There is a clear link between Pope Francis’ Message for World Communications Day, published on 24 January, and the Sunday of the Word of God, an initiative desired by the Holy Father, which begins today (Sunday, 26 January). This connection can be found in the title and in the beginning of the Message that this year the Pope wished to dedicate “to the theme of storytelling, because I believe that, so as not to lose our bearings, we need to make our own the truth contained in good stories”. The Sunday of the Word of God has the Bible at its core, a narration rich with the truth of good stories, a text, a “fabric” of stories which have the power to make us breathe, that is, to make us live, and reject the bewilderment that accompanies the life of every man.

The Bible is not a book of abstract theories, but rather a collection of narratives, a “library” (from the Greek Τὰ Βιβλία, The Books) of 73 books filled with tales and stories that collectively make up “the history of salvation”. Every human story is a story of salvation. This is the ultimate meaning of literature: man recognizes the bewilderment that life brings with it ("the straightforward pathway had been lost" as Dante recounts in his famous incipit), and faces the nameless abyss of death. Literature is the storytelling of this experience; the man who comes back alive from death can narrate this story, because evil, as Paul Ricoeur states, cannot be explained. It is indeed the absence of an explanation, but it can be told. Primitive men came back from the hunt (bringing the dead and the wounded with them) and spoke of their adventure as they sat by the fire, and one of them would often depict it, painting the stories on the walls of the cave, because “life becomes history”, as the title of the Papal Message says. It is not surprising that the poems of the ancients are "nasti", accounts of homecomings from the horror of war, like that of Ulysses. This is also true in modern times, as in Melville’s novel in which Ishmael, the only survivor of the Pequod, clings to the floating coffin, comes back from death and tells his story. And as much occurs in the Gospel, which is a narrative arising from the big-bang of the
Fr Gonzalo is the Pope’s new personal secretary

Pope Francis has appointed as his “personal secretary” Father Gonzalo Aemilius, an Uruguayan priest from the clergy of Montevideo.

The announcement was made on Sunday, 26 January, by the Director of the Press Office of the Holy See, Matteo Bruni.

Born on 18 September 1979, “Father Gonzalo” has recently turned 41. He was ordained a priest on 6 May 2006 and is a Doctor in Theology.

H.E. Fr Félix Antoine Tshisekedi
Tshilombo, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and entourage
Archbishop Ivan Jurković, titular Archbishop of Corbavia, Holy See Permanent Observer at the Office of the United Nations and Specialized Agencies in Geneva and at the World Trade Organization; Holy See Representative at the International Organization for Migration
H.E. M. Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Apostolic Nuncio in the Dominican Republic, on a farewell visit
Saturday, 18 January
Cardinal Marc Ouellet, PSS, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops
Hon. Virginia Raggi, Mayor of Rome, Italy
Hon. Martin Schulz
Bishop Franz-Peter Tebartz-van Elst, Bishop emeritus of Limburg, Germany; Delegate for Catechesis for the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization
Archbishop Cyril Vasil’, sj, titular Archbishop of Polemis in Libya, secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches
Monday, 20 January
Members of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (Region 8), on a visit ad Lumen Apostolorum
Monday, 20 January
Archbishop Ante Jozić, titular Bishop of Miarinarivo, Secretary General; H.E. Mr. Hery Rajaonarisoa, Ambassador of Madagascar, on ad Lumen Apostolorum
Monday, 20 January
Archbishop Filippo Santoro of Bari, in the Southern part of Italy
Bishop Guglielmo Borghetti of Alghero-Bosa, Italy
Tuesday, 21 January
Archbishop Guglielmo Borghetti of Alghero-Bosa, Italy
Wednesday, 22 January
Archbishop Filippo Santoro of Bari, in the Southern part of Italy
Bishop Guglielmo Borghetti of Alghero-Bosa, Italy
Thursday, 23 January
Archbishop Filippo Santoro of Bari, in the Southern part of Italy
Bishop Guglielmo Borghetti of Alghero-Bosa, Italy
Friday, 24 January
H.E. M. Barham Salih, President of the Republic of Iraq, with his entourage

Francis to visit the city of Bari in Southern Italy

The schedule for the Holy Father’s pastoral visit to Bari, was released by the Holy See Press Office on Tuesday morning, 21 January. Pope Francis will travel to Bari, in the Southern part of Italy on Sunday, 25 February.

He is scheduled to address a conference organized and promoted by the Italian Bishops’ Conference, entitled “Mediterranean, peace frontier”.

After greeting participants, he will visit the Basilica of Saint Nicholas where he will spend some time praying before the relics of the Saint, and engage with its community of Dominican Fathers.

Before leaving Bari, the Holy Father will celebrate an open-air Mass in the city centre. He is expected to return to the Vatican around 4pm Rome time.
Pope Francis begins a new series of catecheses dedicated to the Beatitudes

The path to happiness

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Good Morning.

Today we are beginning a series of catecheses on the Beatitudes in Matthew’s Gospel (5:1-11). This passage, which starts the “Sermon on the Mount”, illuminated the lives of believers and also that of many non-believers. It is difficult not to be touched by these words of Jesus, and the desire to understand them and welcome them ever more fully is righteous. The Beatitudes provide the “identity card” of Christians — because they outline the face of Jesus himself, his style of living.

Let us now frame Jesus’ words within a wider context. Over the next catecheses we will comment on each individual Beatitude, one by one.

First of all, how the proclamation of this message occurred, is important: seeing the multitude that followed him, Jesus scaled the gentle slope overlooking the Sea of Galilee, sat down and, turning to the disciples, announced the Beatitudes. His message was thus addressed to his disciples. However, the multitude, that is, all of humanity, was on the horizon. It is a message for all of humanity.

Moreover, the “mount” recalls Sinai, where God gave Moses the Commandments. Jesus begins to teach a new law: to be poor, to be meek, to be merciful.... These “new commandments” are much more than a set of rules. Indeed, Jesus does not impose anything but reveals the way of happiness — his way — by repeating the word “blessed” eight times.

Each Beatitude is composed of three parts. Firstly, there is always the word “blessed”. Then there is the situation in which the blessed find themselves: poverty of spirit, affliction, hunger and thirst for justice, and so on. Lastly, there is the reason for the beatitude, introduced by the conjunction “because”. “Blessed are they because, blessed are those because...”. The eight Beatitudes are like this and it would be good to learn them off by heart so as to repeat them, to have this law that Jesus gave us, precisely in our minds and hearts.

Let us pay attention to this fact: the reason behind the Beatitudes is not a current situation, but rather the new condition that the blessed receive as a gift from God: because “theirs is the Kingdom of heaven”, because “they shall be comforted”, because “they shall inherit the earth” and so on.

In the third element which is the reason for happiness, Jesus often uses the future passive voice: “they shall be comforted”, “they shall be satisfied”, “they shall be forgiven”, “they shall be called children of God”.

But what does the word “blessed” mean? Because each of the eight Beatitudes begins with the word “blessed”. The original term does not mean one with a full belly or one who is doing well, but rather it is a person who is in a condition of grace, who progresses in God’s grace and progresses on God’s path: patience, poverty, service to others, comfort.... Those who advance in these things are happy and shall be blessed.

In order to give himself to us, God often chooses unthinkable paths, perhaps the path of our limitations, of our tears, of our defeats. It is the paschal joy of which our Oriental brothers and sisters speak, the one that has the stigmata but is alive, has been through death and has experienced the Power of God. The Beatitudes always bring you to joy. They are the paths to reach joy. It will do us good to take Matthew’s Gospel today, chapter 5, verses 1-11, and to read the Beatitudes — perhaps a few more times throughout the week — in order to understand this very beautiful path, so sure of the happiness the Lord offers us.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

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

Lastly, I greet young people, the elderly, the sick and newlyweds. May the example of holiness of Saint John Bosco whom we remember this Friday as a father and teacher to the youth, lead you dear young people in particular, to realize your future projects, without excluding God’s plan for each of us. Let us pray to Saint John Bosco so that each one may find their path in life, what Jesus wants for us.

Hope for a new beginning

A group of detainees from a prison in the Southern Italian region of Apulia were also at the General Audience on Wednesday, 29 January, to greet Pope Francis and to offer him the regional specialties they produce as part of the Diocesan project “Without barriers”. Among other things, the project, which aims at more than social integration, teaches inmates how to make artisanal “taralli” (Italian crackers) and pasta.

“For Francis, I prepared the best taralli”, said Matteo, a Senegalese man who converted to Catholicism and was baptized in prison, “and do you know why? The Pope always repeats to the powerful that no one should be rejected”.

The project, supported by Bishop Luigi Mansi of Andria, was launched two years ago and is open to individuals who are at house arrest and former detainees who wish to begin a new life immediately.
Pope Francis celebrates Ecumenical Vespers at the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside-the-Walls

Hospitality among brothers and sisters

“Hospitality belongs to the tradition of Christian communities and families,” Pope Francis emphasized this in his homily for the Second Vespers of the Solemnity of the Conversion of Saint Paul the Apostle. The Mass was celebrated by Metropolitan Gennadios, representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Anglican Archbishop Ian Ernest, representative in Rome of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Together they worshipped the relics of Saint Paul and Saint Timothy, who were brought to Rome from Terni for the occasion. Numerous representatives of other Churches and Christian denominations were also present, whom the Pope greeted personally. Also present were Cardinal Karl Kranz—who thanked the Pope at the end of the Celebration—and Bishop Brian Farrell and Mgr Andrea Palmieri, respectively President, Secretary and Undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The celebration was held on Saturday afternoon, 25 January, in the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside-the-Walls in Rome, at the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The following is the English text of the Holy Father’s homily.

Three different groups were on board the ship that brought Saint Paul to Rome as a prisoner. The most powerful group was made up of soldiers under a centurion. Then there were the sailors, upon whom naturally everyone on board depended during the long voyage. Finally, there were the weakest and most vulnerable: the prisoners.

When the ship ran aground off the coast of Malta, after having been at the mercy of a storm for several days, the soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to ensure that no one would escape, but they were stopped by the centurion who wanted to save Paul. Although he was among the most vulnerable, Paul offered himself to the centurion to save the sailors, upon whom naturally everyone on board depended during the long voyage. Finally, there were the weakest and most vulnerable: the prisoners.

In a video message the Pope remembers the tragedy of Brumadinho
Many inadequate dams in Brazil

A year after the tragic collapse of the mine of Brumadinho, where 274 people lost their lives, several dams in the Brazilian State of Minas Gerais still pose a threat to local communities. According to the National Mining Agency’s assessment, at least 55 dams in the State are listed as posing a high risk. The local authorities have blocked 22 dams which do not comply with adequate safety standards; at least 98 others have been marked as operational.

In a video message, Pope Francis remembered the 274 people who lost their lives in the collapse of the mine operated by the mining giant Vale. “Let us offer our solidarity to the families of the victims — he said in the message — and our support to the archdiocese and to all the people who are suffering and need our help.” Praying for us to “protect our common home”, the Pope also lamented the state of the Paraopeba river basin, which was severely contaminated by the residues of the dam.

Legacies of the past in the desire to move from a common landing place, the more readily we will recognize, welcome and share these gifts.

