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At the General Audience the Pontiff speaks about the significance of his journey to Korea

Between memory and hope

A young and dynamic Church, founded on the witness of martyrs and filled with missionary zeal

Memory, hope and witness. Pope Francis summarized in those three words the significance of his journey to Korea, to which he dedicated the Catechesis during the General Audience in the Paul VI Audience Hall on Wednesday, 20 August. The following is a translation of the Pope's address, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning,

In recent days I made an Apostolic Journey to Korea and today, together with you, I thank the Lord for this great gift. My journey enabled me to visit a young and dynamic Church, founded on the testimony of martyrs and filled with missionary zeal, in a country which is a point of encounter between ancient Asian cultures and the perennial newness of the Gospel: both are encountered.

Once again I wish to express my gratitude to my dear brother Bishops of Korea, to the President of the Republic, to the other Authorities and to all those who collaborated in my visit.

The significance of this Apostolic Journey can be summed up in three words: *memory, hope and witness*.

The Republic of Korea is a country whose economic development is remarkably rapid. Its inhabitants are hardworking, disciplined and organized, and must maintain the strength inherited from their ancestors.

Cardinal Filoni returns

The Pope's envoy in Iraq



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During the Pope's visit to Korea, 14-18 August

In this setting, the Church is the guardian of memory and hope: she is a spiritual family in which the adults pass on to the young the torch of faith received from their forebears. The memory of past witnesses becomes a new witness in the present and hope for the future. One can read, from this perspective, the two principal events of this journey: *the beatification of the 124 Korean Martyrs*, who join those canonized by St John Paul II 30 years ago; and *the encounter with young people* on the occasion of the *Sixth Asian Youth Day*.

A young person is always a person in search of something worth living for, and a Martyr bears witness to something, rather to Someone worth giving one's life for. This reality is the Love of God, which was made flesh in Jesus, the Witness of the Father. In two moments of the journey dedicated to young people, the Spirit of the Risen Lord filled us with joy and hope, which the young people will take back to their countries, and that will do so much good!

In Korea the Church also safeguards the memory of the *primary role played by lay people*, both at the dawn of the faith and in the work of evangelization. In that land, in fact, the Christian community was not founded by missionaries but by a group of young Koreans in the latter half of the 1700s. They were captivated by several Christian texts which they studied in depth and chose as their rule of life. One of them was sent to Peking to receive Baptism and then this layman baptized his companions. From that first core a great community developed, which from the very start and for about a century was subjec-

ted to violent persecution, with thousands of martyrs. Thus, the Church in Korea was founded on faith, on missionary commitment and on the martyrdom of the lay faithful.

The first Korean Christians chose the apostolic community of Jerusalem as a model, practicing *fraternal love* which overcomes every social difference. This is why I have encouraged modern Christians to be generous in *sharing with the poorest and the excluded*, in line with Chapter 25 of the Gospel according to Matthew: "as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (v. 40).

Dear brothers and sisters, it is seen in the history of the faith in Korea that Christ does not nullify cultures, he does not suppress the journey of the peoples who, over centuries and millennia, have sought the truth and practiced love of God and neighbour. Christ does not abolish what is good, but he enhances it, he brings it to fulfillment.

What Christ fights and conquers, on the other hand, is the Evil One, who causes difficulties between individuals, between peoples; who creates exclusion and incites the idolatry of money; who places the poison of nothingness in the hearts of young people. Yes, Jesus has fought

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In-flight from Korea to Rome

The door always wide open

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The Gospel at heart

GIOVANNI MARIA VIAN

Speaking to the Asian Bishops, Francis introduced himself as their "brother bishop", and this definition, as effective as it is expressive of a commonly perceived fact, helps one to understand the esteem garnered by his visit to Korea, and certainly not only among Catholics. The third international journey of Bergoglio's pontificate, after those of John Paul II in 1984 and 1989, and the third journey by a Pontiff to the "Land of the Morning Calm" in little more than 30 years, it was also his first visit to the Far East. Even as a young Jesuit he had wanted to be a missionary in these lands.

The five days in Korea therefore began the fulfillment of a dream, introducing a mission without borders. First and foremost Francis addressed all the inhabitants of a lively country, where, though a minority, Catholics are important and rapidly growing in number, and where the Pope, with the beatification of 124 martyrs, celebrated the heroic beginnings of a young Church borne from the laity between the late 18th and early 19th centuries. A twofold dialogue was then initiated: with the youth of Asia, who were holding their Sixth gathering here, and with a group of the continent's Bishops.

Thus Francis' journey to Korea ideally embraced all of Asia, where, in less than five months, the Pope will return to visit Sri Lanka and the Philippines. And while the Pontiff persuasively compared the divided Korean peninsula to a family where everyone speaks the same language, and concluded his visit by praying for peace and for the dramatic situation of the religious minor-

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The Pope in Korea

Land of the Morning Calm

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VATICAN BULLETIN

AUDIENCES

Sunday, 10 August

Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples

Monday, 11 August

Cardinal Marc Ouellet, PSS, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops

Thursday, 21 August

Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and the Pope's Personal Envoy to Iraq

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Nikolaos Foskolos of Athens, Greece, and from his office as Apostolic Administrator *ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* of Rhodes, Greece. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (12 Aug.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Sevastianos Rossolatos, as Archbishop of Athens, Greece, and as Apostolic Administrator *ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* of Rhodes, Greece. Until now he has been chancellor of the Curia and Rector of the *Faneromeni* Shrine (12 Aug.).

Archbishop-elect Rossolatos, 70, was born in Ermoupolis, Syros. He holds a BA in philosophy and in theology. He was ordained a priest on 21 July 1968. He has served as: member of various Commissions of the Episcopal Conference of Greece; as member of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal; as a religion teacher in

Francis expresses condolences

Upon being informed of the tragic air accident, Pope Francis expressed his condolences in a telegram – signed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State – sent to Archbishop Iganazio Bedini of Ispahan, President of the Episcopal Conference of Iran, joining in prayer for the suffering of families who lost their loved ones. The following is the English text.

His Holiness Pope Francis was deeply saddened by the tragic air accident in Tehran, and he asks you to convey his heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims. Praying for the eternal repose of the dead, His Holiness invokes upon all who mourn their loss, the divine blessings of strength, consolation and peace.

CARDINAL PIETRO PAROLIN
Secretary of State

State schools for many years; as an assistant at diocesan premarital courses to help couples take appropriate initiatives.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Pablo Emiro Salas Anteliz as Bishop of Armenia, Colombia. Until now he has been Bishop of Espinal (18 Aug.).

Bishop Salas Anteliz, 57, was born in Valledupar, Colombia. He was ordained a priest on 2 December 1984. He was ordained a bishop on 2 December 2007, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Espinal.

The Holy Father accepted the resig-

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Efforts of Catholic charities

In the context of the current humanitarian crisis in Iraq, the Holy Father has made repeated appeals for peace and has sent Cardinal Fernando Filoni as his Personal Representative. Regarding the charitable activity of the Church, the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* has announced that humanitarian aid programmes have been in place for refugees since June. These programmes have been launched by the local Church, particularly through *Caritas Iraq* and have reached at least 4,000 families. These local Church programmes are associated with several national organizations of the *Caritas* family, under the coordination of *Caritas Internationalis*. Other international Catholic organizations have prepared their own aid programmes. Through *Cor Unum* the Holy Father has contributed an initial donation to this relief activity, while the President of the Dicastery is in direct contact with His Beatitude Louis Raphael I Sako, Patriarch of Babylon for Chaldeans, not only to express his spiritual closeness, but also to understand the most immediate needs to be faced. The humanitarian activity currently being carried out by Catholic organizations is concentrating particularly on three areas: emergency relief with food supplies and health kits; education for children; psychological support. Studies and onsite visits are in progress in order to prepare a comprehensive aid plan on behalf of the Catholic Church for the near future, in close cooperation with the Patriarch of Babylon for Chaldeans and the local *Caritas*.

Moved and distressed by the humanitarian tragedy in Iraq Awakening the conscience

The Pope's letter to UN Secretary-General

The Holy Father in an urgent appeal asks all men and women of good will and the international community to awaken their conscience so as to take action to end the humanitarian tragedy now underway in Iraq. The following is the letter sent by the Holy Father to H.E. Mr Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations Organization about the dramatic situation in Northern Iraq.



Iraqi refugees finding relief in the Church of St Joseph in Erbil (La Presse/AP)

religious minorities of the beloved land of Iraq. In renewing my urgent appeal to the international community to take action to end the humanitarian tragedy now underway, I encourage all the competent organs of the United Nations, in particular those responsible for security, peace, humanitarian law and assistance to refugees, to continue their efforts in accordance with the Preamble and relevant Articles of the United Nations Charter.

The violent attacks that are sweeping across Northern Iraq cannot but awaken the consciences of all men and women of goodwill to concrete acts of solidarity by protecting those affected or threatened by violence and assuring the necessary and urgent assistance for the many displaced people as well as their safe return to their cities and their homes. The tragic experiences of the Twentieth Century, and the most basic understanding of human dignity, compels the international community, particularly through the norms and mechanisms of international law, to do all that it can to stop and to prevent further systematic violence against ethnic and religious minorities.

Confident that my appeal, which I unite with those of the Oriental Patriarchs and other religious leaders, will meet with a positive reply, I take this opportunity to renew to your Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration.

From the Vatican, 9 August 2014

Francis

His Excellency
Mr Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General
United Nations Organization

It is with a heavy and anguished heart that I have been following the dramatic events of these past few days in Northern Iraq where Christians and other religious minorities have been forced to flee from their homes and witness the destruction of their places of worship and religious patrimony. Moved by their plight, I have asked His Eminence Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, who served as the Representative of my predecessors, Pope St John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, to the people in Iraq, to manifest my spiritual closeness and to express my concern, and that of the entire Catholic Church, for the intolerable suffering of those who only wish to live in peace, harmony and freedom in the land of their forefathers.

In the same spirit, I write to you, Mr Secretary-General, and place before you the tears, the suffering and the heartfelt cries of despair of Christians and other re-

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Pope Francis with his Personal Envoy to Iraq upon his return from the mission

A people extraordinary under trial

Cardinal Filoni deeply moved by Christians' witness of faith

Even in the difficult trial they are facing, Iraqi Christians are offering an extraordinary witness of faith to the Church and the world, a witness "deeply moving" for Cardinal Fernando Filoni, who has just returned from their country after completing his visit as Pope Francis' Personal Envoy. The Cardinal met with the Pontiff on Thursday morning, 21 August, to report on the mission he had been entrusted with. He told *L'Osservatore Romano* at the end of the meeting that the Pope did more listening than speaking, as Cardinal Filoni recounted what he had seen and heard. The Cardinal shared his evaluation of the situation and how he had felt as he was close to this reality.



What impressions have you brought back from your trip to Iraq?

The mission that the Holy Father entrusted to me was to represent him in the country, in particular on a humanitarian mission to Christian refugees in the region of Kurdistan; and then to bring a message of solidarity to the Yazidi community, who at this time are being subjected to extremely violent persecution. This mission did me much good. Above all, the experience of being close to the suffering of so many people really helped me. Aside from the troubles, the difficulties, the traumas and worries, I also saw hope in them, above all in those families where there are many children and whose future is still uncertain.

What attitude did the political leaders assume toward you?

Everywhere I went, the civil authorities – both those of Iraq, the President of the Republic, and of Iraqi Kurdistan, the President and the Prime Minister – assured their closeness, their solidarity, their aid. Above all they told me they were totally committed to defending the Christians, saying that they want the Christians to return, because they are an integral part of the mosaic of their land and have an innate right to be there among them. And they recognized that they had come there after the Christians. This is a very good intention, but it must be trans-

lated into a concrete reality, where daily life very often becomes difficult for our Christians too.

What did you experience among the Christian communities of the country?

