is a free invitation, an attractive evangelization will be the proof of credible ecumenism. Music was identified as a common language understood by all, one that leads to reflection on the communication of faith and makes doctrine understandable through human sensitivity. The topic of rethinking ministry in the light of the Amazonian experience again came to the fore, and discussions raised the issue of a more widespread ministry that would include a greater presence of women and new criteria for selecting and preparing ministers authorized to administer the Eucharist. The establishment of a fund for the formation of the laity in the biblical, theological and pastoral spheres was also set forth.

Participants at the 12th General Congregation were reminded on Tuesday afternoon that the Church cannot speak of the poor while forgetting that the people are being crucified. The Church is called to take up the cry of the people and of the earth, with the Gospel as her point of departure.

On the topic of overcoming victimization and fostering co-responsibility for building the community's own destiny, it was noted that populations in some of the more vulnerable regions of the Amazon often feel abandoned. The Church must work to boost their self-esteem, to prevent them from becoming victims. Indeed, the region itself is undeniably a victim of abuse.

The cry for help emanating from both the peoples and the earth requires a common response which recognizes the value of every

creature, a concern rooted in the Christian vocation. Protecting the Amazon from man-made destruction is humanity's responsibility. The creation of an international body of scientists and scholars to coordinate global responses to climate change with the Pontifical Academy of Sciences was proposed. It was hoped that on an educational level, more could be done to sensitize the public on caring for our Common Home. A new ecological Canon was suggested as an addition to the Code of Canon Law which would delineate the environmental obligations of Christians. It was noted that the Amazon region belongs neither to States nor to those who govern them, and that administrators must be held accountable for their actions.

The need was expressed for a spirituality and a sacramental theology open to the challenge of the lived experience of communities and their gifts. In this regard, coordinated local Church efforts (such as REPAM) were encouraged. Intercultural dialogue inspired by the Pentecostal Spirit was also highlighted. Humility is necessary for such dialogue, founded on the common conviction of being co-responsible in caring for our Common Home.

Seventy percent of communities in the Amazon region are visited by a priest only once or twice each year. They are deprived of the sacraments, the Word of God, and essential Christian celebrations such as Easter, Pentecost and Christmas. Some choose to attend other Christian assemblies so as not to be "sheep without a shepherd". The universal Church cannot remain indifferent to this situation and must make courageous choices.

Some participants felt that the passion for mission has faded in the most remote areas. Some areas are heavily affected by the consequences of large, unsustainable mining projects that can lead to illness, drug trafficking and loss of identity. The international community must be exhorted not to invest in industrial projects that cause harm and illness to the surrounding populations. In addition, the Amazon is in need of missionaries, for they are the only ones the local populations still trust.

Itinerant missionary teams who constantly visit different villages, are considered a real and creative model of a Church always "on the move", which forsakes a pastoral ministry aimed at preserving the past. We can no longer be "obsolete" while the rest of the world moves ahead. The Gospel, in fact, always has something new to say. This too is a part of an ecological conversion. Openness to new forms of ministry means the incorporation of women and young people.

The Church is called to enter the everyday lives of men and women – collegially and synodally. Once again, the topic of migrants arose with a focus on cities, where they are forced to confront challenging situations: political, social, economic, the existential void, and heightened individualism. Making the Gospel present in cities is a duty, and in this way, they become places for mission and sanctification.

Pastoral ministry specific to this context, where indigenous migrants are mostly affected, must be encouraged. Defence of the territory is of utmost importance both for the biome of the region and for the way of life of the Amazon's local populations. In this sense, an "intransigent defence" of the indigenous peoples was recommended, one that includes the right to their own culture, their own theology, their own religion, and that considers them as riches to be safeguarded in the interests of all humanity.

Lastly, the issue of food sustainability was raised. With its fresh water resources, the Amazon could contribute to the reduction of world hunger. In fact, 26% of the world's fresh water comes from this region and it was suggested that sustainable projects should be encouraged.

9th and 10th Congregation

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philia, other forms of sexual abuse and the trafficking of people and organs, among other issues caused by grave economic inequality and lack of government intervention. Thus an appeal was made for greater commitment to prevention, including through the in-

volvement of the Episcopal Conferences and religious congregations. Another practical suggestion was the establishment of a special pastoral commission specifically to deal with these crimes.

The importance of pastoral work for vocations was highlighted as was the fact that all evangelization must be accom-

panied by youth ministry, as young people need to be supported by adequate formation through the witness of holy and committed lives. Participants also heard that safeguarding water, a source of life, entails an ecological conversion that considers the ethical dimension and underpins contemporary lifestyles.