We thus arrive at a third aspect that was at the centre of this Week of Prayer: hospitality. In the last chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, Saint Luke says, with regard to the inhabitants of Malta, “The natives showed us unusual kindness” (v. 9). The fire kindled on the shore to warn the shipwrecked travellers is a fine symbol of the human warmth that unexpectedly surrounds them. Even the governor of the island showed himself welcoming and hospitable to Paul, who, at the end of the voyage, requested to be sent to Jerusalem to face the Jewish authorities. "The Lord had prepared an escape for Paul and to his grace should be attributed the salvation of all: the centurion made important decisions, the sailors put to use their knowledge and abilities, the Apostle entrusted Christian communities. As in the account of Paul’s shipwreck, it is often the weakest who bring the most important message of salvation. This was what pleased God: to save us not with the power of this world, but with the weakness of the cross (cf. 1 Cor 1:26-27). As disciples of Jesus, we must be careful not to be attracted by worldly logic, but rather to listen to the small and the weak, because God loves to send his messages through those who most resemble his Son made man.

The account in Acts reminds us of a second aspect: God’s priority is the salvation of all. As the angel said to Paul, “God has granted safety to all those who sail with you”, Paul insists on this point. We too need to repeat it: it is our duty to put into effect the paramount desire of God who, as Paul himself writes, “desires everyone to be saved” (1 Tim 2:4). This is an invitation not to devote ourselves exclusively to our own communities, but to open ourselves to the good of all, to the universal gaze of God who took flesh in order to embrace the whole human race and who died and rose for the salvation of all. If we, with his grace, can assimilate his way of seeing things, we can overcome our divisions. In Paul’s shipwreck, each person contributed to the salvation of all: the centurion made important decisions, the sailors put to use their knowledge and abilities, the Apostle encouraged those without hope. Among Christians as well, each community has a gift to offer to the others. The more we look beyond parochial interests and overcome the attendance to the families of the victims — he said in the message — and our support to the archdiocese and to all the people who are suffering and need our help.” Praying for us to “protect our common home”, the Pope also lamented the state of the Paraopeba river basin, which was severely contaminated by the residues of the dam.
“Jesus began to preach” (Mt 4:17). With these words, the evangelist Matthew introduces the ministry of Jesus. The One who is the Word of God has come to speak with us, in his own words and by his own life. On this first Sunday of the Word of God, said let us go to the roots of his preaching, to the very source of the word of life. Today’s Gospel (Mt 4:12-25) helps us to know Jesus, where and to whom Jesus began to preach.

How did he begin? With a very simple phrase: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (v. 17). This is the main message of all Jesus’ sermons: to tell us that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. What does this mean? The kingdom of heavens is for God that is, the way in which God reigns through his relationship with us. Jesus tells us that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. How does this mean? The kingdom of heaven is not far away. The One who dwells in heaven has come down to earth; he became man. He has torn down walls and shortened distances. We ourselves did not deserve this: he came down to meet us. One who dwells in heaven has come down to earth; he became man. He did not embrace distances. We ourselves did not deserve this: he came down to meet us.

This is a joyful message: God can reach us, love us, and welcome us in. How did he begin? With this very simple phrase: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”. And this nearness became flesh in Jesus.

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The Bible is like a “love letter” from God, Pope Francis said of the Word of God. Like a ‘love letter’, the Bible reads on the pages of the Bible, the Word of God to us. It is full of love, joy, and salvation that, alone and unaided, We can now understand the direct demand that Jesus makes: “Repent”, in other words, “Change your life”. Change your life, for a new way of living has begun. The time when you lived for yourself is over; now is the time for living with and for God, with and for others, with and for love. Today Jesus speaks those same words to you: “Take heart, I am here with you, allow me to enter and your life will change”. Jesus knocks at the door. That is why the Lord gives you his word, so that you can receive it like a love letter he has written to you, to help you realize that he is at your side. His word consoles and encourages us. At the same time it challenges us: it comes from the bondages of our selfishness and summons us to conversion. Because his word has the power to change our lives and to lead us out of darkness into the light. This is the power of his word.

If we consider where Jesus started his preaching, we see that he began from the very places that were then thought to be “in darkness”. Both the first reading and the Gospel speak to us of people who “sat by the road by the sea, the land beyond the Jordan”. The Biblicist, a religious man, a seminarian, a young boy and girl, a doctor, a nun, a poor person, a disabled person, a representative for the Episcopal Conference of Latin America (CIELAM), a young boy and girl, a doctor, a nun, a representative for correctional facilities, a religious man, a seminarian, a representative for the evangelical communities, a novice, an elderly couple, a carabiniere, a policeman, an artist, a Red Cross nurse, an engaged couple, a woman from the association of former Red Cross nurses, and a primary school teacher.

At the end of the celebration, 10,000 copies of the new publications of the Scriptures were given out to the faithful gathered outside the Basilica. The special edition, which was published for the first Sunday of the Word of God by San Paolo publishing house, was also given out to those present on Sunday afternoon, at the “evangelical marathon” held in the Church of Saint Agnes in Agony. A total of 57 people took turns to read the Gospel of Matthew, which Catholic communities around the world will be reading each Sunday this year.

Consignment of the Bible

On the morning of 26 January, the first Sunday dedicated to the Word of God, Pope Francis celebrated Mass in the Vaticano Basilica. During the Homily, the Pope reflected on the Gospel of Matthew, which recounts “Jesus, where and to whom Jesus began to preach” (Mt 4:12). And this nearness became flesh in Jesus.

The Lord gives you his word, so that you can receive it like a love letter he has written to you, to help you realize that he is at your side. His word consoles and encourages us. At the same time it challenges us: it comes from the bondages of our selfishness and summons us to conversion. Because his word has the power to change our lives and to lead us out of darkness into the light. This is the power of his word.

That is why we need his word: so that we can hear, amid the thousands of other words in our daily lives, that one word that speaks to us not about things, but about life.

3. Finally, to whom did Jesus begin to speak? The Gospel says that, “as he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men’” (Mt 4:19).

The first people to be called fishermen: not people carefully chosen for their abilities or devotion people at prayer in the temple, but ordinary working people.

Let us think about what Jesus said to them: I will make you fishers of men. He was speaking to fishermen, but he is also speaking to us. His live is a scandal on the spot. He called them where they were and as they were, in order to make them sharers in his mission.

“Immediately they left their nets and followed him” (v. 20). Why immediately? Simply because they felt drawn. They did not hurry off because they had received an order, but because they were drawn by love. To follow Jesus, mere good works are not enough; we have to listen daily, to his call. He, who alone knows us and who loves us fully, leads us to put out into the deep of life. Just as Jesus did with the disciples who heard him.

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That is why we need his word: so that we can hear, amid the thousands of other words in our daily lives, that one word that speaks to us not about things, but about life.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us make room inside ourselves for the word of God! Each day, let us read the word in person and in heart. Let us begin with the Gospel: let us keep it open on our table, carry it in our pocket or bag, read it in our cell phones, and allow it to inspire us daily. We will discover that God is close to us, that he dispels our darkness and, with great love, leads our lives into deep waters.

Consignment of the Bible
The meaning of every story
On the Holy Father’s Message for the 54th World Day of Social Communications

PAOLO RUFFINI

"Amid the cacophony of voices and messages that surround us, we need a human story that can speak of ourselves and of the beauty all around us."

"Even when we tell of evil, we can learn to leave room for redemption; in the midst of evil, we can also recognize the working of goodness and give it space."

With these two sentences, the first immediately after the beginning of his Message for the 54th World Communications Day, and the other towards the end, Pope Francis takes us to the essence of an issue around which we have been going in circles for so long. As if [we were] in a vortex where we are at risk of losing our orientation, the Pope draws us out of it; with the paradox that this era of communication runs the risk of coinciding with the era of incomunicability; and the risk that our narrative is able to bring the wisdom necessary to read and share the meaning of every story, and thus the meaning of History. The verb ‘to narrate’ comes from gnosis, to experience. But without the ability to bring experience back to unity, there is no wisdom, nor knowledge, and everything is reduced to a meaningless act of listing.

This is what narration is for.

Only storytelling (always, even in science, a research hypothesis is required, a key to reading things) is capable of revealing what is not immediately visible to the eyes, what is hidden and requires time for knowledge to be revealed.

With his message, the Pope is speaking certainly to communicators and definitely to journalists, but his words are addressed more generally — to everyone because we all communicate, we are all responsible for the world that our narrative weaves.

Our narratives are infinite. They are written, spoken, filmed, woven in words, images, music; memories of the past, and visions of the future.

Our stories are the life we pass on. And the Pope asks everyone: what is the story we tell ourselves? How much have we really experienced it, meditated on it, reflected on it, unweave it, before telling it? Is it a true story?

It is a dynamic story? Or, is it a false story? Is it a static story? Is it a story where there is man and the mystery that encloses him, or is it a story that erases our humanity? Is it a well told story, or is it poorly told story? Is it a story open to hope, or a closed story? Is it a story that welcomes evil or one that always seeks the spark of good that can redeem it, in every situation?

All stories are understood only when they end. What is the end of our stories? What space is left for the mystery of God, for the possibility of redemption?

Where is the story’s wisdom? "The great sages of the past — the Pope wrote in the Laudato Si’ — run the risk of going unheard amid the noise and distractions of an information overload... True wisdom, as the fruit of self-examination, dialogue and generous encounter between persons, is not acquired by a mere accumulation of data which eventually leads to overload and confusion, a sort of mental pollution.

We do not always realize the importance of the role of communication — and in it of each one of us when we communicate — in being instruments of understanding or misunderstanding, in building or destroying responsible awareness, in nourishing or malnourishing our becoming identities.

From these questions, from this assumption of responsibility that concerns us all, we can resume the path. And take it up again as believers, with the awareness of an event that has changed history, illuminating it in the mystery of God who became man precisely to redeem it.

Faced with this mystery, the Three Magi, who were aware of that very wisdom that we run the risk of losing amid the bustle of our lives, were warned in a dream to choose another path for their return home, so as to protect the history that had been revealed to them and the Child God who embodied it. In order to find the place that safeguards the sense of history and the story, it is also worthwhile for us to choose a different path than the one that has brought us this far. To start again we need another path, another story, another way to see, to tell, to remember, to build the future by narrating it.

Prefect, Dicastery for Communication

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Storytelling and the Word of God

apparitions of the risen Christ to his disciples.

Even today, in the contemporary era, in the hyper-connected and ‘hyper-communicative’ world, the telling of stories is, as the Pope recalls, a matter of life or death. One must give space to words, to the Word, otherwise one can die, suffocated by gossip, the true enemy. Unlike silence, it is the opposite of the Word. The Word and silence exist as one thanks to each other, because silence is the womb of the Word. Silence and the Word generate and regenerate life, while gossip on the other hand, produces death, and kills.

The Sunday of the Word of God recalls the centrality in Christian life of God’s Word, collected in the Bible. This is a theme on which Pope Francis has often returned in his preaching. In the Bible, Christians can contemplate how “life becomes history”; the Trinitarian God, the creator of life, in the second person of the Word, “became flesh and dwelt among us”, he walked the dusty roads of men. It is the mystery of Christ’s kenosis, of his “renunciation” to the point of death on the Cross, which has generated much fruit, life and salvation for all his creatures. Christ is the Word, the Word of God who, as the prophet Isaiah says, works like rain and snow that “come down from heaven, and return not thither but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word go forth out of my mouth, it shall not return to me empty, but shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it”. This is precisely how Jesus, that is, the life of God made history, fulfills his mission of love “to the very end”.