I found very beautiful communities, which truly bear a witness of extraordinary faith. When asked to renounce their faith or to accept small

compromises and concessions with the Jihadists or others, these people chose to remain faithful to their Creed in the face of situations where it would have been easy to deceive those who asked, just in order to stay on their land. They chose to abandon everything, to lose everything, rather than the faith and the religious tradition that they have cherished for millennia. This, to me,

is a faithfulness to be highlighted. These people, however, need to sense our solidarity, not only in words, or through offers of economic aid, but a solidarity which must first of all be ecclesial: their problems are not those of a people far away, who in the end do not affect us, do not concern us. Their wish is that we take on the responsibility of kindness, of closeness, of aid, of support which goes beyond material matters and beyond the words themselves. This is a task which, as Church, we must take on. They are brothers and sisters, displaced here and there, small communities, but I can attest that they have a wealth of faith, of tradition, of extraordinary love for the Pope and for their bishops. I was deeply moved by all of this.

In your opinion how will the situation develop?

I think that many developments have taken place. The very fact that the Holy Father wanted to send his Personal Representative has drawn the attention of many of the world's foreign ministers to the the situation of the Christian and Yazidi minority.

Cardinal Filoni among the persecuted people of Iraq

Don't leave us on our own

"Do it soon" and "don't leave us on our own" have been the most dramatic and most often-repeated pleas that Cardinal Ferdinando Filoni, Pope Francis' Personal Envoy, heard expressed by the Iraqi people – Christian and Yazidi minority – for weeks the victims of savage persecution by fundamentalist militants of the "Islamic State".

The Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples brought a tangible sign of the solidarity of the Pontiff and the Universal Church to these people, forced to abandon their lands, a sign which, during these hours, has also been expressed in prayer and in spiritual closeness. In particular, as stated in a communiqué of the Church for Chaldeans, the Cardinal,

accompanied by Patriarch Louis Raphaël I Sako of Babylon for Chaldeans, by the Archbishop Giorgio Lingua, Apostolic Nuncio, and by local bishops, met with political leaders of the Kurdish Autonomous Region and visited Christian and Yazidi refugees in the Provinces of Duhok and Erbil. According to some estimates cited by the Fides News Agency, Christian refugees in various parts of the country number more than 100,000 out of a million displaced people. Currently in Ankawa, a Christian neighbourhood of Erbil, there are 23 refugee camps accommodating at least 20,000 people, while other families are being housed in private homes or in makeshift shelters.

Cardinal Filoni heard about and saw for himself the tragedy and suffering of so many families that have left their villages, their homes and property, above all in Mosul, on the Plain of Nineveh, and in Sinjar. This emergency drove Patriarch Sako to launch a new appeal to the International Community, and in particular to countries and international organizations that take their moral responsibilities seriously. The three most urgent requests: "To intervene immediately in bringing help in providing basic necessities: water, food, medical supplies, sanitary services"; "to liberate the villages and other places that have been occupied as soon as possible and with a permanent result. The hope of these people must not be allowed to

die!"; "to assure that there is international protection for these villages and so to encourage these families to go back to their homes and to continue to live a normal life in security and peace. Many times did the people cry out to us: help us to return to just living our lives!".

Cardinal Filoni's attention was not directed only to Christians. The cardinal also expressed the Pope's steadfast solidarity to the Yazidi community taking refuge in Kurdistan. Meeting with several representatives, he heard their dramatic testimony: they implore the Holy Father and national leaders as well to put an end to the so-called "genocide" of their people. This is their story: "Our dignity has been violated, humiliated as men, destroyed as a community. We no longer have our women, our mothers and our daughters. What is left here for us?" With the most heartfelt of appeals, they ask that they not be forgotten. Cardinal Filoni stated that "their voices are heartrending and create a dreadful atmosphere of tragedy. I assure them that the Pope does not defend only Christians but also all the minorities whose rights are violated by terrorists and that I will convey their voices and their cries. I will also refer the words of the President of the Kurdish Autonomous Region when he affirmed that, in this country, "We will all die together or we will all continue to live together with dignity".



Press conference of His Holiness Pope Francis in-flight from Korea to Rome

The door always wide open

And he asks the international community to carefully evaluate the means to stop unjust aggression

During the return flight from Korea on Monday, 18 August, the Pontiff entertained representatives of the international media for over an hour, during which time he replied to a series of questions regarding the pilgrimage and other subjects. The conversation was introduced by the Director of the Holy See Press Office, Fr Federico Lombardi, SJ. The questions were formulated by several journalists speaking on behalf of their respective language groups. In his greeting at the start of the conference, the Pope expressed his gratitude for their hard work. "Thank you so much," he said, "for your work, which has been very demanding. Thank you for all you have done, and now for your attention to this conversation. Thank you very much".

(Sung Jin Park, Yonhap News) Holy Father, on behalf of the Korean journalists and our people I want to thank you for your visit; you have brought happiness to many people in Korea. And thank you too, for encouraging the unification of our country. Holy Father, during your visit in Korea, you spoke first of all to the families of the victims of the Sewol ferry disaster and comforted them. I have two questions. First, what were your feelings when you met them? Second, aren't you concerned that your gesture might be misunderstood politically?

Whenever you find yourself facing human suffering, you have to do what your heart tells you to. Then people will say: "He did it for this or that political reason..."; let them say what they want. But when you think of these men and women, these fathers and mothers who have lost their children, their brothers and sisters, of the immense pain of such a disaster, I don't know, my heart... I am a priest and I feel the need to draw near! That's how I feel; that is the first thing. I know that the com-

fort that any word of mine might give is no cure, it doesn't bring the dead back to life, but human closeness at these times gives us strength, there is solidarity.... I remember that as Archbishop of Buenos Aires I experienced two catastrophes like this one: a fire in a dance hall where a pop music concert was being held and 193 persons died. Another time, a trains disaster – I believe 120 people died. At the time, I felt the same way: a need to draw close. Human suffering is powerful, and if at these sad times we draw close we help one another greatly. As for that final question, I would like to add something. I took this [referring to a yellow ribbon worn by the families and by those who have been mobilized by the ferry tragedy]. After I wore it for half a day – I took it in solidarity with them – somebody came up to me and said: It's better to take it off... You should be neutral... – "But listen, where human suffering is involved, you can't be neutral". That



was my answer; that's how I feel. Thanks for your question.

(Alan Holdren, Catholic News Agency, ACI Prensa in Lima, Peru and EWTN) As you know, United States military forces have just begun to bomb terrorists in Iraq in order to prevent a genocide, to protect the future of minorities – I'm also thinking of the Catholics in your care. Do you approve of this American bombing?

Thank you for your very clear question. In these cases, where there is an unjust aggression, I can only say that it is licit to stop the unjust aggressor. I emphasize the word: "stop". I'm not saying to drop bombs, to make war, but to stop the aggressor. The means used to stop him would have to be evaluated. Stopping an unjust aggressor is licit. But we also need to remember! How many times, with this excuse of stopping an unjust aggressor, the powers have taken over peoples and carried on an actual war of conquest! One nation alone cannot determine how to stop an unjust aggressor. After the Second World War, there was the idea of the United Nations: that is where discussion is to take place, to say: Is this an unjust aggressor? It would seem so. How do we stop him? This alone, nothing else.

Second, minorities. Thanks for using that word. Because people say to me: "the Christians, the poor Christians...". And it is true, they are suffering, and martyrs, yes, there are many martyrs. But there are also men and women, religious minorities, not all Christians, and all are equal before God. To stop an unjust aggressor is a right of humanity, but it is also a right that the aggressor be stopped in order not to do evil.

(Jean-Louis de la Vaissière, France Press) Going back to the situation in Iraq: would Your Holiness be prepared,

like Cardinal Filoni and Father Cadoré, the Superior of the Dominicans, to support a military intervention on the ground in Iraq in order to halt the jihadists? I have another question: Do you think you'll be able one day to go to Iraq, maybe to Kurdistan, to support the Christian refugees who are waiting for you there, and to pray with them in this land where they have been living for two thousand years?

Thank you. A little while ago I was with the President of Kurdistan and he had a very clear view about the situation, how to find solutions.... But it was before this last aggression. I have already answered the first question: I agree that when there is in fact an unjust aggressor, he must be stopped. Yes, I am open to the idea, but I think I can say this: when my collaborators and I heard about the plight of the religious minorities and the problem, at that time, of Kurdistan, which could not receive so many people – it is a problem, you know, it simply couldn't – we said: What can be done? We thought of a number of things. First of all, we wrote the Communiqué which Fr Lombardi read in my name. Then this Communiqué was sent to all the Nunciatures to be forwarded to the governments. Then we wrote a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.... So many things.... In the end we decided to send a personal envoy, Cardinal Filoni. And finally we thought: if necessary, when we get back from Korea, we can go there. It was one of the possibilities. So the answer is: I am open to the idea. At this moment it is not the best thing to do, but I am open to it.

(Fabio Zavattaro, Italian journalist) You, Holy Father, are the first Pope ever to fly over China. The telegram you sent to the President of China was accepted without negative comments. Do you think that these may be steps forward in a possible dialogue? And would you like to go to China?

Between memory and hope

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and conquered this with his Sacrifice of love. And if we remain in Him, in his love, we too, like the Martyrs, can live and witness to his victory. With this faith, we prayed and we still pray now so that all the sons and daughters of the land of Korea, who suffer the consequences of war and division, may fulfil a journey of fraternity and of reconciliation.

This journey was illuminated by the feast of the Assumption of Mary into Heaven. From on high, where she reigns with Christ, may the Mother of the Church journey with the People of God, support their steps in the most arduous conditions, comfort those in their trials and keep the horizon of hope open. Through her motherly inter-

cession, may the Lord always bless the Korean people, grant them peace and prosperity; and bless the Church which lives in that land, that it may be ever fruitful and filled with the joy of the Gospel.

SPECIAL GROUPS

I offer an affectionate greeting to the young altar servers from Malta, and I thank them for their faithful service in Saint Peter's Basilica this past month. Upon all the English-speaking pilgrims taking part in today's Audience, including those from the United Kingdom and Japan, I invoke the joy and peace of the Lord Jesus. God bless you!

I also thank you for the prayers and condolences for what happened to my family. The Pope has a family too. There were five of

us siblings; I have 16 nieces and nephews. One of my nephews had a car accident: his wife and two young children – one was two years old and the other several months – died and he is currently in critical condition. I thank you so very, very much for your condolences and prayers.

I address a special thought to the young people, especially those from the Dioceses of San Miniato and Livorno, to the sick and to newlyweds. Today we celebrate the feast day of St Bernard, Abbot and Doctor of the Church. May his love for Our Lady, Star of the Sea inspire the Christian life of each one: may we learn to look to and to invoke Mary that we may never be defeated by sin and may be able to experience the fruits of the grace given us by Jesus, her Son.



our history is there, with Father Ricci.... All these things came to mind. Do I want to go to China? Of course: tomorrow! Oh, yes. We respect the Chinese people; it is just that the Church seeks freedom for her mission, for her work; no other condition. We must not forget that fundamental document about the Chinese problem which was the Letter to the Chinese written by Pope Benedict XVI. That Letter is still timely today. It is good to reread it. The Holy See is always open to contact: always, because it has genuine esteem for the Chinese people.

(Paloma García Ovejero, of COPE) Well, your next trip will be to Albania. And maybe Iraq. Then, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.... But where will you go in 2015? Let me also say: Do you know that Avila and in Alba de Tormes, there is great anticipation; can they still hope?

Yes, yes.... The President of the Republic of Korea told me, in perfect Spanish: "La esperanza es la última que se pierde". Those were her words, hoping for the unification of Korea. I want to say this: one can hope, but a decision has not been made.

But afterwards: Mexico, Philadelphia?

No, I'll tell you why. This year, Albania was planned, that is true. There are those who say that the Pope tends to start everything from the periphery. But no, Why am I going to Albania? For two important reasons. First, because they have managed to form a government – we think of the Balkans! – a government of national unity between Muslims, Orthodox and Catholics, with an interreligious Council which is very helpful and balanced. And this is working well, it's harmonious. The Pope's presence is a way of saying to everyone: "We can all work together!" I felt it would be a real help to that noble people. And another thing: If we think of the history of Albania, it was, in terms of religion, the one communist country whose Constitution enshrined practical atheism. If you went to Mass, it was a violation of the Constitution. One of the ministers told me that at the time – here I want to be precise in the figures – 1,820 churches were torn down. Torn down! Orthodox churches, Catholic churches.... And other churches were turned into cinemas, theaters, dance halls.... I felt I should go: It is nearby, it can be done in a day.... Then next year, I would like to go to Philadelphia, to the Meeting of Families; I have also been invited by the President of the United States to [address] Congress, and also to New York by the Secretary [General] of the United Nations: perhaps all three cities to-

gether.... As for Mexico, the Mexicans want me to go to Our Lady of Guadalupe and I could take advantage of that trip, but it isn't certain. And finally, Spain. The King and Queen invited me, and the bishops have invited me... there's a flurry of invitations to go to Spain; Santiago de Compostela... maybe it is possible, but I will say no more because it's not been decided: to go in the morning to Avila and Alba de Tormes, and to come back in the afternoon.... It might be possible....