Returning to the morning's theme of communication, participants heard that through the mass media one must be open to communicate to every culture and in every language in order to support the Amazonian peoples. Church-sponsored media should, therefore, be a place to consolidate local knowledge, which can be done through the formation of indigenous communicators. At the end of the 10th General Congregation, Pope Francis reflected on the themes that had emerged throughout the day, sharing his thoughts with participants.



GENERAL AUDIENCE

With a call to enter the school of the Prince of the Apostles in order to learn that “an evangelizer cannot be an impediment to the creative work of God”, Pope Francis emphasized the need to “overcome all particularism in order to be open to the universality of salvation, because God wants to save everyone”. He offered this advice to the faithful who had gathered in Saint Peter’s Square for the General Audience on Wednesday, 16 October. The following is a translation of the Holy Father’s catechesis, which he delivered in Italian.



Evangelizers cannot impede the creative work of God

Pope Francis continues his series of catecheses on the Acts of the Apostles

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

The Gospel’s journey through the world, which Saint Luke recounts in the Acts of the Apostles, is accompanied by the supreme creativity of God which is manifested in a surprising way. God wants his children to overcome all particularism in order to open themselves up to the universality of salvation. This is the aim: to overcome particularism in order to be open to the universality of salvation, because God wants to save everyone. Those who are reborn by water and by the Holy Spirit – the baptized – are called to go out of themselves and be open to others, to live the closeness, the way of living together, which transforms every interpersonal relationship into an experience of fraternity (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 87).

The witness to this process of “fraternization” that the Spirit wishes to initiate in history is Peter, the protagonist in the Acts of the Apostles, along with Paul. Peter experiences an event that marks a decisive turning point in his life. While he is praying, he receives a vision that acts as divine “provocation”, so as to bring about a change of mindset in him. He sees a great tablecloth that descends from on High, containing various creatures: four-legged animals, reptiles and birds, and he hears a voice that invites him to eat of that flesh. He, as a good Jew, responds by claiming that he has never eaten anything unclean, as required by the Law of the Lord (cf. Lev 11). Then the voice reiterates forcefully: “What God has cleansed, you must not call common” (Acts 10:15).

With this event the Lord wants Peter to no longer value events and people according to the categories of clean and unclean, but

that he learn to go further, to look at the person and at the intentions in his or her heart. What renders man unclean, in fact, comes not from outside but only from within, from the heart (cf. Mk 7:21). Jesus said it clearly.

After that vision, God invites Peter to go to the house of an uncircumcised Gentile, Cornelius, “a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, a devout man who feared God”, who gave alms liberally to the people and always prayed to God (cf. Acts 10:1-2), but was not a Jew.

In that Gentile’s home, Peter preaches Christ Crucified and Risen, and the forgiveness of sins to those who believe in Him. And as Peter speaks, the Holy Spirit pours out upon Cornelius and his household. And Peter baptizes them in the name of Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 10:48).

This extraordinary fact – it is the first time that this sort of

thing happens – becomes common knowledge in Jerusalem, where the brethren, scandalized by Peter’s behaviour, criticize him bitterly (cf. Acts 11:1-3). Peter did something that went beyond what was customary, beyond the law, and this is why they criticize him. But after the encounter with Cornelius, Peter is more free of himself and in greater communion with God and with others, because he has seen the will of God in the action of the Holy Spirit. Thus he is able to understand that the election of Israel is not a reward for merit, but the sign of the freely given call to be a mediator of the divine blessing among the Gentiles.

Dear brothers and sisters, we learn from the Prince of the Apostles that an evangelizer cannot be an impediment to the creative work of God, who “desires all men to be saved” (1 Tim 2:4), but one who fosters the en-

counter of hearts with the Lord. And we, how do we behave towards our brothers and sisters, especially those who are not Christian? Are we an impediment to the encounter with God? Do we obstruct their encounter with the Father or do we facilitate it?

Today let us ask for the grace to allow ourselves to be astonished by God’s surprises, not to obstruct his creativity, but to recognize and foster the ever new ways through which the Risen One pours out his Spirit upon the world and attracts hearts by making them come to know him as “Lord of all” (Acts 10:36). Thank you.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I welcome all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today’s Audience, especially those from England, Scotland, Finland, Norway, Nigeria, Zambia, Kenya, Malawi, Korea, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Canada and the United States of America. I greet in particular the Delegation from the NATO Defense College, with good wishes for their efforts in the cause of peace. Upon all of you, and your families, I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

Lastly I greet *young people, the elderly, the sick and newlyweds*. The day after tomorrow we will celebrate the Feast of Saint Luke, the Evangelist who best reveals Jesus’ heart and his mercy. May that occasion help everyone to rediscover the joy of being Christian, witnesses to the goodness of the Lord.