Are these Bible stories “good”? Of course they are, but in what sense? The news that they bring is the Gospel, the Good News, the redemption of men brought about by Christ, but they are good above all because they are “true” stories. From this point of view, the biblical text possesses an extraordinary realism, which does not take for granted the rawness of life and all its shady areas. In Greece Plato told artists not to depict life’s obscenities and turpitude. However, this is not the case for the inspired authors of the biblical text. Killings, betrayals, failures: the reader of the Bible is spared none of this, and they will look in vain for a “happy ending”, which is absent in most of the stories told there. The characters of those events enter the scene with all their truth, made of nobility intertwined with pettiness and even the “greatest” among them are seen in their constitutive fragility — the great King David for example — for that is their humanity. The point is that the stories told in the Bible are good, that is, they bring the good news, that they are not “sweet”. There is more salt than honey in the Word of God, as the Book of Hebrews says: “for the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart”. Men of every age need this “sharp” word, and Christians today, too, because the risk is that they may fall into the temptation of re-moving the sting, as the literary critic Northrop Frye (who defined the Bible as the “Great Code” of literature) sensed: “The normal human reaction to a great cultural achievement like the Bible is to do with it what the Philistines did to Samson: reduce it to impotence, then lock it in a mill to grind our aggressions and prejudices”. Pope Francis fights against this “accommodating” temptation and even the initiative of the Sunday of the Word of God must be read within this struggle, a struggle that the Pontiff conducts with great confidence in the strength of that Word, because, as Frye himself concludes: “But perhaps its hair, like Samson’s, could grow again even there.”

A.M.
Holy Father’s Message for the 54th World Day of Social Communications

Tell true and good stories that unite

“That you may tell your children and grandchildren” (Ex 10:2).

“Life becomes history” is the theme of the Pontiff’s Message for the 54th World Day of Social Communications, which will be celebrated this year on Sunday, 24 May, Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. The following is the English text of the Pope’s Message.

We are not just the only beings who need clothing to cover our vulnerability (cf. Gen 3:21); we are also the only ones who need to be “clothed” with stories to protect our lives. We weave not only clothing, but also stories: indeed, the human capacity to “weave” (Latin texere) gives us not only the word textile but also text. The stories of different ages all have a common “loom”: the thread of their narrative involves “heroes”, including everyday heroes, who in following a dream confront difficult situations and combat evil, driven by a force that makes them courageous, the force of love. By becoming ourselves in stories, we can find reasons to heroically face the challenges of life.

Human beings are storytellers because we are engaged in a process of constant growth, discovering ourselves and becoming enriched in the tapestry of the days of our life. Yet since the very beginning, our story has been threatened: evil snakes its way through history.

1. Weaving stories

Human beings are storytellers. From childhood we hunger for stories just as we hunger for food. Stories influence our lives, whether in the form of fairy tales, novels, films, songs, news, even if we do not always realize it. Often we decide what is right or wrong based on characters and stories we have made our own. Stories leave their mark on us; they shape our convictions and our behaviour. They can help us understand and communicate who we are.

We are not just the only beings who need clothing to cover our vulnerability (cf. Gen 3:21); we are also the only ones who need to be “clothed” with stories to protect our lives. We weave not only clothing, but also stories: indeed, the human capacity to “weave” (Latin texere) gives us not only the word textile but also text. The stories of different ages all have a common “loom”: the thread of their narrative involves “heroes”, including everyday heroes, who in following a dream confront difficult situations and combat evil, driven by a force that makes them courageous, the force of love. By becoming ourselves in stories, we can find reasons to heroically face the challenges of life.

Human beings are storytellers because we are engaged in a process of constant growth, discovering ourselves and becoming enriched in the tapestry of the days of our life. Yet since the very beginning, our story has been threatened: evil snakes its way through history.

2. Not all stories are good stories

“When you eat of it … you will become, you will achieve…” This is the message whispered by those who even today use storytelling for purposes of exploitation. How many stories serve to pull us, convincing us that to be happy we continually need to gain, possess and consume. We may not even realize how greedy we have become for chatter and gossip, or how much violence and falsehood we are consuming. Often on communication platforms, instead of constructive stories which serve to strengthen social ties and the cultural fabric, we find deceptively persuasive arguments, sending unverified information, repeating banal and deceptively persuasive messages, which make history alongside us. Human beings are storytellers because we are engaged in a process of constant growth, discovering ourselves and becoming enriched in the tapestry of the days of our life. Yet since the very beginning, our story has been threatened: evil snakes its way through history.

3. The ‘Story of stories’

Sacred Scripture is a Story of stories. How many events, peoples and individuals it sets before us! It shows us from the very beginning a God who is both creator and narrator. Indeed, God speaks his word and things come into existence (cf. Gen 1). As narrator, God calls things into life, culminating in the creation of man and woman as his free dialogue partners, who make history alongside him. In one of the Psalms, the creature tells the creator: “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made … My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in the depths of the earth” (139:13-15).
VATICAN BULLETIN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Cardinal Marc Ouellet, PSS, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops
Bishop Nicolas Brouzet of Tarbes et Lourdes, France
Msgr Pio Vito Pinto, Dean of the Tribunal of the Roman Rota
College of Prelate Auditors of the Roman Rota

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE 2019

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of the Diocese of Lai, Chad, Fr Nicolas Nadju Bah. Until now he has served as diocesan administrator of the same diocese (14 Dec.).
Bishop-elect Nadju Bah, 59, was born in Béï, Chad. He was ordained a priest on 11 May 2002.

The Holy Father appointed as bishop of the Diocese of Ngozi, Burundi, Bishop Georges Bizimana, Coadjutor of Bubanza (17 Dec.).
The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Luigi Ventura, titular of Equiló, from his office of Apostolic Nuncio in France (17 Dec.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Wayne Joseph Kirkpatrick as Bishop of Antigonish, Canada. Until now he has served as titular Bishop of Aradi and Auxiliary of the Archdiocese of Toronto (18 Dec.).
Bishop-elect Khawam, 51, was born in Beirut, Syria. He was ordained a priest on 16 August 1986.
The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Cornelius Fontem Esua of Bamenda, Cameroon (30 Dec.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Andrew Nkea Fuanya of Manife as Metropolitan Archbishop of Bamenda (50 Dec.).

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE 2020

The Holy Father accepted the resignation from his office as Apostolic Nuncio in Sri Lanka of Archbishop Pierre Nguyen Van Tot, titular Archbishop of Rusticana (3 Jan.).
The Holy Father appointed Bishop Matthew Ishaya Audu as Metropolitan Archbishop of Jos, Nigeria. Until now he has served as Bishop of Lafia, Nigeria (6 Jan.).

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Gonzalo Restrepo Restrepo of Manizales, Colombia (6 Jan.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Michael Andrew Gienel as Auxiliary Bishop of Auckland, New Zealand, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Apamea of Syria for Greek-Melkites (18 Dec.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Joseph Khamaw, 38, as Apostolic Exarch for Greek-Melkite faithful resident in Venezuela, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Apollonia. Until now he has served as bishop of Aba, Nigeria (28 Dec.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Joseph Khamaw, 38, as Apostolic Administrator sede vacante et ad nutum Sedes Epiphaniiae of the Eparchy of Nuestra Señora del Paraíso en México. Until now he has served as diocesan administrator of the same diocese (14 Dec.).

The Holy Father appointed Archbishop Cyril Vasil, 67, titular Archbishop of Polemiaka of Libya, as Apostolic Administrator “sede plena” of the Eparchy of Kosíq, Republic of Slovenia, for Catholics of Byzantine Rite. Until now he has served as Secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches (20 Jan.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Paulino Honcharuk as Bishop of Kharkiv-Zaporizhia, Ukraine. Until now he has served as diocesan treasurer and Director of Caritas of the said diocese (6 Jan.).

Bishop-elect Honcharuk, 41, was born in Komarnichka, Ukraine. He was ordained a priest on 21 June 2001.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Petros Berga as Apostolic Visitor for the Ethiopian faithful of the Alexandrian Ge’ez Rite resident in Europe. Until now he has served at the Metropolitan see of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (7 Jan.).

EASTERN CHURCHES

H.B. Patriarch Ibrahim Sedrak, Patriarch, with the consent of the Synod of Bishops of the Patriarchal Church of Alexandria for Copts, and after having consulted the Apostolic See, has established in accord with can. 85 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, the Eparchy of Abu QRuqs with territory taken from the Eparchy of Muyá (7 Jan.).

The Holy Father gave his assent to the canonical election by the Synod of Bishops of the Patriarchal Church of Alexandria for Copts who appointed Fr Bechara Giuda, OSB, as the first Bishop of Abu QRuqs. Until now he has served as parish priest of the Shrine of the Stigmat of Saint Francis in Assisi (7 Jan.).

Bishop-elect Giuda, 48, was born in Al-Nagila. He was ordained a priest on 8 June 1986.

The Holy Father appointed Archbishop Cyril Vasil, 67, titular Archbishop of Polemiaka of Libya, as Apostolic Administrator “sede plena” of the Eparchy of Kosíq, Republic of Slovenia, for Catholics of Byzantine Rite. Until now he has served as Secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches (20 Jan.).

Congregation for the Causes of Saints

Promulgation of Decrees

On Thursday, 23 January, the Holy Father received in audience His Eminence Cardinal Angelo Becciu, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. During the audience, the Supreme Pontiff authorized the Congregation to promulgate the Decrees regarding:

– the martyrdom of the Servants of God José Pio Gurruchaga Castaño, diocesan priest, Founder of the Congregation of the Servants of Christ, born in Toluca, Spain on 5 May 1881 and died in Bilbao, Spain on 22 May 1967;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Marie-Antoine de Lavaur (in the world: François-Léon Clergue), of the Order of the Friars Minor Capuchin, born in Laval, France on 23 December 1855 and died in Toulouse, France on 8 February 1997;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Maria de Carmen of the Holy Trinity (in the world: Carmen Catariuna Bueno), of the Order of Discalced Carmelites nuns, born in Campinas, Brazil on 25 November 1858 and died on 15 July 1866 in Tuxteq, Brazil;
The Lord came for the sinners not for the perfect ones
To the Roman Rota at the start of the Judicial Year

"The Lord came to seek the sinners not the perfect ones": the Pope emphasized this to the officials and lawyers of the Roman Rota whom he received in audience on Saturday morning, 25 January, in the Clementine Hall for the inauguration of the judicial year. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's address which was given in Italian.

Your Excellency, Prelate Auditors,

Dear Officials of the Roman Rota,

I am pleased to be able to meet you today, on the occasion of the inauguration of the New Judicial Year of this Tribunal. I warmly thank His Excellency, the Dean, for the noble words he addressed to me and for the wise methodological resolutions that have been formulated.

I wish to return to the catechesis of the General Audience of Wednesday, 13 November 2019, offering to you today a further reflection on the primary role the spouses Aquila and Priscilla played as examples of married life. Indeed, in order to follow Jesus, the Church has to work according to three conditions validated by the Divine Teacher himself: itinerancy, promptness and decision (cf. Angelus, 30 June 2019). The Church is, by her very nature, on the move; she does not remain confined and unperturbed in her specific area, but is open to the widest horizons. The Church is sent forth to take the Gospel to the streets and to reach the human and existential peripheries. It reminds us of the New Testament married couple, Aquila and Priscilla.