It is possible...

Yes, but no decision has been made. And that's the answer. Thank you.

(Johannes Schidelko, KNA – German Catholic Agency) Your Holiness, what kind of relationship do you have with Benedict XVI? Is there a regular exchange of opinions and ideas, is there a common project after this Encyclical?

We see one another.... Before leaving, I went to visit him. Two weeks before, he had sent me an interesting article and asked my opinion about it.... We have a normal relationship because – I keep coming back to this idea which may not please some theologians (and I am no theologian) – I think that a Pope emeritus should not be an exception; after so many centuries, this is our first Pope emeritus. As he put it: "I've grown old, I don't have the strength". It was a fine gesture, noble yet also humble and courageous. My thinking is that 70 years ago bishops emeritus were an exception; they didn't exist. Today bishops emeritus are an institution. I think that a "Pope emeritus" has already become an institution. Why? Because our span of life increases and at a certain age we no longer have the ability to govern well because our body is weary; our health may be good but we don't have the ability to deal with all the problems of a government like that of the Church. I believe that Pope Benedict XVI took this step which de facto instituted Popes emeritus. I repeat, perhaps some theologian will tell you that it isn't right, but that's what I think. Time will tell if it is right or wrong, we shall see. You can ask me: "What if one day you don't feel prepared to go on?" I would do the same, I would do the same! I will pray hard, but I would do the same thing. [Benedict] opened a door which is institutional, not exceptional. Ours is really a relationship between brothers. I have also said that I feel as if I have a grandfather in the house for wisdom: he is a man of wisdom, of nuance, and I find it good for me to listen to him. He also encourages

me a lot. This is the relationship we have with him.

(Yoshimori Fukushima, Mainichi Shimbun) Pope Francis, first of all, thank you for your first visit to Asia. On this trip, you encountered people who have suffered. How did you feel when you greeted the seven "comfort women" at this morning's Mass? As far as people's suffering is concerned, as was the case in Korea, so too there were secret Christians in Japan, and next year will be the 150th anniversary of their "reemergence". Will it be possible to pray for them together with you at Nagasaki? Thank you very much.

That would be very nice, very nice indeed! I have been invited, both by the government and by the bishops. Suffering.... You have gone back to one of the first questions. Koreans are a people who have not lost their dignity. As a people, they were invaded, humiliated, they experienced wars, now they are divided, with great suffering. Yesterday when I went to the meeting with the young people, I visited the Museum of the Martyrs. It is terrible, the suffering which those people endured, simply for refusing to trample on the Cross! It is an historic pain or suffering. This people has the capacity to suffer, and this too is part of their dignity. Today, there were these elderly women present at Mass. To think that in that invasion they were carried off as young girls into barracks to be used.... And they did not lose their dignity. Today they are showing their face, the elderly women, the last ones remaining.... [Koreans] are a people secure in their dignity. But turning to these instances of martyrdom and suffering, and these women: these are the fruits of war! Today we are in a world at war, everywhere! Someone told me, "You know, Father, we are in the Third World War, but it is being fought piecemeal". Do you understand? It is a world at war, where these acts of cruelty take place.

I would like to reflect on two words. The first is *cruelty*. Today children don't count! We used to speak of *conventional war*; today, this does not count. I'm not saying that conventional wars are a good thing, of course not. But today a bomb is dropped and kills the innocent with the guilty, the child and the woman with him, his mother.... They kill everybody. But we need to stop and think a bit about the degree of cruelty at which we have arrived. This should frighten us! I don't say this to create fear: one can make an empirical study. Today, the degree of mankind's cruelty is frightening. The other word on which I would like to reflect, and which is related to this, is *torture*. Today, torture is an al-

most, I would say, ordinary means used in *intelligence*, in trials.... And torture is a sin against humanity, it is a crime against humanity. And to Catholics, I say: to torture a person is a mortal sin; it is a grave sin, but even more, it is a sin against humanity. Cruelty and torture. I would like it very much if you, in your media, would reflect on these things. How do you see these things today? What is the level of mankind's cruelty? What do you think about torture? I think it could benefit all of us to reflect on this.

(Deborah Ball, The Wall Street Journal) Our question is this: you keep a very, very demanding pace, a tight schedule with little time for rest and no vacations; it makes these trips gruelling! Then too, in the last few months we have seen that you have had to cancel an appointment here and there, sometimes at the last minute. Is there any concern about the pace which you keep?

Well, yes, I've been told that! I have taken my vacation, just now, at home, as I usually do, because... once I read an interesting book, entitled: "Be Glad. You're Neurotic"! I have my own little neuroses, but you have to take care of them, these little neuroses! You have to serve them *mate* every day.... One of these neuroses is that I am a bit too attached to my habitat. The last time I took a vacation outside of Buenos Aires, with the Jesuit community, was in 1975. I do always take a vacation – really – but in my habitat; I change pace. I sleep more; I read the things I want; I listen to music; I spend more time praying.... And this makes me relax. In July and part of August, I did this and it was fine. The other question, the fact that I had to cancel [certain engagements]: that is true, true enough. The day I had to go to Gemelli [Hospital], just 10 minutes beforehand, I was there but I couldn't do it, really.... Those were very busy days. And now I have to be a little more prudent. You're right!

(Anaïs Feuga, French Radio) In Rio, when the crowd cried out: "Francesco, Francesco", you responded by saying "Christ, Christ". Today how do you handle this immense popularity? How do you deal with it?

Well, I don't know what to say.... I experience it with gratitude to the Lord that his people are happy – I really do – and wishing the best for God's people. I experience it as people's generosity. This is true. Interiorly, I try to think about my sins and my mistakes, lest I have any illusions, since I realize that this is not going to last long, two or three years, and then... off to the house of the Father. Then again, it isn't wise to ask yourself this, but I experience it as the Lord's presence in his people; he uses the bishop who is the people's pastor in order to make many things clear. I experience it more naturally than before: before, I was a little fearful.... I do these things.... I also say to myself: don't make mistakes, because you must not hurt this people; and all these things.... It's a bit like that....

(Francesca Paltracca, Radio RAI) For

The door always wide open

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

the Pope who came "from the ends of the earth" and now finds himself in the Vatican, apart from Santa Marta – you have already spoken about life there and why you decided to live there – what kind of life does the Pope have in the Vatican? People always ask us: What does he do? Where does he go? Where does he take walks? We have seen that you go to the canteen, and you surprise us every day... We have seen that you went to the Vatican canteen, for example.... You surprise us. So, what kind of life do you lead, apart from work, in Santa Marta?

Well, I try to be free.... There are official appointments, working meetings.... But then my life is as normal as I can make it. Really, I would like to get out, but it can't be done, it just can't be done.... And not for safety reasons, either. It can't be done because if you go out, people flock around you.... It can't be done, this is a fact. But inside, at Santa Marta, I have a normal life of work, rest, conversations....

So, all told, you don't feel yourself a prisoner?

No, no. In the beginning, yes, but now... some walls have fallen... I don't know.... "The Pope can't go...". An example, to make you laugh: I go to take the elevator, suddenly someone shows up because the Pope cannot take the elevator alone. "Go back to your place, I'll go down by myself". End of story. So it is, no? It is normal, altogether normal.

(Sergio Rubin, Clarin) I'm sorry, but I have to ask you, on behalf of the Spanish group, which includes Argentina, a question which requires your profound theological knowledge. Your team, San Lorenzo, for the first time became American champions! I would like to know your reaction to this event, and they tell me that you are also going to receive a delegation of the Sporting Association at this Wednesday's General Audience....

After Brazil took second place, it's a good bit of news. I heard about it here in Seoul. They told me and then they said: "Look, they're coming on Wednesday". Let them come, it's the public audience, they'll be there.... For me, San Lorenzo is the team my whole family supported: my dad played basketball for San Lorenzo, he was on the basketball team. And as children we used to go, our mom even came with us, to the gasometer... I remember it as clearly if it were today, the season of '46, San Lorenzo had a brilliant team, they ended up as champions.... You know, with joy; I'm happy about it. But miracles, no! Let's not talk about miracles!

(Gürgen Erbacher, German television) The question is: for some time now, there has been talk of plans for an encyclical on ecology. Can you tell us when it will come out, and what will be its main points?

This encyclical... I've spoken about it at length with Cardinal Turkson, and with others, and I asked Cardinal Turkson to gather all

the contributions which have arrived. And before this trip, the week before, no, four days before, Cardinal Turkson handed me the first draft. The first draft is this big...! I would say that it is a third bigger than *Evangelii Gaudium*! It's just the first draft. But now there is a rather difficult problem, because, up to a certain point, one can speak with some assurance about safeguarding creation and ecology, including human ecology. But there are also scientific hypotheses [to be taken into account], some of them quite solid, others not. In this kind of encyclical, which has to be magisterial, one can only build on solid data, on things that are reliable. If the Pope says that the earth is the centre of the universe, and not the sun, he errs, since he is affirming something that ought to be supported by science, and this will not do. That's where we are at now. We have to study the document, number by number, and I believe it will become smaller. But to get to the heart of the matter and to what can be safely stated. You can say in a footnote: "On this or that question, there are the following hypotheses...", as a way of offering information, but you cannot do that in the body of the encyclical, which is doctrinal and has to be sound.

(Fr Lombardi) We have asked 12 questions and all the groups have had two turns. Do you want to continue or should we break for dinner?

It depends on how hungry they are....

(journalists) We aren't hungry, we aren't tired....

(Jung Hae Ko, Korean newspaper) Your Holiness, thank you very much for your visit to South Korea. I will ask two questions. First, immediately before the final Mass at the Cathedral of Myeong-dong, you spoke with several "comfort women". What thoughts went through your mind? That is my first question. The second is: Pyongyang says that Christianity represents a direct threat to his regime and to his leadership. We know that something terrible has happened to the Christians of North Korea. But we don't know what has happened. Is there a particular commitment in your heart to try to change the approach of Pyongyang towards North Korean Christians?

To the first question, I would repeat: Today, these women were present because, in spite of all they have suffered, they have dignity: they wanted to be there. I was thinking about what I spoke about a little while ago: the sufferings of war, the cruelty which war brings.... These women were used, they were enslaved, and these are acts of cruelty.... I thought of all this: the dignity which they possess and all that they have suffered. And suffering is a legacy. We say, the early Fathers of the Church said, that the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians. You Koreans have sown much, so very much. Out of fidelity. And now we are seeing the fruit of what the martyrs sowed. About North Korea, I don't know... I know that there is suffering... I do know

one thing for sure: that there are some relatives, many relatives, who can't be reunited, and this creates suffering, that is true. It is suffering which comes from the division of the country. Today in the Cathedral, where I vested for Mass there was a gift for me: Christ's crown of thorns, made of the barbed wire dividing the two parts of one Korea. And we have brought this gift, I have brought it on the plane with me.... The suffering of division, of a divided family. As I said – yesterday, I think, but I don't remember exactly when, perhaps in speaking to the bishops, I don't recall – we have one hope. The two Koreas are brothers; they speak the same language. When we speak the same language it is because we have the same mother. And this gives us hope. The pain of the division is great; I understand this and I pray that it may end.

(Philip Pulella, Reuters) A comment and a question: as an Italian-American, I wanted to compliment you on your English. You shouldn't be afraid! And before you go to America, my second homeland, if you want to practice some, I'm available! Whatever accent you want... a New York accent? I'm from New York – I'm available. Here is my question: You have spoken about martyrdom. At what point are we in the [canonization] process for Bishop Romero? What would you like to see come out of this process?