The Holy Spirit wished to place this admirable example of itinerant spouses beside the Apostle [Paul]. Indeed both in the Acts of the Apostles and according to Paul's description, they were never still but always in continuous movement. And we wonder, why for many centuries, this example of itinerant spouses did not have their identity recognized as evangelizing spouses within the pastoral teaching of the Church. It is what our parish Churches need, in particular in urban image. It is what our parish is willing to reach, made up by commercial interests? God’s judgment will be quite harsh on this.

From Aquila and Priscilla, Christians spouses should learn how to fall in love with Christ and to be close to families, who often lack the light of faith, not through their own fault, but because they are left on the sidelines by our pastoral care: an elite pastoral care that forgets the people.

How I would like this discourse not to be simply a symphony of words but rather that it may spur pastore, bishops, and parish priests to seek to love, as the Apostle Paul did, spouses as humble missionaries willing to reach our cities’ squares and buildings where the Gospel light and the voice of Jesus fail to penetrate. And at the same time, Christian spouses who have the courage to awaken others from their dumber, as Aquila and Priscilla did, capable of being agents, let us not say autonomously, but certainly filled with enough courage, to awaken from lethargy and slumber those pastors who perhaps are stuck in the philosophy of the small circle of perfect. The Lord came to seek the sinners not the perfect ones.

In the Encyclical Letter Ecclesiam suum Saint Paul VI observed: “before speaking, we must take great care to listen not only to what men say, but more especially to what they have in their hearts to say. Only mission, and they are already present in our territorial communities. It is up to us pastors to illuminate them, to give them visibility, to make them wellsprings of a new ability to live a Christian marriage, and also to protect them so they do not fall into ideologies. These couples that the Holy Spirit certainly continues to enliven must be ready 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” (General Audience, 16 October 2012). Let us think about pastoral care as a catch-ecumenize before and after marriage. These are the couples that should do it and move forward.

It is necessary to be vigilant so that they do not fall into the danger of particularism, opting to live in chosen groups. On the contrary, it is necessary “to open to the universal-ty of salvation” (ibid.). Indeed if we are grateful to God for the presence within the Church of movements and associations that do not neglect the formation of Christian spouses, then we must firmly state that the parish is the ecclesial place for proclamation and witness because it is in that territorial context that Christi-ans spouses worthy of shedding light already dwell. They can be active witnesses of conjugal and family beauty and love (cf. Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia, 126-130).

There is no more urgent need than the work of marriage as a community, which the Church today needs married couples on the move anywhere in the world. Ideally starting, however, from the roots of the Church of the first four centuries and that is from the catacombs, as Saint Paul VI did at the end of the Council by going to the Catacombs of Dom- tillia. In those catacombs that圣Pontiff said: Here, Christianity planted its roots in poverty, in the ostracism of the powers, in the suf-fering of unjust and bloody persecutions. Here, the Church was stripped of all human power; she was poor, she was humble, she was pi-oous, she was oppressed, she was heroic. Here, the primacy of the Spirit of which the Gospel had its dark, almost mys-terious but undeclared affirmation, his incomparable witness, his man as the Church who was already there waiting for him. The Church is sent forth to take the Gospel to the streets and to reach the human and existential peripheries. It reminds us of the New Testament married couple, Aquila and Priscilla.

The Church needs, in particular in urban image, this admirable example of itinerant (i t i n e ra n t) Churches need, in particular in urban image. It is what our parish is willing to reach, made up by commercial interests? God’s judgment will be quite harsh on this.

From Aquila and Priscilla, Christians spouses should learn how to fall in love with Christ and to be close to families, who often lack the light of faith, not through their own fault, but because they are left on the sidelines by our pastoral care: an elite pastoral care that forgets the people.

How I would like this discourse not to be simply a symphony of words but rather that it may spur pastore, bishops, and parish priests to seek to love, as the Apostle Paul did, spouses as humble missionaries willing to reach our cities’ squares and buildings where the Gospel light and the voice of Jesus fail to penetrate. And at the same time, Christian spouses who have the courage to awaken others from their dumber, as Aquila and Priscilla did, capable of being agents, let us not say autonomously, but certainly filled with enough courage, to awaken from lethargy and slumber those pastors who perhaps are stuck in the philosophy of the small circle of perfect. The Lord came to seek the sinners not the perfect ones.

In the Encyclical Letter Ecclesiam suum Saint Paul VI observed: “before speaking, we must take great care to listen not only to what men say, but more especially to what they have in their hearts to say. Only mission, and they are already present in our territorial communities. It is up to us pastors to illuminate them, to give them visibility, to make them wellsprings of a new ability to live a Christian marriage, and also to protect them so they do not fall into ideologies. These couples that the Holy Spirit certainly continues to enliven must be ready 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” (General Audience, 16 October 2012). Let us think about pastoral care as a catch-ecumenize before and after marriage. These are the couples that should do it and move forward.

It is necessary to be vigilant so that they do not fall into the danger of particularism, opting to live in chosen groups. On the contrary, it is necessary “to open to the universal-ty of salvation” (ibid.). Indeed if we are grateful to God for the presence within the Church of movements and associations that do not neglect the formation of Christian spouses, then we must firmly state that the parish is the ecclesial place for proclamation and witness because it is in that territorial context that Christi-ans spouses worthy of shedding light already dwell. They can be active witnesses of conjugal and family beauty and love (cf. Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia, 126-130).

Thus the Apostolic Action of the parish is illuminated in the Church by the presence of spouses like those described by Paul and Luke in the New Testament, never still, always on the move, certainly with children, according to what the iconography of the Oriental Churches has handed down to us. Therefore, may pastors allow themselves to be illuminated by the Spirit today too, so that this salvific news may be ful-filled by couples who are often already prepared, but not called. They exist.

The Church today needs married couples on the move anywhere in the world. Ideally starting, however, from the roots of the Church of the first four centuries and that is from the catacombs, as Saint Paul VI did at the end of the Council by going to the Catacombs of Dom-tilla. In those catacombs that圣Pontiff said: Here, Christianity planted its roots in poverty, in the ostracism of the powers, in the suf-fering of unjust and bloody persecutions. Here, the Church was stripped of all human power; she was poor, she was humble, she was pi-oous, she was oppressed, she was heroic. Here, the primacy of the Spirit of which the Gospel had its dark, almost mys-terious but undeclared affirmation, his incomparable witness, his man as the Church who was already there waiting for him. The Church comes to us not for the perfect ones but for the sinners not the perfect ones.”

In conclusion, we can say that the Church’s mission today is to reach the sinners not the perfect ones. The Church is sent forth to take the Gospel to the streets and to reach the human and existential peripheries. It reminds us of the New Testament married couple, Aquila and Priscilla.

The Holy Spirit wished to place this admirable example of itinerant spouses beside the Apostle (Paul). Indeed both in the Acts of the Apostles and according to Paul’s description, they were never still but always in continuous movement. And we wonder, why for many centuries, this example of itinerant spouses did not have their identity recognized as evangelizing spouses within the pastoral teaching of the Church. It is what our parish Churches need, in particular in urban areas where the parish priest and his assistants in the clergy will never have enough time and energy to love the faithful who, while calling themselves Christian, do not receive the Sacraments and are without or almost without the knowledge of Christ.

So many centuries later, the modern image of these holy spouses ever on the move so that Jesus might be known, is surprising: They evangelized, transmitting their passion for the Lord and for the Gospel, a passion of the heart that translated into practical gestures of proximity, of closeness to the neediest brothers and sisters, of welcome and care.
To the Roman Rota at the start of the Judicial Year

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long silence surrounding these holy figures of the early Church is certainly quite perplexing.

I invite and urge all the brother bishops and pastors to indicate these saintly spouses of the early Church as faithful and bright companions of the Pastors of that time, as support, today of, for example, the young and elderly Christian married couples who always make Christian marriage fruitful with children in Christ. We must be convinced, and I would like to say certain, that similar married couples in the Church are already a gift of God, and not through our merit, but because they are the fruit of the action of the Holy Spirit, the fruit of the love that the Church radiates, the fruit of the love that the Spirit awakens in us so that the light that those spouses radiate in the peripheries of the world are not extinguished. (cf. Gaudium et Spes, nn 4-9).

Hence, the Spirit to renew us so as not to resign ourselves to being a Church of the few, to almost enjoy being isolated leaving the capacity of the spouses of the New Testament, to multiply in humility and obedience to the Spirit. The Spirit that illuminates, contains the capacity of making visible our human action and our very poverty; it is capable of making salutary all our activities; even convinced that the Church does not grow by proselytism but by attraction – the witness of these people attracts – and always ensuring the signature of bearing witness.

We do not know whether or not Aquila and Priscilla died as martyrs but they certainly are a sign of martyrdom, at least spiritually for today’s spouses, that is, witnesses capable of being present in the flour of being left in the dough, that is, who have transformed the mass of dough (cf. Discourse to the Associations of Catholic Families in Europe, 1 June 2007). This is possible everywhere today.

Dearest Judges of the Rota, the darkness of faith or the desert of faith that your decisions, starting 20 years ago, have stated as possible causes for the annulment of consent, gives me, as it did to my predecessor, a vivid image of the Church. Rota, 25 January 2015 and 22 January 2016; 22 January 2021; cf. art. 14, Ratio proportionata of the Motu proprio Unum in diverso); the reason to extend a serious and pressing invitation to the children of the Church of our time, to all feel called to deliver to the future, the beauty of the Christian family.

The Church is a temple of marriage, a venerated with married couples like Aquila and Priscilla who can speak and live with authority of Baptism, that “does not consist in commanding and making oneself heard, but in being alive to the love of God, and for this being present, and for being companions on the way of the Lord” (Homily, Santa Marta, 14 January 2020).

I give thanks to the Lord because still today he gives the Church the courage and the light to return to the beginnings of faith and find again the passion of the spouses Aquila and Priscilla, so that they may be recognizable in every marriage celebrated in Christ Jesus.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

We are not born complete, but need to be constantly ‘woven’, ‘knitted together’. Life is given to us as an invitation to continue to weave the ‘wonderful’ mystery that we are.

The Bible is thus the great love story between God and humanity. At its centre stands Jesus, whose own story brings fulfillment both to our life for and our love for God. Henceforth, in every generation, men and women are called to return to this cornerstone. The most significant epochs of this Story of stories, those best that communicate its meaning.

The title of this year’s Message is drawn from the Book of Exodus, a primordial biblical story in which God0 intervenes in the history of his people. When the enslaved children of Israel cry out to Him, God listens (Ex 2:24-25). God’s memory brings liberation from oppression through a series of signs and wonders. The Lord then reveals to Moses the primordial biblical story in which God works, the story of how he continues to work, hand in hand with the people of Israel — and God knew.” (Homoio logos) 4:24). The Exodus experience teaches us that knowledge of the Lord’s memory is the condition of generation to generation mainly by telling the story of how he continues to work, hand in hand with the people of Israel — and God knew.” (Homoio logos) 4:24). The Exodus experience teaches us that knowledge of the Lord’s memory is the condition of humanity.

We do not know whether or not Aquila and Priscilla died as martyrs but they certainly are a sign of bearing witness. The Spirit that never abandons the Church. Rather, our merit, but because they are the fruit of the action of the Holy Spirit, the love of God, writes within us. And as he writes within us, he establishes goodness in us and constantly reminds us of it. Indeed, the re-mind means to bring to mind, to ‘write’ on the heart. By the power of the Holy Spirit, even every story, even the most forgotten one, even the one that seems to be written with the most crooked lines, can become inspired, can be reborn as a masterpiece, and become an appendix to the Gospel. Like the Confessions of Augustine. Like A Pilgrim’s Journey of Ignatius. Like The Story of a Soul of Saint Theres(see of the Child Jesus. Like The Reversal, like The Brothers Karamazov. Like countless other stories, which have already been ‘scripted’, the encounter between God’s freedom and that of man. Each of us knows different stories that have the fragrance of the Gospel, that have borne witness to the Love that transforms life. These stories are also out to be shared, recounted and brought to live in every life, in every language, in every medium.

4. An ever renewed story

The history of Christ is not a leg-acy from the past, it is our story and our love for God. Henceforth, in every generation, men and women are called to return to this cornerstone. The most significant epochs of this Story of stories, those best that communicate its meaning.

We do not know whether or not Aquila and Priscilla died as martyrs but they certainly are a sign of bearing witness. The Spirit that never abandons the Church. Rather, our merit, but because they are the fruit of the action of the Holy Spirit, the love of God, writes within us. And as he writes within us, he establishes goodness in us and constantly reminds us of it. Indeed, the re-mind means to bring to mind, to ‘write’ on the heart. By the power of the Holy Spirit, even every story, even the most forgotten one, even the one that seems to be written with the most crooked lines, can become inspired, can be reborn as a masterpiece, and become an appendix to the Gospel. Like the Confessions of Augustine. Like A Pilgrim’s Journey of Ignatius. Like The Story of a Soul of Saint Theres(see of the Child Jesus. Like The Reversal, like The Brothers Karamazov. Like countless other stories, which have already been ‘scripted’, the encounter between God’s freedom and that of man. Each of us knows different stories that have the fragrance of the Gospel, that have borne witness to the Love that transforms life. These stories are also out to be shared, recounted and brought to live in every life, in every language, in every medium.

5. A story that renews us

Our own story becomes part of the great story. As we read the Scriptures, the stories of the saints, and also those texts that have shed light on the heart and its history, the Holy Spirit is free to write in our hearts, reviving our memory of what we are in God’s eyes. When we remember the love that created and saved us, when we make love a part of our daily stories, when we weave the tapestry of our days with mercy, we are turning an- other page in the story of the Lord’s love for us and for others.

With the gaze of the great storyteller – the only one who has the ultimate point of view – we can also recognize the working of goodness and give it space.

So it is not a matter of simply telling stories; we are choosing to be a people of story-telling ourselves, but rather of remembering who and what we are in God’s eyes, bearing witness to what the Spirit writes in our hearts and revealing to everyone that his or her story contains marvelous things. In order to do this, let us entrust ourselves to a woman who knits together in her womb the humanity of God and, the Gospel tells us, wove together the events of her life. For the Virgin Mary “traversed all the things and pondered them in her heart” (Lk 2:19). Let us ask for help from her, who knew how to ‘weave’ the knots of life with the gentle strength of love.

O Mary, woman and mother, you were the divine knot-winder who, as we shall see, you recounted by your life the magni- cent works of God. Listen to our stor- ies, hold them in your heart and make your own the stories that no one wants to hear. Teach us to recognize the good thread that runs through history. Look at the tangled knots in our life that paralyze our memory. By your gentle hands, may every knot be untied. With- out the Spirit, mother of trust, in- spire us too. Help us build stories of peace, stories that point to the future. And show us the way to live them to- gether.

Rome, at Saint John Lateran, 24 January 2020, the Memorial of Saint Francis de Sales
Rocío’s blouse is now a flag
She was a young Mexican woman. The author donated the blouse to Francis

Valentina Alazraki
Rocío was a Mexican woman. She was 27 when she was murdered in front of her 8-year-old son, the youngest of her three children. In a bar, in a very violent village in Acapulco, Mexico, where she was a waitress, Rocío had inadvertently overheard an exchange between a group of men related to drug traffickers. They took her by force, took her home where her son was waiting for her, tied him to a chair and killed her in front of him in a ferocious and inhuman manner. No one outside her poor and violent neighbourhood would have ever come to know of her story if one day Pope Francis had not taken the blouse she was wearing when she was killed.

I kept that blouse that had been given to me by her son, as one of my most cherished relics. The day before I was going to interview the Pope for Televisiva TV station, the blouse came to my mind and I thought it would be nice to give it to him so that he could touch the suffering of women, who are victims of violence with their own hands. When I gave it to him telling him briefly about its story, Pope Francis closed his eyes and made a grimace of horror, of pain, which was worth more than a thousand words. Throughout the interview, in which I told him that I had written a book on violence against women entitled Grecia e le altre [Grecia and the others], the blouse remained on a small table between us but at the end, before saying goodbye, he took it in his hands in an absolutely unexpected way, lowered his gaze and began to speak in a subdued form, almost as if he were praying. “I would like to conclude by talking about Rocío. This woman couldn’t see her children grow up and here is her blouse. I would like to say to those who are following us that more than a blouse this is a flag, a flag of the suffering of so many women who give life and pass without a name. We know the name of Rocío, even of Grecia, but many others we do not know. They pass without a name, but leave a mark. The blood of Rocío and of so many women killed, used, sold, exploited, I believe that it must be the seed of an awareness like this”. Then Pope Francis asked those who listened to him to have a moment of silence in their hearts to think of Rocío, to give her a face, to think of women like her, to pray and to cry. “Crying over all this injustice, over all this wild and cruel world...” For Pope Francis, violence against women is not a matter of numbers, or of statistics. Behind every single case, there is a name, there is a face, there is a story, there are orphans. There was a name, a face, a story when he wrote a letter with his tight calligraphy to Filomena Lamberti, an Italian woman disfigured with acid in Salerno by her husband. Pope Francis wrote a letter to her, ideally written to all women who had had the same fate, made known by Filomena on the international day of the fight against violence in 2018.

“Dear Filomena, it terrifies me to think of the cruelty that has disfigured your face and offended your dignity as a woman and mother. I apologize and ask you for forgiveness, taking upon myself the burden of a humanity that doesn’t know how to ask for forgiveness of those who, in the prevailing indifference, live daily offended, trampled upon and marginalised.”

Pope Francis is aware that violence against women has no time or boundaries: it is an endemic and does not spare any nation or any country, he it industrialized or developing, whether rich or poor. So often he has denounced what is happening, not far from here, but near Termini station, in the streets of Rome, the “cultured Rome” or Puerto Maldonado, Francis said that “it hurts to see how in this land, which is under the protection of the Mother of God, so many women are so devalued, despised and exposed to endless violence”. He said that violence could not be “normalized”, and it could not be done by supporting a masculine culture that does not accept women in the role of protagonist. “We are not allowed to look the other way, brothers, and let so many women, especially teenagers, be “trampled” in their dignity”. I experienced Pope Francis’ sensitivity on this subject once again, when at the end of the press conference on the flight from Tokyo to Rome he spoke to us spontaneously, not answering a specific question, about how a problem in Thailand “that hurts the heart” made him feel, that is, the exploitation of women. His most touching words, however, that really made me understand what it means to suffer like so many women, was when he said right before saying goodbye: “I still have Rocío’s shirt in my heart, I will not forget her.”
On the eve of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp, Pope Francis once again reiterated his “never again!” because, “in the face of this terrible tragedy, this atrocity, indifference is unacceptable and remembrance is due”. The Holy Father said this at the Angelus on Sunday, 26 January, in Saint Peter’s Square. The following is a translation of the Pope’s remarks, which were given in Italian.

Never again this atrocity

Pope’s appeal on the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Good Morning,

Today’s Gospel (cf. Mt 4:12-23) presents us with the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry. This occurred in Galilee, a land on the periphery of Jerusalem that was looked upon with suspicion because the population was mixed with the Gentiles. Nothing good and new was expected from that region. However, it was precisely there that Jesus, who had grown up in Nazareth in Galilee, began his preaching.

He proclaimed the central core of his teaching in his condensed appeal: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (v. 17). This announcement is like a powerful ray of light that pierces the darkness and splits the fog and evokes the prophecy of Isaiah that is read on Christmas Eve: “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined” (Is 9:2). With the coming of Jesus, Light of the world, God the Father showed his closeness and friendship to humanity. These gifts are freely given to us regardless of our merits. Closeness to God and friendship with God, are not deserved but gifts freely given by God. We must safeguard these gifts.

The appeal to conversion that Jesus addresses to all men and women of good will is fully understood, precisely in view of the event of the manifestation of the Son of God, on which we meditated on recent Sundays. It is often impossible to change life, to abandon the path of egoism, of evil, to abandon the way of sin because we centre our commitment to conversion only on ourselves and on our strengths, and not on Christ and his Spirit. However, our adherence to the Lord cannot be reduced to a personal effort, no. To think this would also be a sin of pride. Our adherence to the Lord cannot be reduced to a personal effort. Instead, it must express itself in a trusting opening of the heart and of the mind in order to welcome the Good News of Jesus. This is – the Word of Jesus, the Good News of Jesus, the Gospel – what changes the world and hearts! We are thus called to trust Christ’s Word, to open ourselves to the Father’s mercy and to allow ourselves to be transformed by the grace of the Holy Spirit. This is where a true journey of conversion begins. Just as occurred to the first disciples: the encounter with the divine Teacher, with his gaze, with his Word spurred them to follow him, to change their lives by placing themselves concretely at the service of the Kingdom of God.

The surprising and decisive encounter with Jesus began the disciples’ journey, transforming the disciples into proclaimers and witnesses of God’s love for his people. May each of us follow in the footsteps of the Saviour to offer hope to those who thirst for it, imitating these first heralds and messengers of the Word of God.

May the Virgin Mary whom we address in this prayer of the Angelus, support these intentions and strengthen them with her maternal intercession.

After praying the Angelus with the faithful, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, today, for the first time, we are celebrating the Sunday of the Word of God, instituted to celebrate and welcome ever better the gift of the Word that God has made and continues to make daily to his people. I thank the Dioceses, I thank the communities that have implemented initiatives to recall the centrality of the Sacred Scriptures in the life of the Church.

Today we are celebrating World Leprosy Day. We are close to all those affected [by the disease] and to those who care for them in various ways.

I also wish to be close to and to pray for the victims of the virus that has broken out in China.

May the Lord receive the deceased in his peace, comfort their families and support the great commitment of the Chinese community, which has already been set in motion to fight this epidemic.

I greet you all, those of you who have come from Italy and from various countries, in particular the pilgrims from Valencia, Salamanca, Burgos, Santander and Valladolid, the students and teachers from Murcia, Cuenca, Badajoz and those from Panama.

I greet the faithful from Turin and the UNITALSI group from Lazio who help disabled people attend the General Audience and the Angelus, and who today are distributing the Missal with the daily Word of God.

Now my companions have arrived [two children from Catholic Action stand at the window beside the Pope]. I warmly greet the youth from Catholic Action, from the parishes and from the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Rome. This year too accompanied by Auxiliary Bishop Selvadagi, by your parents and teachers and by the assisting priests, you have come in large numbers at the conclusion of the “Caravan of Peace”. I thank you for this initiative. And now let us listen together to the message that your friends here beside me will read.

(After reading the message, balloons are released into the air).