The process was blocked "for prudential reasons" at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, so they said. Now it is unblocked. It has been passed to the Congregation for Saints. And it is following the usual procedure for such processes. It depends on how the postulators move it forward. This is very important, to do it quickly. What I would like is a clarification about martyrdom in *odium fidei*, whether it can occur either for having confessed the Creed or for having done the works which Jesus commands with regard to one's neighbour. And this is a task for the theologians. They are studying it. Because after him [Romero] there is Rutilio Grande, and there are others too; there are others who were killed, but none as prominent as Romero. You have to make this distinction theologically. For me Romero is a man of God, but the process has to be followed, and the Lord too has to give his sign.... If he wants to do it, he will do it. But right now the postulators have to move forward because there are no obstacles.

Céline Hoyeaux, La Croix) Holy Father, in your opinion, given the war in Gaza, was the prayer for peace held in the Vatican on 8 June last a failure?

Thank you, thank you for the question. That prayer for peace was absolutely not a failure. First, the initiative did not come from me. The initiative to pray together came from the two Presidents, from the President of the State of Israel and from the President of the State of Palestine. They had expressed this desire to me. Then, we wanted to do it there [in the Holy Land], but the

right place couldn't be found because the political stakes for each were quite high if you went to the other side. True, the Nunciature would have been a neutral place, but to arrive at the Nunciature the President of the State of Palestine would have had to enter Israel, and it was no easy matter. Then they said to me: "Let's do it in the Vatican, and we will go there". These two men are men of peace, they are men who believe in God, and they've experienced so many dreadful things, so many dreadful things that they are convinced that the only way to resolve this whole history is negotiation, dialogue and peace. But now your question: Was it a failure? No, I think that the door is open. All four, as representatives and I wanted Bartholomaios has to be there as the head of Orthodoxy, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Orthodoxy – I don't want to use terms which may not please all of the Orthodox – as Ecumenical Patriarch, it was good that he was with us. The door of prayer was opened. And we said: "We need to pray". Peace is a gift, a gift which is merited by our work, but it is a gift. And to say to humanity that together with the path of negotiation – which is important, and of dialogue – which is important, there is also the path of prayer. Right. Then what happened, happened. But that was circumstantial. The meeting itself was not circumstantial: prayer is a basic step, a basic human attitude. At present the smoke of the bombs, the smoke of wars, does not allow the door to be seen, yet the door has remained open from that moment. And since I believe in God, I believe that the Lord is looking at that door, and he is looking upon all who pray and all who ask for his help. Yes, I like that question. Thank you. Thank you for having asked it. Thank you.

(Fr Lombardi) Holy Father, many thanks. I believe that you have spent more than an hour in conversation with us. So it is only fair that now you get some rest at the end of this trip. In any event, we know that this evening you will probably make a visit to Our Lady....

From the airport I'll go to thank Our Lady [at St Mary Major]. It is a good thing to do. Dr Giani had made arrangements to bring a bouquet of flowers from Korea in the Korean colours, but then, as we were leaving the Nunciature, a little girl came up with a bouquet of flowers, roses, and we said: "Let's bring these flowers from a child of Korea as a gift to Our Lady. From the airport, we will go there to pray a little and then return home.

(Fr Lombardi) Good. Know that we too will be with you, to thank the Lord for these extraordinary days. And best wishes as you again take up your ministry in Rome. We will continue to follow you and we hope that you will continue to give us, as you have done in these days, very beautiful things of which to speak. Thank you.

Thank you for your work, many thanks.... And I'm sorry I can't spend more time with you. Thanks! Enjoy your meal!

Video message to the Korean people before his journey

We are all bothers

“The Church is the great family in which we are all brothers in Christ”. Pope Francis recalled this in a video message to Koreans on Monday, 11 August, as the date of his journey approached.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Within a few days, with God’s help, I will be among you in Korea. I thank you in advance for welcoming me and I invite you to pray together with me, that this Apostolic Journey may bear good fruit for the Church and for Korean society.

“Arise, shine!” (Is 60:1): with these words, which the prophet addressed to Jerusalem, I turn to you. It is the Lord who invites you to receive his light, to receive it in the heart so as to reflect it in a life full of faith, of hope and of love, full of the joy of the Gospel.

As you know, I come on the occasion of the Sixth Asian Youth Day. To young people in particular I shall bring the call of the Lord: “Asian Youth! Wake up! The

glory of the martyrs shines upon you”. The light of the Risen Christ shines as in a mirror in the witnesses of Paul Yun Ji-chung and of his 123 companions, all martyrs for the faith, who will be proclaimed blessed on 16 August in Seoul. Young people bear hope and energy for the future; but they are also victims of the moral and spiritual crisis of our time. For this I would like to announce to them and to all the only name in which we can be saved: Jesus the Lord.

Dear brothers and sisters of Korea, faith in Christ has implanted deep roots in your land and has borne abundant fruit. The elderly are custodians of this heritage: without them the young would have no memory. The encounter between young and old is the guarantee of the people’s journey. And the Church is the great family in which we are all brothers in Christ. I come to you in his name, in the joy of sharing with you the Gospel of love and hope.

May the Lord bless you and may the Virgin Mother protect you.



Cardinal Parolin on the Pope’s visit to Korea

In the heart of Asia

The following is a translation of the interview Cardinal Pietro Parolin gave the Vatican Television Center in collaboration with L’Osservatore Romano, on Monday morning, 11 August.

ALESSANDRO DI BUSSOLO

“I must go to Asia, it is important”, Pope Francis said to journalists at the end of his visit to Brazil. Now the Pope is heading to North Korea, 15 years after John Paul II visited India. What makes this visit so important?

I would say that this visit is important for three reasons: firstly, this is the Pope’s first visit to the Far East, a part of the world which is gaining an increasingly important role in global politics and the global economy. Secondly, the Pope is going there to address the entire continent, not just Korea. Of course Korea is his destination but he aims to address all the continent’s countries thanks to the celebration of Asian Youth Day, which will be taking place in Korea and be attended by the young people’s representatives from nearby nations. And the third aspect is the future. Young people represent the future, so the Pope will be addressing the future of this continent, the future of Asia. In my opinion, these are the three points that characterize this journey and also highlight its importance.

In his Apostolic Exhortation, Ecclesia in Asia, also in 1999, John Paul II wrote that “in the Third Christian Millennium a great harvest of faith will be reaped on this vast and vital continent”. Fifteen years later, has the hope already become a reality?

pel message becomes its proclaimer, the witness to this same message. And it is a truly comforting situation, there are about a thousand Korean priests, men and women religious, lay people and missionaries throughout the world, in roughly 80 countries on the various continents. So it is a very consistent yet growing missionary situation. Pope Francis is going to promote, to reinforce, this movement which is already in progress within the Korean Church, and I think he will do so in a way that is appropriate for her, knowing that, from the very beginning of his pontificate, from his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, he has emphasized this missionary dimension of the Church, the Church that goes out, the Church that goes toward the existential and geographic peripheries, the Church that must take the joyous message of the Gospel to all. Returning to what Paul VI said in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, let us also recall him on almost the eve of his beatification, namely, that

the Church exists in order to evangelize. Thus one of the Pope’s clear messages will be just this, precisely in order to confirm and reinforce this movement.

At the heart of Francis’ visit will be the meeting with Asia’s youth, who, in this highly competitive society, often grow away from the Church as they seek excellence at school. What will the Pope’s message to them be?

We have to say that the Korean Church has always demonstrated great attention and great pastoral care with regard to young people. The message I think the Pope will impart to these young people is that they must become protagonists in the Church’s life. Their presence must therefore be active, participatory, co-operative and co-responsible. The Church needs young people. John Paul II reminded us of this and now Pope Francis reminds us too. So young people need to be protagonists in the Church and in the mis-

Looking a bit at the numbers, at the figures, we must recognize that the Gospel’s journey in Asia is not as rapid, as fast, as we had hoped and as we do hope. We all know that only one or two percent of the Asia population profess the Christian faith, and the Church exists in very different situations in various countries: in some, the situation is easier; in others, more difficult. But I think we must look beyond the numbers, the overall figures, and recognize that in Asia, despite the growing phenomena of secularization and materialism typical of today’s world and of all the continents, there is an intense desire for God, a deep thirst for spiritual values, and there is also great vitality in religions, which have shown they are capable of adapting and changing in the face of the situation in transition. To me these all seem to be positive signs, which go in the direction indicated by the words of St John Paul II, whom you quoted, in the sense that the Gospel, in fact, is proposed as a path toward fullness. Starting from these profound spiritual and religious aspirations, the Gospel is proposed as a fullness which is capable of responding to these aspirations and to these expectations.

Korea, once a mission destination, has become a land which sends out missionaries. Can the impact of Pope Francis’ journey broaden the horizons of this mission in Asia?

We almost find the initial freshness in this experience of the Korean Church, which from being evangelized becomes the Evangelist, from being the recipient of the Gos-



The Pope arrives in Korea

Land of the morning calm

A reconciliation would contribute to the peace of a war-weary world

The first day of Pope Francis' Apostolic Journey to the Republic of Korea was spent in Seoul, where he arrived at approximately 10:30 am, local time, on Thursday, 14 August. The following accompanied the Holy Father throughout his visit: Bishop Peter Kang U-il of Cheju, President of CBCK; Cardinal Andrew Yeom Soo-jung, Archbishop of Seoul and Apostolic Administrator of Pyöng-yang; Archbishop Osvaldo Padilla, titular Archbishop of Pia and Apostolic Nuncio; Bishop Basil Cho Kyu-man, Auxiliary of Seoul, titular Bishop of Elephantaria in Proconsulari and Chairman of the Journey's Organizing Committee; Msgr Julien Kaboré, Nunciature Secretary, and Fr John Chong Che-Chon, SJ,

Secretary, acting as ad hoc interpreter for the Pope. Upon his arrival at the Seoul Air Base, he was greeted on board the aircraft by the Apostolic Nuncio and Head of Protocol, after which the Pope disembarked and was welcomed by the President H.E. Ms Park Geun-hye and two children who presented him with flowers. His arrival was further honoured by a 21-gun salute. Shortly thereafter, the Pope was driven to the Nunciature of Seoul for a private Mass and lunch. The official Welcome Ceremony began at 3:45 at the "Blue House", location of both the official residence and executive office of Korea's Head of State. Following a cordial greeting in the garden, President

Park Geun-hye welcomed the Pontiff on a Courtesy Visit in the Blue House, which included official photographs, an exchange of gifts and the introduction of Authorities and Dignitaries. Several Government leaders were present as well as the Presidium of the Korean Bishops' Conference (CBCK) and a group of faithful. The Pope then attended a Meeting with Members of the Administration, Army Officials and Members of the Institutions of the Republic, a Delegation of the Diplomatic Corps and other Authorities in the Blue House's Chungmu Hall. Both Pope Francis and the President addressed the group. The following is the Holy Father's address, which he delivered in English.

Madam President,
Honorable Government
and Authorities,
Distinguished Members of the
Diplomatic Corps,
Dear Friends,

It is a great joy for me to come to Korea, the land of the morning calm, and to experience not only the natural beauty of this country, but above all the beauty of its people and its rich history and culture. This national legacy has been tested through the years by violence, persecution and war. But despite these trials, the heat of the day and the dark of the night have always given way to the morning calm, that is, to an undiminished hope for justice, peace and unity. What a gift hope is! We cannot become discouraged in our pursuit of these goals which are for the good not only of the Korean people, but of the entire region and the whole world.

I wish to thank President Park Geun-hye for her warm welcome. I greet her and the distinguished members of the government. I would like to acknowledge also the members of the diplomatic corps, and all those present who by their many efforts have assisted in preparing for my visit. I am most grateful for your hospitality, which has immediately made me feel at home among you.

My visit to Korea is occasioned by the Sixth Asian Youth Day, which brings together young Catholics from throughout this vast contin-

ent in a joyful celebration of their common faith. In the course of my visit I will also beatify a number of Koreans who died as martyrs for the Christian faith: Paul Yun Ji-chung and his 123 companions. These two celebrations complement one another. Korean culture understands well the inherent dignity and wisdom of our elders and honors their place in society. We Catholics honor our elders who were martyred for the faith because they were willing to give their lives for the truth which they had come to believe and by which they sought to live their lives. They teach us how to live fully for God and for the good of one another.