I wish you all a happy Sunday. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. Arvividetis!
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I. Papal Events

Documents
04/04 Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio regarding the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei (17 Jan.)
13/05 Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio Communis Vita which provides for the modification of several norms of the Code of Canon Law (19 Mar.)
14/16 Christus Vivit: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation to Young People and to the entire People of God (2 Apr.
19/01 Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio vos estis lux mundi on new norms for the whole Church regarding abuse (link)
34/02 Chirograph: New Statutes of the Institutes for the Works of Religion (8 Aug.)
40/06 Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio Aperuit Illis instituting the Sunday of the Word of God (30 Sept.)
44/12 Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio Historical Experience to change the term ‘secret’ with ‘Apostolic’ of the Vatican Archives – ‘Vatican Apostolic Archives’ (22 Oct.)
49/06 Apostolic Letter AdmoViabile Signum on the meaning and importance of the Nativity Scene (1 Dec.)
51/02 Rescriptum to the Normae de gestorumibus delictis (3 Dec.)
51/02 Instruction: On the Confidentiality of Legal Proceedings (6 Dec.)

Messages/Letters
01/13 To Prof. Giovanni Maria Vian, Editor-in-Chief emeritus of L’Osservatore Romano (22 Dec. 2018)
01/16 To US Bishops (1 Jan. 2019)
03/04 To the President of the Pontifical Academy for Life (6 Jan.)
03/09 To the Doctrinal Commissions of Asian Episcopates (10 Jan.)
13/04 To FAO Director General for World Water Day (22 Mar.)
01/06 Urbi et Orbi Christmas Message (25 Dec. 2018)
20/11 To Conference on our Common Seas (16 Apr. 2019)
17/11 Urbi et Orbi Easter Message (11 Apr.)
20/10 To Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences (25 May)
24/04 Message for the 75th anniversary of Normandy landings (5 Jun.)
24/09 Letter for the global launch of the UN Decade of Family Farming (29 May)
24/05 Message for Missionary Month, October 2019 (9 May)
29/10 Message for the 108th Session of the International Labour Conference of the ILO (18 June)
32/08 To all priests on 160th anniversary of Holy Curé of Ars’ death (4 Aug.)
33/01 To the Synod of Union of Methodist and Waldensian Churches: Knowledge, understanding and cooperation (5 Sep. Aug.)
33/07 To Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople (30 Aug.)
33/03 Pope calls for international meeting to be held in 2020 (15 Sept.)
45/05 To the 31st Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol (7 Nov.)
47/08 To director of the United Nations WFP (18 Nov.)
19/04 To Bartholomew for the Feast of Saint Andrew (5 Nov.)
49/01 To COP25 Conference in Madrid (1 Dec.)
50/06 International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 Dec.)
50/06 To Pontifical Academies (4 Dec.)

TELEGRAMS
06/02 On the death of Card. Fernando Sebastián Aguilar (31 Jan.)
12/04 On the death of Card. Godfried Danneels (4 Mar.)
16/01 On fire eruption in Notre-Dame Cathedral, Paris (15 Apr.)
18/10 On the first anniversary of the Panmunjom Declaration (27 Apr.)
20/04 On the death of Card. Nasrallah Pierre Sfeir (12 May)
**Angelus/Regina Caeli**

01/04 Prayers and support for Indonesia (23 Dec. 2018)

01/07 Always open to forgiveness (26 Dec. 2018)

01/07 Appeal for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (30 Dec. 2018)

01/08 All are responsible for the common good (1 Jan. 2019)

01/12 Solidarity with Migrants in the Mediterranean (6 Jan.)

01/07 Jesus initiates a new creation (13 Jan.)

01/12 Pope expresses twofold heartache (20 Jan.)

01/19 With a gaze on world tragedies: Panamá (17 Jan.)

01/06/07 For children in Yemen (5 Feb.)

01/07/12 Report exploitation and slavery (10 Feb.)

01/08/12 Pastoral responsibility for the protection of minors (17 Feb.)

01/12/17 Lack of attention to victims is unjustifiable (24 Feb.)

01/12/10 Be sound and wise leaders (3 Mar.)

11/12/11 One does not dialogue with the devil (30 Mar.)

11/12/12 Gestures of peace to counter hatred and violence (7 Mar.)

11/12/15/12 Contemporary Calvary (24 Mar.)

11/12/15 Let us drop the stones of denigration (7 Apr.)

11/15/12/16 Palm Sunday (14 Apr.)

11/17/12 Acts of terrorism are never justifiable (22 Apr.)

11/18/12/18 Humanitarian corridors for refugees in Libya (28 Apr.)

11/19/12/18 Land of encounter: Bulgária (5 May)

11/20/12 A round of applause for mothers (12 May)

11/20/12 Love overcomes barriers and creates bridges (19 May)

11/22/03 The logic of welcoming love (26 May)

11/23/12 Pope offers gratitude: Romania (2 June)

11/24/18 May violence cease in Sudan (9 June)

11/25/12 Dialogue and peace for the Middle East: Camerino (16 June)

11/26/12 In the mindset of sharing (23 June)

11/27/07 Facing society’s issues with a sense of civic responsibility (29 June)

11/27/12 A further step toward peace (30 June)

11/28/12/03 Humanitarian corridors for the neediest (7 July)

11/29/11/02 Let us not get carried away by egotistical insensitivity (14 July)

11/30/12 With Martha’s hands and Mary’s heart (21 July)

11/31/04 After Angelus: appeal for lost of lives in shipwreck (28 July)

11/31/12 Dialogue based on trust and committed to solidarity (28 July)

11/32/16/12 Prayers for victims of shootings in US (4 Aug.)

11/34/11 War and terrorism are the great defeat of humanity (11 Aug.)

11/34/05 A Rosary for peace in Syria (15 Aug.)

11/34/12 Charities open to all overcomes division and particularism (18 Aug.)

11/35/12/12 The Amazon, vital lung for our planet (25 Aug.)

11/36/12 A more sustainable lifestyle (1 Sept.)

11/36/11/11 For the month of March

11/36/19/10 For the year 2020

11/36/04 For the month of May

11/36/09 For the month of July

11/36/02 For the month of August

11/36/06 For the month of September

11/36/04 For the month of October

11/36/05 For the month of November

11/36/02 For the month of December

**WORLD DAY MESSAGES**

02/02/17 World Day of the Sick 2019 (25 Nov. 2018)

02/05/17 33rd World Communications Day (24 Jan. 2019)

11/03/17 World Day of Prayer for Vocations (31 Jan.)

22/06/17 World Day of Migrants (30 Apr.)

25/06/17 World Day of the Poor (15 June)

36/06/17 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation (5 Sept.)

48/05/17 World Day of Migrants and Refugees (29 Sept.)

48/01/18 World Food Day (16 Oct.)

45/06/17 World Mission Day (20 Oct.)

50/04/17 World Day of Peace 2020 (12 Dec.)

**VIDEO MESSAGES**

02/01/17 To the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt (6 Jan.)

10/04/17 To inauguration of paediatric centre in Bangui (28 Apr.)

19/04/17 To the people of Bulgaria (3 May)

19/13/17 To the people of North Macedonia (7 May)

20/01/17 For Anglican prayer initiative ‘Thy Kingdom Come’

22/03/17 To the people of Romania (8 May)

25/09/17 To US conference: Catholic International Education Office (8 June)

30/02/17 To conference on abuse in Mexico (19 July)

35/01/17 To the people of Mozambique (30 Aug.)

37/07/17 To the people of Madagascar (1 Sept.)

37/20/17 To the people of Mauritius (9 Sept.)

38/01/17 To the U.N. Climate Action Summit (23 Sept.)

47/12/17 To the people of Thailand (6 Nov.)

47/02/17 To Thai youth in Thailand (20 Nov.)

48/08/17 To the people of Japan (18 Nov.)

— Francis’ monthly Prayer Intentions

01/03/17 For the month of January

07/05/17 For the month of February

31/10/17 For the month of March

15/10/17 For the year 2020

19/04/17 For the month of May

08/09/17 For the month of July

32/02/17 For the month of August

36/06/17 For the month of September

40/04/17 For the month of October

45/03/17 For the month of November

50/02/17 For the month of December

**Homilies and Prayers**

01/05/17 Christmas Eve Mass (24 Dec. 2018)

01/06/17 ‘Te Deum and First Vespers of the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (31 Dec. 2018)

01/09/17 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God and the 53rd World Day of Peace (1 Jan. 2019)

01/20/18 Mass for the Solemnity of the Epiphany (6 Jan.)

01/06/18/17 Solemnity of the Baptism of the Lord – 27 infants baptized (15 Jan.)

01/04/18 Homily at Vespers for the opening of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (18 Jan.)

01/06/18 Mass for the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (2 Feb.)

01/06/18 Mass at Zayed Sport City Stadium: UAE (5 Feb.)

10/05/18 Mass on Ash Wednesday (6 Mar.)

14/30/18 Pentecostal celebration (26 Mar.)

14/05/18 Palm Sunday (14 Apr.)

18/03/18/17 Chrism Mass (18 Apr.)

18/04/18 Holy Thursday in Coena Domini (18 Apr.)

17/09/18 Prayer at the Colosseum (19 Apr.)

18/07/18 Easter Vigil Mass (20 Apr.)

19/07/18 Mass in Knayza Aleksander 1 Square: Bulgária (5 May)

19/13/18 Mass in Skopje: North Macedonia (7 May)

20/16/17 Mass for the ordination of 19 priests (12 May)

21/07/17 Mass for the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin: Romania (5 May)

23/08/17 Mass in the Shrine of Sumuleu Ciuc: Romania (1 June)

24/06/17 Mass for the Vigil of Pentecost (8 June)

24/07/17 Solemnity of Pentecost (9 June)

26/07/17 Mass for the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (23 June)

27/06/17 Mass for the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul and blessing of Pallia (30 June)

28/12/17 Mass for the 6th anniversary of visit to Lampedusa (8 July)

37/16/18 Mass in Madagascar (8 Sept.)

37/20/18 Mass in Mauritius (9 Sept.)

40/12/18 Mass for the opening of the Extraordinary Missionary Month (1 Oct.)

14/03/19 Ordination Mass for 4 archbishops (4 Oct.)
46/08 Choosing salvation in the inner struggle between good and evil (25 Oct.).