A wise and great people do not only cherish their ancestral traditions; they also treasure their young, seeking to pass on the legacy of the past and to apply it to the challenges of the present. Whenever young people gather together, as on the present occasion, it is a precious opportunity for all of us to listen to their hopes and concerns. We are also challenged to reflect on how well we are transmitting our values to the next generation, and on the kind of world and society we are preparing to hand on to them. In this context, I think it is especially important for us to reflect on the need to give our young people the gift of peace.

This appeal has all the more resonance here in Korea, a land which has long suffered because of a lack of peace. I can only express my ap-



preciation for the efforts being made in favor of reconciliation and stability on the Korean peninsula, and to encourage those efforts, for they are the only sure path to lasting peace. Korea's quest for peace is a cause close to our hearts, for it affects the stability of the entire area and indeed of our whole war-weary world.

The quest for peace also represents a challenge for each of us, and in a particular way for those of you dedicated to the pursuit of the common good of the human family through the patient work of diplomacy. It is the perennial challenge of breaking down the walls of distrust and hatred by promoting a culture of reconciliation and solidarity. For diplomacy, as the art of the possible, is based on the firm and persevering conviction that peace can be won through quiet listening and dialogue, rather than by mutual recriminations, fruitless criticisms and displays of force.

Peace is not simply the absence of war, but "the work of justice" (cf. Is 32:17). And justice, as a virtue, calls for the discipline of forbearance; it demands that we not forget past injustices but overcome them through forgiveness, tolerance and cooperation. It demands the willingness to discern and attain mutually beneficial goals, building foundations of mutual respect, understanding and reconciliation. May all of us dedicate these days to peace, to praying for it and deepening our resolve to achieve it.

Dear friends, your efforts as political and civic leaders are directed to the goal of building a better, more peaceful, just and prosperous world for our children. Experience teaches us that in an increasingly globalized world, our understanding of the common good, of progress and development, must ultimately be in human and not merely economic terms. Like most of our developed nations, Korea struggles with important social issues, political divisions, economic inequities, and concerns about the responsible stewardship of the natural environment. How important it is that the voice of every member of society be heard, and that a spirit of open communication, dialogue and cooperation be fostered. It is likewise important that special concern be shown for the poor, the vulnerable and those who have no voice, not only by meeting their immediate needs but also by assisting them in their human and cultural advancement. It is my hope that Korean democracy will continue to be strengthened and that this nation will prove to be a leader also in the globalization of solidarity which is so necessary today: one which looks to the integral development of every member of our human family.

In his second visit to Korea, 25 years ago, St John Paul II stated his conviction that "the future of Korea will depend on the presence among its people of many wise, virtuous and deeply spiritual men and women" (8 October 1989). In echoing his words today, I assure you of the continued desire of Korea's Catholic community to participate fully in the life of the nation. The Church wishes to contribute to the education of the young, the growth of a spirit of solidarity with the poor and disadvantaged, and the formation of new generations of citizens ready to bring the wisdom and vision inherited from their forebears and born of their faith to the great political and social questions facing the nation.

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you once more for your welcome and hospitality. May God bless you and all the beloved Korean people. In a special way, may he bless the elderly and the young people, who, by preserving memory and inspiring courage, are our greatest treasure and our hope for the future.



After the Welcome Ceremony and meetings at the Presidential Palace on Thursday morning, 14 August, the Holy Father was taken to the headquarters of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea (CBCK), also in Seoul. In the afternoon the Pope was accompanied by Msgr Peter Kang U-il, Bishop of Cheju, President of CBCK, and two Korean Cardinals to the chapel, where they were awaited by a group of resident priests and religious as well as a group of Maryknoll missionaries. After the welcome by Bishop U-il and before meeting individually with the bishops present and signing the "Gold Book", the Holy Father gave the following address in Italian. The following is the English text.

I thank Bishop Peter Kang U-il for his words of fraternal welcome on your behalf. It is a blessing for me to be here and to witness at first hand the vibrant life of the Church in Korea. As pastors, you are responsible for guarding the Lord's flock. You are guardians of the wondrous works which he accomplishes in his people. Guarding is one of the tasks specifically entrusted to the bishop: looking after God's people. Today I would like to reflect with you as a brother bishop on two central aspects of the task of guarding God's people in this country: *to be guardians of memory and to be guardians of hope.*

To be guardians of memory. The beatification of Paul Yun Ji-chung and his companions is an occasion for us to thank the Lord, who from the seeds sown by the martyrs has brought forth an abundant harvest of grace in this land. You are the children of the martyrs, heirs to their heroic witness of faith in Christ. You are also heirs to an impressive tradition which began, and largely grew, through the fidelity, perseverance and work of generations of lay persons. They were not tempted by clericalism: they were laity and they moved ahead on their own. It is significant that the history of the Church in Korea began with a direct encounter with the word of God. It was the intrinsic beauty and integrity of the Christian message – the



To Bishops of Korea on Thursday afternoon

Guardians of memory and hope

'No' to a well-to-do Church where the poor are ashamed to enter

Gospel and its summons to conversion, interior renewal and a life of charity – that spoke to Yi Byeok and the noble elders of the first generation; and it is to that message, in its purity, that the Church in Korea looks, as if in a mirror, to find her truest self.

The fruitfulness of the Gospel on Korean soil, and the great legacy handed down from your forefathers in the faith, can be seen today in the flowering of active parishes and ecclesial movements, in solid programs of catechesis and outreach to young people, and in the Catholic schools, seminaries and universities. The Church in Korea is esteemed for its role in the spiritual and cultural life of the nation and its strong missionary impulse. From being a land of mission, yours has now become a land of missionaries; and the universal Church continues to benefit from the many priests and religious whom you have sent forth.

Being *guardians of memory* means more than remembering and treasuring the graces of the past; it also means drawing from them the spiritual resources to confront with vision and determination the hopes, the promise and the challenges of the future. As you yourselves have noted, the life and mission of the Church in Korea are not ultimately measured in external, quantitative and institutional terms; rather, they must be judged in the clear light of the Gospel and its call to conversion to the person of Jesus Christ. To be guardians of memory means realizing that while the growth is from God (cf. *1 Cor 3:6*), it is also the fruit of quiet and persevering labor, past and present. Our memory of the martyrs and past generations of Christians must be one that is realistic, not idealized and not "triumphalistic". Looking to the past without hearing God's call to conversion in the present will not help us move forward; instead, it will only hold us back and even halt our spiritual progress.

In addition to being guardians of memory, dear brothers, you are also called to be *guardians of hope*: the hope held out by the Gospel of God's grace and mercy in Jesus



Christ, the hope which inspired the martyrs. It is this hope which we are challenged to proclaim to a world that, for all its material prosperity, is seeking something more, something greater, something authentic and fulfilling. You and your brother priests offer this hope by your ministry of sanctification, which not only leads the faithful to the sources of grace in the liturgy and the sacraments, but also constantly urges them to press forward in response to the upward call of God (cf. *Phil 3:14*). You guard this hope by keeping alive the flame of holiness, fraternal charity and missionary zeal within the Church's communion. For this reason, I ask you to remain ever close to your priests, encouraging them in their daily labors, their pursuit of sanctity and their proclamation of the Gospel of salvation. I ask you to convey to them my affectionate greeting and my gratitude for their dedicated service to God's people. I urge you to remain close to your priests. Close, so that they can see their bishop often. This closeness of the bishop is not only fraternal but also paternal: as they carry our their pastoral ministry, priests often need it. Bishops must not be distant from their priests, or worse, unapproachable. I say this with a heavy heart.

Where I come from, some priests would tell me: "I've called the bishop, I've asked to meet him; yet three months have gone by and I have still not received an answer". Brothers, if a priest phones you today and asks to see you, call him back immediately, today or tomorrow. If you don't have time to see him, tell him: "I can't meet you because of this, that and or the other thing, but I wanted to call you and I am here for you". But let them hear their father's response, as quickly as possible. Please, do not be distant from your priests.

If we accept the challenge of being a missionary Church, a Church which constantly goes forth to the world and, especially, to the peripheries of contemporary society, we will need to foster that "spiritual taste" which enables us to embrace and identify with each member of Christ's body (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 268). Here particular care and concern needs to be shown for the children and the elderly in our communities. How can we be guardians of hope if we neglect the memory, the wisdom and the experience of the elderly, and the aspirations of our young? In this regard, I would ask you to be concerned in a special way for the education of children, supporting the indispensable mission not only of the universities, important as they are, but also Catholic schools at every level, beginning with elementary schools, where young minds and hearts are shaped in love for the Lord and his Church, in the good, the true and the beautiful, and where children learn to be good Christians and upright citizens.

Being guardians of hope also entails ensuring that the prophetic witness of the Church in Korea remains evident in its concern for the poor and in its programs of outreach, particularly to refugees and migrants and those living on the margins of society. This concern should be seen not only in concrete charitable initiatives, which are necessary, but also in the ongoing work of social, occupational and educational promotion. We can risk reducing our work with

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Mass on the Feast of the Assumption at Daejeon

The 'great sign'

On Friday morning, 15 August, Pope Francis left Seoul by helicopter, arriving at approximately 9:45 in the country's fifth largest city, Daejeon. He was welcomed at the city's heliport by Bishop Lazzaro You Heung-sik of Daejeon, who accompanied the Holy Father the entire day. He was also met by several local leaders. The Pontiff travelled in the 'popemobile' to the World Cup Stadium, built for the 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan. Before entering the Sacristy he was driven around inside the stadium, which has a seating capacity of up to 50,000. Holy Mass was then celebrated in both Latin and Korean for the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Survivors and families of the victims of the 16 April 2014 Sewol ferry disaster were also present. The following is the English text of the Pope's homily, which was given in Italian.

In union with the whole Church, we celebrate the Assumption of Our Lady, body and soul, into the glory of heaven. Mary's Assumption shows us our own destiny as God's adoptive children and members of the Body of Christ. Like Mary our Mother, we are called to share fully in the Lord's victory over sin and death, and to reign with him in his eternal Kingdom. This is our vocation.

The "great sign" presented in today's First Reading invites us to contemplate Mary enthroned in glory beside her divine Son. It also invites us to acknowledge the future which even now the Risen Lord is opening before us. Koreans traditionally celebrate this feast in the light of their historical experience, seeing the loving intercession of Our Lady at work in the history of the nation and in the lives of its people.

In today's Second Reading, we heard Saint Paul tell us that Christ is the new Adam, whose obedience

to the Father's will has overturned the reign of sin and bondage and inaugurated the reign of life and freedom (cf. 1 Cor 15:24-25). True freedom is found in our loving embrace of the Father's will. From Mary, full of grace, we learn that Christian freedom is more than liberation from sin. It is freedom for a new, spiritual way of seeing earthly realities. It is the freedom to love God and our brothers and sisters with a pure heart, and to live a life of joyful hope for the coming of Christ's Kingdom.

Today, in venerating Mary, Queen of Heaven, we also turn to her as Mother of the Church in Korea. We ask her to help us to be faithful to the royal freedom we received on the day of our Baptism, to guide our efforts to transform the world in accordance with God's plan, and to enable the Church in this country to be ever more fully a leaven of his Kingdom in the midst of Korean society. May the Christians of this na-



tion be a generous force for spiritual renewal at every level of society. May they combat the allure of a materialism that stifles authentic spiritual and cultural values and the spirit of unbridled competition which generates selfishness and strife. May they also reject inhumane economic models which create new forms of poverty and marginalize workers, and the culture of death which devalues the image of God, the God of life, and violates the dignity of every man, woman and child.

As Korean Catholics, heirs to a noble tradition, you are called to cherish this legacy and transmit it to future generations. This will demand of everyone a renewed conversion to the Word of God and a passionate concern for the poor, the needy and the vulnerable in our midst.