General Audiences
01/20 The enigma of an unbreakable name (2 Jan.).
02/01 No prayer remains unheard (9 Jan.).
03/02 To call God 'Papa' like a trustful child (16 Jan.).
04/03 Young people offer a counter-response to walls built by nationalism (30 Jan.).
06/03 The dialogue between Christianity and Islam is a decisive factor for peace in the world (6 Feb.).
07/03 There is no room for 'I' (15 Feb.).
08/03 Externally begging for love (30 Feb.).
09/03 Christian life reflects God's holiness (27 Feb.).
10/03 The seed of the Kingdom sown in this world (6 Mar.).
12/03 Courage to trust in God (20 Mar.).
13/03 Food is not private property (27 Mar.).
15/03 After Audience: To Sr Maria Concetta Esu (27 Mar.).
14/03 Before: To rainbow choir (5 Apr.).
14/03 God wants fraternity between Christians and Muslims (5 Apr.).
15/03 We all need forgiveness (10 Apr.).
16/03 At Easter God voids the distances (17 Apr.).
17/03 The power of forgiveness (24 Apr.).
18/03 God tempers no one (1 May.).
19/03 Pope recalls significant moments of his visits to the Balkans (8 May).
20/03 A cry against evil (15 May.).
21/12 Courage to address God as 'Father' (22 May.).
22/12 Salvation is a freely given gift (29 May.).
23/12 The 'Our Father' is the common patrimony of all the baptized (5 June.).
24/03 Unity and freedom (12 June).
25/03 Everyone understands the language of truth and love (19 June).
26/03 No room for egotism in a Christian's soul (26 June).
32/03 Bridges of friendship and solidarity in place of barriers (7 Aug.).
34/03 The mindset of sharing vs hypocrisy and one's own interests (1 Aug.).
35/03 The sick are not to be discarded, but healed and supported (28 Aug.).
37/23 The Beatitudes: an antidote to egotistical and discriminatory well-being (11 Sept.).
38/03 Martyrs do not sell out their faith (18 Sept.).
39/03 The martyrdom of everyday faithfulness (25 Sept.).
40/03 Joy is the sign of evangelization (2 Oct.).
41/26 Do not transform religion into ideology (9 Oct.).
42/12 Evangelizers cannot impede the creative work of God (16 Oct.).
43/03 Dialogue, listening and discernment to resolve conflicts (23 Oct.).
44/03 Welcoming heart and bold faith (30 Oct.).
45/03 Oustretched hands to build bridges with non-believers and those of different belief (6 Nov.).
46/03 Persecuting the Jews is neither human nor Christian (13 Nov.).
48/03 Closeness and affection (27 Nov.).
49/03 Magic is not Christian (4 Dec.).

50/03 The example of persecuted Christians (11 Dec.).
51/03 A sign of peace in a world that produces weapons and violence (18 Dec.).

Special Audiences

ROMAN CURIA

HEADS OF STATE
02/08 President of the Slovak Republic (14 Dec. 2018).
02/02 Prime Minister of Ethiopia (21 Jan. 2019).
10/04 President of the Central African Republic (5 Mar.).
12/02 President of South Sudan (16 Mar.).
12/10 President of Malta (21 Mar.).
14/02 President of Lithuania (29 Mar.).
18/02 President of Latvia (25 Apr.).
18/05 Chairman of the tripartite Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (26 Apr.).
18/11 President of Togo (29 Apr.).
28/03 Prime Minister of Slovenia (26 June).
27/01 President of Russia (4 July).
32/08 President of the Republic of Serbia (12 Sept.).
32/08 President of Malta (16 Sept.).
44/02 President of the European Council (5 Oct.).
46/04 President of Lithuania (8 Nov.).
47/10 President of Angola (12 Nov.).

AMBASSADORS
01/15 To no newly accredited Ambassadors (13 Dec. 2018).
02/06 To Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See (7 Jan. 2019).
22/09 To nine newly accredited Ambassadors (23 May).

AMBASSADORS

Presentation of Letters of Credence
11/10 Armenia (9 Mar.).
13/09 Turkey (23 Mar.).
18/11 Iraq (17 Apr.).
25/02 Malaysia (10 June).
28/02 Bulgaria (22 June).
39/02 Colombia (20 Sept.).
43/10 Greece (14 Sept.).
43/10 Morocco (16 Sept.).

Other Audiences and Addresses
01/11 To the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre (16 Nov. 2018).
01/03 To performers in a Christmas concert (14 Dec. 2018).
04/09 With an ecumenical delegation from Finland (9 Jan. 2019).
06/04 To Commission for theological dialogue between Catholic and Orthodox Churches (1 Feb.).
08/04 To Indigenous Peoples’ Forum (4 Feb.).
08/04 To ISD staff (14 Feb.).
08/05 To Governing Council of IFAD (14 Feb.).
08/06 To opening Meeting on the Protection of Minors (27 Feb.).
09/09 To Meeting on the Protection of Minors (24 Feb.).
11/09 To delegation of Apostoliki Diakonia of the Greek Church (15 Feb.).
10/09 To staff of the Vatican Secret Archive (4 Mar.).
12/09 To Roman Curia after Lenten Spiritual Exercises (1 Mar.)
10/08 To the World Congress in Brussels (27 Mar.)
11/06 To priests of the Diocese of Rome (7 Mar.)
11/04 To International Conference “Religions and the Sustainable Development Goals” (8 Mar.)
11/05 To American Jewish Committee (8 Mar.)
11/09 To European Cycling Union and the African Cycling Confederation (9 Mar.)
12/05 To Camillian Charismatic Family (18 Mar.)
13/09 To Italian Federation of Primary Care Paediatricians (21 Mar.)
15/05 To Apostolic Penitentiary’s course on the Internal Forum (29 Mar.)
15/08 Dialogue with Collegio San Carlo community (6 Apr.)
15/06 To civil and ecclesiastical authorities of South Sudan on spiritual retreat (11 Apr.)
16/05 To Conference on Human Trafficking (11 Apr.)
17/11 Remarks on attack in Sir Lanka (21 Apr.)
18/11 To Association of Organ Donation (20 Apr.)
18/04 To Catholic Biblical Federation (25 Apr.)
18/05 To Italian Federation of Associations for the Deaf (25 Apr.)
20/05 Invitation to young economists and entrepreneurs to meet in Assisi (5 May)
21/11 To meeting on the mining industry (5 May)
20/13 To Roma and Sinti community (9 May)
21/06 To Pontifical Biblical Institute (9 May)
21/09 To International Union of Superiors General (10 May)
20/07 To Papal Foundation (10 May)
21/09 To International Union of Superiors General (10 May)
20/04 To meeting on Jewish-Catholic dialogue (15 May)
21/04 To Brothers of Christian Schools 300th anniversary of La Salle’s death (16 May)
21/05 To Camillian Charismatic Family (18 May)
21/06 To Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (20 May)
22/04 To Conference: “Yes to Life! Caring for the precious gift of life in its frailness” (25 May)
22/05 To Conference: “Climate change and new evidence from science, engineering, and policy” (27 May)
24/11 To 21st General Assembly of Caritas Internationalis (27 May)
28/08 To Pan-American Judges’ Summit on Social Rights and Franciscan Doctrine (4 June)
25/10 To Congress: national centres for vocations of the Churches of Europe: prepared speech (6 June)
25/11 To Congress: national centres for vocations of the Churches of Europe (6 June)
24/12 To Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service (8 June)
26/04 To Centesimus Annus pro Pontifice (8 June)
27/09 To Catholic civil aviation chaplains and airport chaplaincy (10 June)
26/11 To ROACO Plenary Session (10 June)
25/04 To Heads of global oil companies (14 June)
27/10 To General Chapter of Friars Minor Conventual (17 June)
26/08 To Congress: “Theology after ‘Veritatis Gaudium’ in the context of the Mediterranean”, Naples, Italy (17 June)
26/12 To 14th International Youth Forum (22 June)
27/11 To the International Federation of Catholic Medical Associations (23 June)
26/05 To Chaplains and volunteers of Stella Maris – Apostleship of the Sea (27 June)
27/04 To 41st General Conference of FAM (27 June)
27/05 To the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate
28/05 To delegation of Pope’s Worldwide prayer network (28 June)
28/04 Pope announces canonization of John Henry Newman and four women during Ordinary Public Consistory (1 July)
30/10 With the Grand Master of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta (27 July)
31/14 Pope announces Consistory (1 Sept.)
31/15 Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church (4 Sept.)
38/04 To members of the Italian Association of Medical Oncology (4 Sept.)
39/08 To Displaced Asians (12 Sept.)
39/11 To Bishops ordained over the year (12 Sept.)
39/09 To Order of Saint Augustine (13 Sept.)
39/05 To Eastern Catholic Bishops of Europe (14 Sept.)
39/12 To SOMOS Community Care of New York (10 Sept.)
38/04 To Diocesary for Communication: prepared speech (31 Sept.)
39/05 To Diocesary for Communication (31 Sept.)
43/11 To Sisters of Tithia Kuma (26 Sept.)
40/09 To seminar on “The Common Good in the Digital Age” (27 Sept.)
41/10 Opening remarks at the Pan-Amazon Synod (5 Oct.)
41/30 To new Vatican Ethnological Museum and an exhibition on the Amazon (18 Oct.)
42/05 At the Synod’s closing ceremony (26 Oct.)
45/04 To Forum of the International Federation of Catholic Universities (4 Nov.)
45/08 To Course of Formation of Catholic Military Chaplains (31 Oct.)
46/04 To the farewell of the Ratzinger Prize – Faith and Reason in seeking truth (9 Nov.)
46/05 To the Council for Inclusive Capitalism (11 Nov.)
46/05 To delegation of the Salvation Army (8 Nov.)
46/09 To the meeting for the 70th anniversary of the Society of Jesuit Secretariat for Social Justice and Reconciliation (7 Nov.)
46/10 To Third International Congress on Church and music (9 Nov.)
47/09 To Congress: Child Dignity in the Digital World (14 Nov.)
51/04 To donors of the Christmas Tree and Nativity Scene (5 Dec.)
50/07 To NGO’s: New paths for dialogue and collaboration (7 Dec.)
51/06 To Congregation for the Causes of Saint on their 550th anniversary (12 Dec.)
51/04 To artists of the Christmas concert (15 Dec.)

Pastoral visits abroad

Panama: 22-27 January
04/07 Pope’s video message to World Meeting of Indigenous Youth in Panama (18 Jan.)
04/07 President of Panama on the Pope’s visit
05/04 To authorities and representatives of civil society (24 Jan.)
05/05 To Central American Bishops (24 Jan.)
05/09 Opening of world Youth Day (24 Jan.)
07/10 To youth detention centre (25 Jan.)
05/12 Homily at Campo Santa Maria for Via Crucis (25 Jan.)

05/14 Homily for Mass and Dedication of the altar of Santa Maria La Antigua Cathedral (27 Jan.)
05/16 Prayer vigil in Campo San Juan Pablo II (26 Jan.)
05/18 Closing Mass of WYD (26 Jan.)
05/19 Visit to home for AIDS patients (27 Jan.)
05/19 Angelus (27 Jan.)
05/20 Thanks to WYD volunteers (27 Jan.)
05/21 Press conference on return flight (27 Jan.)

United Arab Emirates: 3-5 February
02/07 Logo and schedule
02/07 Video message to the people (31 Jan.)
02/08 To religious leaders and signing of the “Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together” (4 Feb.)
02/11 To interreligious meeting (4 Feb.)
02/15 With Grand Imam and U.A.E Prime Minister (4 Feb.)
02/15 Exchanging of gift with Crown Prince (4 Feb.)
02/23 Mass in Abu Dhabi’s Zayed Sport City Stadium (5 Feb.)
02/15 Private visit to Saint Joseph’s Cathedral (5 Feb.)
02/16 Farewell ceremony (5 Feb.)
02/05 Press conference on return flight (5 Feb.)

Morocco: 30-31 March
11/12 Lopp
12/01 Video message to the people (28 Mar.)
14/07 Welcome ceremony (30 Mar.)
14/07 King Mohammed VI (excepts)
14/08 To migrants (30 Mar.)
14/13 Appeal for Jerusalem signed by the Pontiff and King Mohammed VI (30 Mar.)
14/09 To religious and the Ecumenical Council of Churches (31 Mar.)
14/10 Mass in the Prince Moulay Abdellah Sports Complex (31 Mar.)
14/11 Remarks after Mass (31 Mar.)
14/13 Telegram of thanks to the King (31 Mar.)
14/14 Press conference on return flight (31 Mar.)