In celebrating this feast, we join the Church throughout the world in looking to Mary as our Mother of Hope. Her song of praise reminds us that God never forgets his promise of mercy (cf. Lk 1:54-55). Mary is the one who is blessed because "she believed that there would be a ful-

fillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord" (Lk 1:45). In her, all God's promises have been proved trustworthy. Enthroned in glory, she shows us that our hope is real; even now it reaches us as "a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul" (Heb 6:19) to where Jesus is seated in glory.

This hope, dear brothers and sisters, the hope held out by the Gospel, is the antidote to the spirit of despair that seems to grow like a cancer in societies which are outwardly affluent, yet often experience inner sadness and emptiness. Upon how many of our young has this despair taken its toll! May they, the young who surround us in these days with their joy and confidence, never be robbed of their hope!

Let us turn to Our Lady and explore the grace to rejoice in the freedom of the children of God, to use that freedom wisely in the service of our brothers and sisters, and to live and work as signs of the hope which will find its fulfillment in that eternal Kingdom where to reign is to serve. Amen.

Prayer at the Angelus

For the victims of the sinking of the Sewol ferry

At the end of the Mass, which was celebrated in both Latin and Korean for the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Holy Father said a few words before reciting the Angelus prayer. The following is the English text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At the end of our Mass, we turn once more to Our Lady, Queen of Heaven. To her we bring all our joys, our sorrows and our hopes.

We especially entrust to her all who lost their lives in the sinking of the *Sewol* ferry, as well as those who continue to be affected by this great national disaster. May the Lord welcome the dead into his peace, console those who mourn, and continue to sustain those who so generously came to the aid of their brothers and sisters. May this tragic event which has brought all Koreans together in grief confirm their commitment to work together in solidarity for the common good.

We also ask Our Lady to look with mercy on all those among us who are suf-

fering, particularly the sick, the poor and those who lack dignified employment.

Finally, on this day when Korea celebrates its liberation, we ask Our Lady to watch over this noble nation and its citizens. And we commend to her care all the young people who have joined us from throughout Asia. May they be joyful heralds of the dawn of a world of peace in accordance with God's gracious plan!



Francis baptizes the father of a young victim in the Sewol tragedy

The cross of Lee Ho Jin

His name is Lee Ho Jin, 56, his face marked by years of hard work in a small town in South Korea. So much effort to support his family, a wife and two children. He wants the best for them. He spends a fortune on schooling; in Korea education is very expensive. But he is happy. At least he was until 16 April, when the Sewol ferry tragedy claimed close to 300 lives, most of them students on a school excursion. Among them was his son, Seung hyun, not yet 16. "With him my life ended. But now we begin a different one", he said, emotionally.

The Pope met with some of the family members from the ferry tragedy before celebrating Mass with thousands of Koreans at the World Cup Stadium in Daejeon on 15 August. The Holy Father blessed and touched the head of each one of them and he shared his closeness with them. Mr Lee took that opportunity to ask to be baptized personally by the Pope.



The Holy Father accepted and this took place at the Seoul Nunciature, before Mass on Sunday morning, 17 August.

A dialogue with young people at the Shrine of Solmoe

One family

After celebrating Mass at the World Cup Stadium in Daejeon on Friday morning, 15 August, the Pope travelled by helicopter to the Major Seminary of the Catholic University of Daejeon, where he was greeted by the University's Rector and had lunch with young people at the Seminary. Afterwards, Pope Francis was taken by helicopter to Solmoe, the birthplace of the first Korean priest, St Andrew Kim Taegon, who was martyred as were ten other family members including his father and grandfather. In 1996, the Diocese of Daejeon celebrated the 150th anniversary of his martyrdom by rebuilding his paternal

home and transforming it into the Shrine of Solmoe, where the Pope arrived from the heliport in the 'popemobile' at approximately 5:15 pm. The Holy Father was greeted by thousands of people along the way. Hundreds of seminarians and aspirants were gathered at the Shrine, where he was welcomed by the Rector. They prayed briefly in front of the small house before entering the 6,000-person capacity "mega tent" for his meeting with young people for the Sixth Asian Youth Day. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's address, which he delivered in English and Italian.

and address young people spontaneously, from the heart". But I have a great difficulty: I have poor English! [No!, No!] Yes, Yes! But if you wish, I can say other things spontaneously. [Yes!] Are you tired? [No!] May I go on? [Yes!] But I will do so in Italian. [to the interpreter] Will you translate? Thank you.

What Marina said really struck me: about the conflict she felt in her life. What to do in this situation? Take up the path of consecrated life, religious life, or study to be better able to help others.

This is only an apparent conflict, because when the Lord calls, he always does so for the good of others, whether it is through the religious life, the consecrated life, or as a lay person, as the father or mother of a family. The goal is the same: to worship God and to do good to others. What should Marina do, and the many others of you who are asking the same question? I once asked it myself: What path should I choose? But you do not have to choose any path! The Lord must choose it! Jesus has chosen it! You have to listen to him and ask: "Lord, what should I do?"

This is the prayer that a young person should make: "Lord, what do you want from me?" With prayer and the advice of some good friends – laity, priests, religious sisters, bishops, popes (even the Pope can offer some good advice!) – you can find the path that the Lord wants for you.

Let us pray together! [to the interpreter: Have them repeat in Korean: Lord, what do you want from my life? Three times.] Let us pray!

I am sure that the Lord will listen to you. And to you, Marina, I am sure of it! Thank you for your witness. [...] Sorry! I got the name wrong: the question was asked by Mai, not by Marina!

Mai spoke about something else too: martyrs, saints and witness. She told us with some sadness and nostalgia about her homeland, Cambodia. There are still no saints there, but let us hope... Saints there are, and many of them! But the Church has not yet recognized, beatified or canonized any of them. I thank you very much, Mai, for expressing this. I promise that, when I return home, I will speak to the person in charge of these things, he is a good man by the name of Angelo – he is a good man, this Angelo – and I will ask him to study this matter so as to move it along. Thank you!

It is time to finish. Are you tired? [No!] Shall I go on a little? [Yes!]

Then let us turn to Marina. Marina asked two questions... not so much two questions as two reflections and a question about happiness. She told us

Dear Young Friends,

"It is good for us to be here!" (Mt 17:4). These words were spoken by Saint Peter on Mount Tabor as he stood in the presence of Jesus transfigured in glory. Truly it is good for us to be here, together, at this shrine of the Korean Martyrs, in whom the Lord's glory was revealed at the dawn of the Church's life in this country. In this great assembly, which brings together young Christians from throughout Asia, we can

other people's hearts, inviting them to welcome him into their lives.

This great gathering of Asian young people also allows us to see something of what the Church herself is meant to be in God's eternal plan. Together with young people everywhere, you want to help build a world where we all live together in peace and friendship, overcoming barriers, healing divisions, rejecting violence and prejudice. And this is exactly what God wants for us. The

go forth and bear witness to the Gospel of hope, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the promise of his Kingdom – this is your theme, Marina, and I will speak about it shortly. In the parables, Jesus tells us that the Kingdom comes into the world quietly, growing silently yet surely wherever it is welcomed by hearts open to its message of hope and salvation. The Gospel teaches us that the Spirit of Jesus can bring new life to every human heart and can transform every situation, even the most apparently hopeless. Jesus can transform all situations! This is the message which you are called to share with your contemporaries: at school, in the workplace, in your families, your universities and your communities. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we know that he has "the words of eternal life" (Jn 6:68), that his word has the power to touch every heart, to conquer evil with good, and to change and redeem the world.

Dear young friends, in this generation the Lord is counting on you! He is counting on you! He entered your hearts on the day of your Baptism; he gave you his Spirit on the day of your Confirmation; and he strengthens you constantly by his presence in the Eucharist, so that you can be his witnesses before the world. Are you ready to say "yes"? [Yes!] Are you ready? [Yes!] Thank you! Are you tired? [No!] Really? [Yes!]

A good friend of mine told me yesterday: "You cannot speak to the young with paper; you must speak



almost feel the glory of Jesus present in our midst, present in his Church which embraces every nation, language and people, present in the power of his Holy Spirit who makes all things new, young and alive!

I thank you for your warm welcome: your very warm welcome! I also thank you for the gift of your enthusiasm, your joyful songs, your testimonies of faith, and your beautiful expressions of the variety and richness of your different cultures. In a special way, I thank Mai, John and Marina, the three young people who shared with me your hopes, your problems and concerns; I listened to them carefully, and I will keep them in mind. I thank Bishop Lazzaro You Heung-sik for his words of introduction and I greet all of you from my heart.

This afternoon I would like to reflect with you on part of the theme of this Sixth Asian Youth Day: "The Glory of the Martyrs Shines on You". Just as the Lord made his glory shine forth in the heroic witness of the martyrs, so too he wants to make his glory shine in your lives, and through you, to light up the life of this vast continent. Today Christ is knocking at the door of your heart, of my heart. He calls you and me to rise, to be wide awake and alert, and to see the things in life that really matter. What is more, he is asking you and me to go out on the highways and byways of this world, knocking on the doors of

Church is meant to be a seed of unity for the whole human family. In Christ, all nations and peoples are called to a unity which does not destroy diversity but acknowledges, reconciles and enriches it.

How distant the spirit of the world seems from that magnificent vision and plan! How often the seeds of goodness and hope which we try to sow seem to be choked by weeds of selfishness, hostility and injustice, not only all around us, but also in our own hearts. We are troubled by the growing gap in our societies between rich and poor. We see signs of an idolatry of wealth, power and pleasure which come at a high cost to human lives. Closer to home, so many of our own friends and contemporaries, even in the midst of immense material prosperity, are suffering from spiritual poverty, loneliness and quiet despair. God seems to be removed from the picture. It is almost as though a spiritual desert is beginning to spread throughout our world. It affects the young too, robbing them of hope and even, in all too many cases, of life itself.

Yet this is the world into which you are called to



Beatification Mass for Paul Yun Ji-chung and his 123 companions

The legacy of martyrdom

And the importance, dignity and beauty of the lay vocation

On Saturday morning, 16 August, his third day in Korea, the Pope left the Nunciature in Seoul by car at approximately 8:45 en route to the Shrine of the Martyrs of Seo So Mun, which was built on the site of the execution of 109 Korean Catholic martyrs, who were canonized by Pope John Paul II on 6 May 1984. Pope Francis was joined there in silent prayer by two

young people who helped him place a floral wreath. From there, the Holy Father went by car to the Gwanghwamun Gate, a landmark of ancient and modern Korea with a capacity of 500 thousand people. There in the "popenobile" he circulated among the faithful before entering the Sacristy. At approximately 10:00 am he celebrated the Holy Mass for the Beatification of Paul

Yun Ji-chung and his 123 martyr companions at the Gwanghwamun Gate. This is the third time that the Korean Church has celebrated the beatification of its own martyrs. The Beatification Ceremony was performed in Latin and Korean. The following is the English text of the Pope's Homily, which was delivered in Italian.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? (Rom 8:35). With these words, Saint Paul speaks of the glory of our faith in Jesus: not only has Christ risen from the dead and ascended to heaven, but he has united us to himself and he grants us a share in his eternal life. Christ is victorious and his victory is ours!

Today we celebrate this victory in Paul Yun Ji-chung and his 123 companions. Their names now stand alongside those of the holy martyrs Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong Hasang and companions, to whom I just paid homage. All of them lived and died for Christ, and now they reign with him in joy and in glory. With St Paul, they tell us that, in the death and resurrection of his Son, God has granted us the greatest victory of all. For "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:38-39).

The victory of the martyrs, their witness to the power of God's love, continues to bear fruit today in Korea, in the Church which received growth from their sacrifice. Our celebration of Blessed Paul and his Companions provides us with the opportunity to return to the first moments, the infancy as it were, of the Church in Korea. It invites you, the Catholics of Korea, to



remember the great things which God has wrought in this land and to treasure the legacy of faith and charity entrusted to you by your forebears.

In God's mysterious providence, the Christian faith was not brought to the shores of Korea through missionaries; rather, it entered through the hearts and minds of the Korean people themselves. It was prompted by intellectual curiosity, the search for religious truth. Through an initial encounter with the Gospel, the first Korean Christians opened their minds to Jesus. They wanted to know more about this Christ who suffered, died, and rose from the dead. Learning about Jesus soon led to an encounter with the Lord, the first baptisms, the yearning for a full sacramental and ecclesial life, and the beginnings of missionary outreach. It also bore fruit in communities inspired by the early Church, in which the believers were truly one in mind and heart, regardless of traditional social differences, and held all things in common (cf. Acts 4:32).