Bulgaria and Republic of North Macedonia: 5-7 May
16/09 Schedule

– Bulgaria: 5-6 May
19/04 Video message to the people (5 May)
19/05 To authorities (5 May)
19/06 To Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church
19/07 Mass in Knayz Aleksander 1 Square: somly (5 May)
19/08 Angelus (5 May)
19/08 Visit to refugee camp (6 May)
19/09 Mass celebrating First Communion: somly (6 May)
19/10 With Catholic community (6 May)
19/12 With interfaith leaders (6 May)

– Republic of North Macedonia: 7 May
19/13 Video message to the people (5 May)
19/13 To authorities (5 May)
19/14 Visit to the Mother Teresa Memorial
19/15 Mass in Skopje
19/16 Ecumenical and interreligious meeting with young people
19/18 With priests and religious
Romania: 31 May–2 June
20/11 Schedule
22/01 Video message to the people (28 May)
23/04 To Authorities (31 May)
23/05 To Permanent Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church (31 May)
23/06 At the new Orthodox Cathedral of Bucharest with Patriarch Daniel for the recitation of the ‘Our Father’ (31 May)
23/07 Mass for the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin (31 May)
23/08 Mass in the Shrine of Şumuleu Ciuc: homily (1 June)
23/09 Divine Liturgy for the Beatification of seven Greek-Catholic Bishops (2 June)
23/10 To Political, Diplomatic and Civil Authorities (3 June)
23/11 Mass for the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin (31 May)
23/12 To Barbu Lăutaru neighbourhood (2 June)
23/13 To Bishops (7 Sept.)
23/14 To the clergy, religious, consecrated men and women, seminarians and catechists (22 Nov.)
23/15 Mass at Zimpeto Hospital (6 Sept.)
23/16 Angelus (8 Sept)
23/17 To the clergy and religious (8 Sept.)
23/18 At Sophia’s University (26 Nov.)
23/19 Prayer for workers (8 Sept.)
23/20 Mass at Monument of Mary Queen of Peace (9 Sept.)
23/21 Visit to the City of Friendship (8 Sept.)
23/22 To the Friars of the Franciscan Shrine Greccio: 1 December
23/23 To the clergy and religious (8 Sept.)
23/24 To the clergy and religious (8 Sept.)
23/25 Angelus
23/26 Mass in Antananarivo (8 Sept.)
23/27 Farewell to the people (6 Sept.)
23/28 Visit to Saint Louis Hospital (21 Nov.)
23/29 To Political, Diplomatic and Civil Authorities (3 June)
23/30 Pope inaugurates new centre for the homeless (15 Nov.)

Pastoral visits in Italy
Loreto: 25 March
25/06 Mass and signing of the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Christus Vivit
camerino-San Severino Marche: 16 June
25/05 Mass with the faithful
25/05 Angelus
Geccio: 1 December
49/07 To the Friars of the Franciscan Shrine

Papal News
03/01 Pope offers condolences following attack in Nairobi (15 Jan.)
09/02 With a delegation from the United Arab Emirates (25 Feb.)
10/05 Pope’s sorrow for tornado victims in Alabama, USA (2 Mar.)
11/06 Pope visits San Cristino da Viterbo Parish (5 Mar.)
11/06 Pope expresses sorrow after air craft crashes in Ethiopia (10 Mar.)
11/08 Pope expresses sorrow after air craft crashes in Ethiopia (10 Mar.)
12/08 Pope expresses sorrow after air craft crashes in Ethiopia (10 Mar.)
12/08 Pope expresses sorrow after air craft crashes in Ethiopia (10 Mar.)
13/08 Pope visit Rome’s Municipality on Capitoline Hill (26 Mar.)
12/10 Solidarity with flood victims in Iran (27 Mar.)
14/02 Pope to visit Velletri on Holy Thursday
15/05 Pope expresses condolences for victims of violent storm in Nepal (15 May)
16/04 Pope visits Alzheimer patients (12 Apr.)
18/09 Pope sends wishes to Emperor Naruhito (1 May)
20/02 Pope launches campaign for ‘Talitha Kumi’ network (10 May)
20/15 Pope authorized pilgrimages to Medjugorje (12 May)
27/05 Pope donates Saint Peter’s relics to Patriarch Bartholomew (28 June)
30/01 Plenary Indulgence for air travellers for the Laurentian Jubilee Year
31/01 Pope writes Preface to the book Dono crocifisse — La vergogna della tratta raccontata dalla strega by Fr Aldo Buonaiuto (9 July)
31/03 Pope visits Provincial House of the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul (26 July)
32/01 Pope meets faithful from Papua New Guinea (30 July)
34/01 Pope expresses condolences to victims of monsoon rains in India (12 Aug.)
35/05 Pope encourages the spread of the Document signed in Abu Dhabi
26/02 With Jesus of the Vatican Observatory (29 Aug.)
37/01 Pope with prelates back from spiritual retreat (2 Sept.)
38/02 Pope visits with prelates back from spiritual retreat (2 Sept.)
39/06 Pope with prelates back from spiritual retreat (2 Sept.)
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12/08 Pope expresses condolences to victims of violent storm in Nepal (15 May)
II. Vatican Events

Roman Curia

Secretariat of State

29/05 Msgr Antoine Camilleri at the ‘Persecution of Christians Review’ (15 July)

SECRETARY OF STATE
CARDINAL PIETRO PARolin

10/02 On Cardinal George Pell’s conviction (28 Feb.)
15/04 To international symposium on religious freedom (4 Apr.)
15/02 To group working against criminalization of homosexuality (5 Apr.)
20/08 Interview granted to ‘Global Times’ on Fr Anthony Sablan
14/02 Communiqué on Fr Anthony Sablan
08/02 Theodore Edgar McCarrick dismissed

CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH

02/10 Response to a question on the liceity of hysterectomy in certain cases (10 Dec. 2018)
08/02 Theodore Edgar McCarrick dismissed from clerical status (11 Jan. 2019)
14/02 Communiqué on Fr Anthony Sablan Aplon, OFM Cap. (7 Feb.)
16/06 Complementary Norms for the Apostolic Constitution Anglicanorum coetibus (9 Mar.)

CONGREGATION FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES

14/04 Collection for the Holy Land 2019 (6 Mar.)

CONGREGATION FOR THE CAUSES OF SAINTS

01/04 Edict: Servant of God Pedro Arrupe Gonda, SJ (5 Dec. 2018)
07/02 Edict: Servant of God Enrica Onorante in Michisanti (17 Dec. 2018)
01/06 Promulgation of Decrees (21 Dec. 2018)
03/09 Promulgation of Decrees (15 Jan. 2019)
10/11 Promulgation of Decrees (12 Feb.)
12/08 Promulgation of Decrees (19 Mar.)
20/14 Card. Becciu celebrates Mass in Mexico City for the beatification of Maria Concepción Cabrera in Mexico City (4 May)
20/07 Promulgation of Decrees (13 May)
24/05 Promulgation of Decrees (15 June)
28/04 Promulgation of Decrees (5 July)

Dicasteries

DICASTERY FOR THE LAITY, THE FAMILY AND LIFE

03/12 International Youth Forum to be convened

DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

15/02 Aid to the people affected by Cyclone Idai (Mar.)
16/02 Aid to the populations of Iran (12 Apr.)
22/11 Message on the fourth anniversary of Laudato Si’ (Card. Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson)
29/12 Message for the Apostleship of the Sea (Card. Turkson)
29/12 Apostleship of the Sea celebrations set for October 2020 in Glasgow
31/05 Message for World Tourism Day (Card. Turkson)

DICASTERY FOR COMMUNICATION

PREFECT: Paolo Ruffini
01/02 On the appointment of the ad interim director and the resignation of Greg Burke and Paloma García Ovejero (31 Dec. 2018)
37/01 The union of the People of God: Africa

DIRECTOR: Andrea Tornielli
02/04 On Francis’ letter to US Bishops
09/08 Toward the meeting on the protection of minors and vulnerable adults
04/02 Exceptional nature of Ecclesia Dei cases
06/08 800 years later, a new embrace and commitment in the sign of peace: UAE
07/08 A timely Magisterium: six years since Benedict XVI’s resignation
08/06 Four days that will leave their mark: Meeting on the Protection of Minors
10/09 A ‚bridge’ between two eras: Vatican Archives
14/05 On three texts issued by the Pontiff on the protection of minors
16/09 Benedict XVI celebrates his 94th birthday
19/03 On Pope Francis’ Motu Proprio Vox eis in auxilium
32/08 A letter of encouragement and support: Letter to Priests
34/02 Renewed fidelity to its original mission: IOR statutes
30/01 Pope abolishes Pontifical Seal in sexual abuse cases

Tribunal

Apostolic Penitentiary
32/06 Note on the importance of the internal forum and the invalidity of the sacramental seal (29 June)

Pontifical Councils

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY

— Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews
21/10 Meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee (13-16 May)

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

03/09 Meeting with World Council of Churches (10-11 Jan.)
20/12 Message for Ramadan
20/12 Message for Vesakh
43/09 Message for Deepavali

PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS

— February meeting on the Protection of Minors
02/04 Organizing meeting meet the Pope (10 Jan.)
04/08 Fr F. Lombardi on the upcoming February meeting (Francesco M. Valianti)
07/04 Fr Zollner looks ahead to the Meeting (Maurizio Fontana)
08/00 Opening of the Meeting (M. Fontana)
08/06 Four days that will leave their mark (Andrea Tornielli)
08/06 Pope’s opening address (21 Feb.)
08/06 Testimonies of the victims
08/07 Points for reflection
08/09 Statement of Major Superiors prior to the Meeting
09/05 Testimony of a young Spanish abuse survivor
09/06 Testimony of a European abuse survivor
09/06 Testimony of an Asian abuse survivor
09/09 Pope’s address to the Meeting (24 Feb.)
09/12 Homily of the President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (24 Feb.)
09/14 A new journey begins: final briefing (Marco Bellini)
09/25 Final declaration (Fr F. Lombardi, SJ)

Holy See

03/09 Vietnam and Holy See implement agreement
16/02 Accession to the Convention of the Council of Europe on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons and to its additional protocols (5 Jan.)
10/04 Framework Agreement between the Holy See and the Central African Republic (3 Mar.)
Pastoral guidelines of the Holy See concerning civil registration of clergy in China (30 June)
Framework Agreement between the Holy See and the Republic of the Congo (2 July)

Archbishop Gallagher at the Rimini Meeting: *Excerpt* (Aug.)
Archbishop Gallagher at the International Atomic Energy Agency (16 Sept.)
Archbishop Gallagher at the symposium "Pathways Achieving Human Dignity: Partnering with Faith-Based Organizations" (2 Oct.)

Archbishop of Toamasina Card. Désiré Tsarahazana prior to Pope's visit to Madagascar (7 Oct.)

Feature Articles / Articles

The ring of Pontius Pilate
Never drink from the cup of hatred — Pope’s homily (Frid Guy Consolmagno, SJ)
The prophecy of St John of the Cross

The common tradition of Christianity which has made Europe — T.S. Eliot
An act of fidelity to the Gospel and to truth-telling (Fr Antonio Spadaro, SJ)
While the Earth is still

With Harvey Cox, Baptist theologian (Andrea Mondi)
With Mary Karr (Elisa Buza Ruot)
With Cardinal C. Schönborn (A. Monda)
With Brad Smith, President of Microsoft (A. Monda)
With Secretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development (Nicola Gori)
With William Friedkin (A. Monda)

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