This history tells us much about the importance, the dignity and the beauty of the vocation of the laity. I greet the many lay faithful present, and in particular the Christian families who daily by their example teach the faith and the reconciling love of Christ to our young. In a special way, too, I greet the many priests present; by their dedicated ministry they pass on the rich patrimony of faith cultivated by past generations of Korean Catholics.

Today's Gospel contains an important message for all of us. Jesus asks the Father to consecrate us in truth, and to protect us from the world.

First of all, it is significant that, while Jesus asks the Father to consecrate and protect us, he does not ask him to take us out of the world. We know that he sends his disciples forth to be a leaven of holiness and truth in the world: the salt of the earth, the

light of the world. In this, the martyrs show us the way.

Soon after the first seeds of faith were planted in this land, the martyrs and the Christian community had to choose between following Jesus or the world. They had heard the Lord's warning that the world would hate them because of him (Jn 17:14); they knew the cost of discipleship. For many, this meant persecution, and later flight to the mountains, where they formed Catholic villages. They were willing to make great sacrifices and let themselves be stripped of whatever kept them from Christ – possessions and land, prestige and honor – for

they knew that Christ alone was their true treasure.

So often we today can find our faith challenged by the world, and in countless ways we are asked to compromise our faith, to water down the radical demands of the Gospel and to conform to the spirit of this age. Yet the martyrs call out to us to put Christ first and to see all else in this world in relation to him and his eternal Kingdom. They challenge us to think about what, if anything, we ourselves would be willing to die for.

The example of the martyrs also teaches us the importance of charity in the life of faith. It was the purity of their witness to Christ, expressed in an acceptance of the equal dignity of all the baptized, which led them to a form of fraternal life that challenged the rigid social structures of their day. It was their refusal to separate the twin commandment of love of God and love of neighbor which impelled them to such great solicitude for the needs of the brethren. Their example has much to say to us who live in societies where, alongside immense wealth, dire poverty is silently growing; where the cry of the poor is seldom heeded; and where Christ continues to call out to us, asking us to love and serve him by tending to our brothers and sisters in need.

If we follow the lead of the martyrs and take the Lord at his word, then we will understand the sublime freedom and joy with which they went to their



death. We will also see today's celebration as embracing the countless anonymous martyrs, in this country and throughout the world, who, especially in the last century, gave their lives for Christ or suffered grave persecution for his name.

Today is a day of great rejoicing for all Koreans. The heritage of Blessed Paul Yun Ji-chung and his companions – their integrity in the search for truth, their fidelity to the highest principles of the religion which they chose to embrace, and their testimony of charity and solidarity with all – these are part of the rich history of the Korean people. The legacy of the martyrs can inspire all men and women of good will to work in harmony for a more just, free and reconciled society, thus contributing to peace and the protection of authentically human values in this country and in our world.

May the prayers of all the Korean martyrs, in union with those of Our Lady, Mother of the Church, obtain for us the grace of perseverance in faith and in every good work, holiness and purity of heart, and apostolic zeal in bearing witness to Jesus in this beloved country, throughout Asia, and to the ends of the earth. Amen.

Paul Yun Ji-chung and his 123 companions

First generation of martyrs

Martyrs are not only the seed of Christians, but also the foundation of the Church in Korea. From the very beginnings of evangelization in those lands, in fact, the community's history has been characterized by violent persecution and by heroic testimony by the baptized. It was also this way for Paul Yun Ji-chung and his 123 companion martyrs, who Pope Francis beatified on Saturday morning, 16 August, at the Gwanghwamun Gate in Seoul, during his visit to the Asian country.

This was the third time the Korean Church has celebrated the beatification of its sons: on 5 July 1925, Pius XI proclaimed blessed 79 who were killed during the persecutions between 1939 and 1846; on 6 October 1968, Paul VI likewise elevated 24 others who died during the persecutions of 1866. These blessed, the most famous of whom is St Andrew Kim Taegon, the first Korean priest, were all canonized

together by John Paul II on 6 May 1984 in Seoul.

The difference between the two previous groups of martyrs lies in the fact that Paul Yun Ji-chung and his 123 companions constitute the first generation of Catholic Koreans. Indeed, their stories embrace the years of persecution from 1791 to 1888. Those who were canonized by Pope Wojtyła belong, on the other hand, to the second generation. One must go back to the latter half of the 18th century to find the roots of evangelization in Korea. It was in that period that several members of the embassy to the Imperial Court of Peking met Catholic missionaries and, struck by the message of Jesus, were baptized. Upon their return to Korea, they began to spread the Gospel and baptize their compatriots. Government authorities, however, were immediately very mistrustful with regard to the rapid diffusion of the Catholic faith, considered fruit of Western culture which could

impact order in a country rooted in Confucianism and Buddhist beliefs.

The first persecutions against the Church occurred during the period of 1791-1793. The fuse was lit when Bishop Alexandre de Gouvea of Peking refused to perform Confucian ancestral rites. The deaths of Paul Yun Ji-chung and his cousin James Kwon Sang-yeon occurred during this period. The former, a married nobleman with one daughter, was baptized in 1787. He was arrested by government authorities because of his refusal to carry out his mother's funeral according to traditional rites and his decision to burn ancestral tablets. He managed to hide in Gwangheon but the magistrate of Jinsan had his uncle arrested in order to recapture him. Thus, in October 1791, he was brought before the judge. Despite pressure and violence he refused to deny his faith; for this, the king ordered his decapitation, which was

carried out that 8 December at the Church of Jeondong in Jeonju.

Other martyrs, often of noble lineage, suffered the same fate. The group includes only one priest, Fr James Zhou Wen-mo, of Chinese descent, the first missionary to go to Korea. His death occurred later, on 31 May 1801. He had entered the country in December 1794 and celebrated the first Mass in those lands. With his evangelization the community of the baptized managed to grow substantially, reaching 10,000 only six years after his arrival.

In 1801 an edict of the king legalized the persecution of Christians, considered State criminals. It became easy to arrest, torture and kill them in the name of the law. Fr James sought to calm the violence against Catholics by surrendering to the authorities, who, realizing that they would not manage to draw information from him about where Christians were hiding, sentenced him to decapitation.

With the religious community in Kkottongnae

Experts in Divine Mercy

Poverty is both a wall and a mother

Following the Beatification Mass at the Gwanghwamun Gate in Seoul on Saturday morning, 16 August, Pope Francis returned to the Nunciature, where he had lunch with the papal entourage before going on by helicopter to Kkottongnae. Then he continued by car to the "House of Hope", a shelter for the poor and for neglected sick people. In addition to the several thousands of faithful present, Pope Francis was welcomed by Kkottongnae Founder, Fr. John Oh Woong-jin, by Bishop Gabriel Chang Bong-tan of Cheongju and several local authorities. Fr. Oh Woong-jin accompanied him to the House of Hope, where he met about 150 adult patients and some 50 disabled children from a nearby centre, and nursing staff. Upon entering, according to custom, the Pope removed his shoes out of respect for the centre's infirm. The Holy Father was treated to a short musical production by the children, who

also presented him with several handmade gifts, while he interacted with them informally. Afterwards, on his way to the "School of Love" Training Center, the Pope Francis stopped to greet Korean Pro-Life activists and Bro. Lee Gu-noon, a missionary without limbs, in a brief prayer at the cemetery for aborted babies. At the School of Love, the Pope was greeted by the two Presidents of the men's and women's Associations of General Superiors of Korea. During the celebration of Vespers various prayers were offered, including one for the reconciliation and union of North and South Korea. The Holy Father gave the following address, which was delivered in Italian after Vespers. The following is the English text of the Pope's address.

Good evening! We have a little problem. If there is one thing that we should never neglect, it is prayer; but today we will pray individually. I'll tell you why we can't pray Vespers together: it is because we have a problem with departure of the helicopter. If we do not leave on time, we'll be in danger of crashing! So we'll just say a brief prayer to Our Lady. All together, let us pray to the Blessed Mother. Then the two Presidents will speak and I will do so after them.

Hail Mary...

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

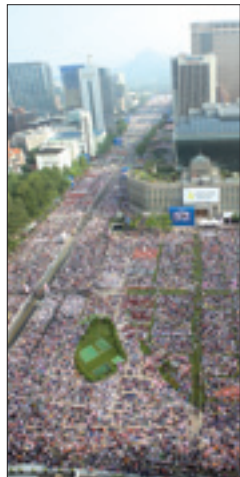
I greet you all with affection in the Lord. It is good to be with you today and to share these moments of communion. The great variety of charisms and apostolates which you represent wondrously enriches the life of the Church in Korea and beyond. In this setting of the celebration of Vespers where we have sung – we should have sung! – the praise of God's goodness, I thank you, and all of your brothers and sisters, for your efforts to build up God's Kingdom. I thank Father

light born of our personal certainty that, when everything is said and done, we are infinitely loved" (Evangelii Gaudium, 6). The firm conviction of being loved by God is at the center of your vocation: to be for others a tangible sign of the presence of God's Kingdom, a foretaste of the eternal joys of heaven. Only if our witness is joyful will we attract men and women to Christ. And this joy is a gift which is nourished by a life of prayer, meditation on the word of God, the celebration of the sacraments and life in community, which is very important. When these are lacking, weaknesses and difficulties will emerge to dampen the joy we knew so well at the beginning of our journey.

For you, as men and women consecrated to God, this joy is rooted in the mystery of the Father's mercy revealed in Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. Whether the charism of your Institute is directed more to contemplation or to the active life, you are challenged to become "experts" in divine mercy precisely through your life in community. From experience I know that community life is not always easy, but it is a providential training ground for the heart. It is unrealistic not to expect conflicts; misunderstandings will arise and they must be faced. Despite such difficulties, it is in community life that we are called to grow in mercy, forbearance and perfect charity.

The experience of God's mercy, nourished by prayer and community, must shape all that you are, all that you do. Your chastity, poverty and obedience will be a joyful witness to God's love in the measure that you stand firmly on the rock of his mercy. That is the rock. This is certainly the case with religious obedience. Mature and generous obedience requires that

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Guardians of memory and hope

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those in need to its institutional dimension alone, while overlooking each individual's need to grow as a person – their right to grow as a person – and to express in a worthy manner his or her own personality, creativity and culture. Solidarity with the poor is at the heart of the Gospel; it has to be seen as an essential element of the Christian life; through preaching and catechesis grounded in the rich patrimony of the Church's social teaching, it must penetrate the hearts and minds of the faithful and be reflected in every aspect of ecclesial life. The apostolic ideal of a Church of and for the poor, a poor Church for the poor, found eloquent expression in the

first Christian communities of your nation. I pray that this ideal will continue to shape the pilgrim path of the Church in Korea as she looks to the future. I am convinced that if the face of the Church is first and foremost a face of love, more and more young people will be drawn to the heart of Jesus ever aflame with divine love in the communion of his mystical body.

I have said that the poor are at the heart of the Gospel; they are present there from beginning to end. In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus made this clear at the outset of his ministry. And when in *Matthew 25* he speaks of the latter days, and reveals the criterion by which we will all be judged, there too we find the poor. There is a danger, a tempta-

tion which arises in times of prosperity: it is the danger that the Christian community becomes just another "part of society", losing its mystical dimension, losing its ability to celebrate the Mystery and instead becoming a spiritual organization, Christian and with Christian values, but lacking the leaven of prophecy. When this happens, the poor no longer have their proper role in the Church. This is a temptation from which particular Churches, Christian communities, have suffered greatly over the centuries; in some cases they become so middle class that the poor even feel ashamed to be a part of them. It is the temptation of spiritual "prosperity", pastoral prosperity. No longer is it a poor Church for the poor but rather a rich

Church for the rich, or a middle class Church for the well-to-do. Nor is this anything new: the temptation was there from the beginning. Paul had to rebuke the Corinthians in his First Letter (11:17), while the Apostle James was even more severe and explicit (2:1-7): he had to rebuke these affluent communities, affluent Churches for affluent people. They were not excluding the poor, but the way they were living made the poor reluctant to enter, they did not feel at home. This is the temptation of prosperity. I am not admonishing you because I know that you are doing good work. As a brother, however, who has the duty to confirm his brethren in the faith, I am telling you: be careful, because yours is a Church which is prospering, a great missionary Church, a great Church. The devil must not be allowed to sow these weeds, this temptation to remove the poor from very prophetic structure of the Church and to make you become an affluent Church for the affluent, a Church of the well-to-do – perhaps not to the point of developing a "theology of prosperity" – but a Church of mediocrity.

Dear brothers, a prophetic witness to the Gospel presents particular challenges to the Church in Korea, since she carries out her life and ministry amid a prosperous, yet increasingly secularized and materialistic society. In such circumstances it is tempting for pastoral ministers to adopt not only effective models of management, planning and organization drawn from the business world, but also a lifestyle and mentality guided more by worldly criteria of success, and indeed power, than by the criteria which Jesus sets out in the Gospel. Woe to us if the cross is emptied of its power to guide the wisdom of this world (cf. *1 Cor 1:17*)! I urge you and your brother priests to reject this temptation in all its forms. May we be saved from that spiritual and pastoral worldliness which stifles the Spirit, replaces conversion by complacency, and, in the process, dissipates all missionary fervor (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 93-97)!

Dear brother Bishops, thank you for all that you do. Thank you! With these reflections on your role as guardians of memory and of hope, I want to encourage you in your efforts to build up the faithful in Korea in unity, holiness and zeal. Memory and hope inspire us and guide us toward the future. I remember all of you in my prayers and I urge you constantly to trust in the power of God's grace. Never forget: "The Lord is faithful". We are not, but he is. "He will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one" (*2 Thess 3:3*). May the prayers of Mary, Mother of the Church, bring to full flower in this land the seeds planted by the martyrs, watered by generations of faithful Catholics, and handed down to you as a pledge for the future of your country and of our world. To you, and to all entrusted to your pastoral care and keeping, I cordially impart my blessing and I ask you, please, to pray for me. Thank you.

One family

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something very true: you cannot purchase happiness. Whenever you buy happiness, you soon realize that it has vanished: The happiness you buy does not last. Only the happiness of love is the kind that lasts.

The path of love is simple: love God and love your neighbor, your brother or sister, the one at your side, who needs love and so many other things. "But Father, how do I know that I love God?" Only if you love your neighbor, if you do not hate your neighbor and do not harbor hatred in your heart, do you love God. This is the sure proof.

And then Marina went on to ask a question, one which I understand. It is a painful question and I thank her for asking it: the division of brothers and sisters in the Koreas. Are there two Koreas? No, there is only one, but it is divided; the family is divided. This pain exists... How can we help the family to be reunited? I would say these two things: first, a word of advice, and then, a word of hope.

First, my advice is to pray; to pray for our brothers and sisters in the North: "Lord, we are one family, help us. Help us to be united. You can do it. Let there not be winners and losers but only one family, only brothers and sisters". Now I invite you all to pray together – after the translation – in silence, for the unity of the two Koreas. In silence let us pray. [silence]

Now, a word of hope. What is hope? There are so many forms of hope, but here is one which is really beautiful! Korea is one; it is a family. You all speak the same language, the language of one family; you are brothers and sisters who speak the same language. [In the Bible,] when the brothers of Joseph went down to Egypt to buy some food – they were hungry, they had money, but they had nothing to eat – they went there to buy food and they found a brother! How? Because Joseph realized that they spoke his language. Think about



your brothers and sisters in the North: they speak the same language and when a same language is spoken in a family, there is room for hope.

Just now we saw something beautiful, that sketch of the prodigal son, the son who left home, spent all his money, everything he had, betrayed his father and his family, betrayed everything. At a certain moment, out of necessity, but full of shame, he decided to return. He thought about how he would ask for his father's forgiveness. He thought he would say: "Father, I have sinned, I have done all these wrong things, so I want to be your servant, not your son", and lots of other fine things.

But the Gospel tells us that the father saw his son coming from afar. Why did he see him? Because every day he used to go out onto the terrace to see if his son would return. The father embraced him: he did not let his son speak; he did not let him say all that he had rehearsed, and he did not allow him to even ask for forgiveness. Then he went off to organize a party. This is the party that God enjoys: whenever we return home, whenever we return to him. "But Father, I am a sinful man, a sinful woman...". All the better, he is waiting for you! All the better, and he will throw a party! Jesus himself tells us that there will be more celebration in heaven over one sinner who turns back than for a hundred of the righteous who remain at home.

None of us knows what life will bring us. And you, dear young friends, are asking: "What is in store for me?" We are capable of doing bad things, very bad things, but please, do not despair: the Father is always there waiting for us! Come back! Come back! This is the word: Come back! Come back home because the Father is waiting for me. And if I am a great sinner, he will celebrate the more. And you priests, please, embrace sinners and be merciful.

To hear this is something beautiful. It is something that brings me great happiness, to know that God never tires of forgiving; he never tires of waiting for us.

I had written three suggestions but I have talked about them: prayer, the Eucharist, and helping others, for the poor.

Now it is time for me to go. I look forward to seeing you in these days and speaking to you again when we gather for Holy Mass on Sunday. For now, let us thank the Lord for the blessings of this time together and ask him for the strength to be faithful and joyful witnesses of his love throughout Asia and the entire world.

May Mary, our Mother, watch over you and keep you ever close to Jesus her Son. And from his place in heaven, may Saint John Paul II, who initiated the World Youth Days, always be your guide. With great affection I give you my blessing. And please, pray for me, don't forget: pray for me! Thank you very much!

The Pope encourages the commitment of the laity and honours the contribution of women

The dignity of earning daily bread

After the celebration of Vespers on Saturday, 16 August, the Holy Father concluded his afternoon in Kkottongnae by meeting with members the Lay Apostolate at the Spirituality Center, where about 150 people had gathered in the Chapel, and where he was greeted by the President of the Catholic Lay Apostolate Council. Before leaving Kkottongnae to return to Seoul for the night, he addressed the group in Italian. The following is the English text of his address.



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am grateful to have this opportunity to meet you, who represent the many expressions of the flourishing apostolate of the laity in Korea: it has always flourished! It continues to flourish! I thank the President of the Catholic Lay Apostolate Council, Mr Paul Kwon Kil-joog, for his kind words of welcome in your name.

The Church in Korea, as we all know, is heir to the faith of generations of lay persons who persevered in the love of Christ Jesus and the communion of the Church despite the scarcity of priests and the threat of severe persecution. Blessed Paul Yun Ji-chung and the martyrs beatified today represent an impressive chapter of this history. They bore witness to the faith not only by their suffering and death, but by their lives of loving solidarity with one

another in Christian communities marked by exemplary charity.

This precious legacy lives on in your own works of faith, charity and service. Today, as ever, the Church needs credible lay witnesses to the saving truth of the Gospel, its power to purify and transform human hearts, and its fruitfulness for building up the human family in unity, justice and peace. We know there is but one mission of the Church of God, and that every baptized Christian has a vital part in this mission. Your gifts as lay men and women are manifold and your apostolates varied, yet all that you do is meant to advance the Church's mission by ensuring that the temporal order is permeated and perfected by Christ's Spirit and ordered to the coming of his Kingdom.

In a particular way, I wish to acknowledge the work of the many societies and associations directly engaged in outreach to the poor and those in need. As the example of the first Korean Christians shows, the fruitfulness of faith is expressed in concrete solidarity with our brothers and sisters, without paying any attention to their culture or social status, for in Christ "there is no Greek or Jew" (Gal 3:28). I am deeply grateful to those of you who by your work and witness bring the Lord's consoling presence to people living on the peripheries of our society. This activity should not be limited to charitable assistance, but must also extend to a practical concern for human growth. Not just charitable assistance, but personal development. To assist the poor is good and necessary, but it is not

enough. I encourage you to multiply your efforts in the area of human promotion, so that every man and every woman can know the joy which comes from the dignity of earning their daily bread and supporting their family. This dignity is presently under threat by a cult of money which leaves many people without work... We might say: "But Father, we are making sure that they are fed". But this is not enough! The unemployed, whether men or women, must also sense the dignity which comes from providing for their household, of being breadwinners! I entrust this task to you.

I wish also to acknowledge the outstanding contribution made by Korean Catholic women to the life and mission of the Church in this country as mothers of families, as catechists and teachers, and in countless other ways. Similarly, I can only stress the importance of the witness given by Christian families. At a time of great crisis for family life – as we are all aware – our Christian communities are called to support married couples and families in fulfilling their proper mission in the life of the Church and society. The family remains the basic unit of society and the first school in which children learn the human, spiritual and moral values which enable them to be a beacon of goodness, integrity and justice in our communities.

Dear friends, whatever your particular contribution to the Church's mission, I ask you to continue to promote in your communities a more complete formation of the lay faithful through ongoing catechesis and spiritual direction. In all that you do, I ask you to work in complete harmony of mind and heart with your pastors, striving to place your own insights, talents and charisms at the service of the Church's growth in unity and missionary outreach. Your contribution is essential, for the future of the Church in Korea – as throughout Asia – will depend in large part on the development of an ecclesiological vision grounded in a spirituality of communion, participation and the sharing of gifts (cf. *Ecclesia in Asia*, 45).

Once again I express my gratitude for all that you do for the building up of the Church in Korea in holiness and zeal. May you draw constant inspiration and strength for your apostolates from the Eucharistic sacrifice, wherein "that love of God and of humanity which is the soul of the apostolate is communicated and nourished" (*Lumen Gentium*, 33). Upon you and your families, and all who take part in the corporal and spiritual works of your parishes, associations and movements, I invoke joy and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ and the loving protection of Mary, our Mother.

I ask you, please, to pray for me. And now, together, let us all pray to the Blessed Mother, and then I will give you my blessing.

Hail Mary... [followed by the blessing]

Thank you and pray for me. Don't forget!

Experts in Divine Mercy

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you cling in prayer to Christ who, taking the form of a servant, learned obedience through what he suffered (cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 14). There are no shortcuts: God desires our hearts completely and this means we have to "let go" and "go out" of ourselves more and more.

A lively experience of the Lord's steadfast mercy also sustains the desire to achieve that perfection of charity which is born of purity of heart. Chastity expresses your single-minded dedication to the love of God who is "the strength of our hearts". We all know what a personal and demanding commitment this entails. Temptations in this area call for humble trust in God, vigilance, perseverance and opening our heart to that wise brother or sister whom the Lord puts on our path.

Through the evangelical counsel of poverty you are able to recognize God's mercy not only as a source of strength, but also as a treasure. It seems contradictory, but being poor means finding a treasure. Even when we are weary, we can

offer him our hearts burdened by sin and weakness; at those times when we feel most helpless, we can reach out to Christ, "who made himself poor in order that we might become rich" (cf. 2 Cor 8:9). This fundamental need of ours to be forgiven and healed is itself a form of poverty which we must never lose sight of, no matter how many advances we make in virtue. It should also find concrete expression in your lifestyle, both as individuals and as communities. I think in particular of the need to avoid all those things which can distract you and cause bewilderment and scandal to others. In the consecrated life, poverty is both a "wall" and a "mother". It is a "wall" because it protects the consecrated life, a "mother" because it helps it to grow and guides it along the right path. The hypocrisy of those consecrated men and women who profess vows of poverty, yet live like the rich, wounds the souls of the faithful and harms the Church. Think, too, of how dangerous a temptation it is to adopt a purely functional, worldly mentality which leads to pla-

cing our hope in human means alone and destroys the witness of poverty which our Lord Jesus Christ lived and taught us. Here I wish to thank your Presidents, because both of them have rightly mentioned the threat that globalization and consumerism pose to religious poverty. Thank you.

Dear brothers and sisters, with great humility, do all that you can to show that the consecrated life is a precious gift to the Church and to the world. Do not keep it to yourselves; share it, bringing Christ to every corner of this beloved country. Let your joy continue to find expression in your efforts to attract and nurture vocations, and recognize that all of you have some part in forming the consecrated men and women of tomorrow. Whether you are given more to contemplation or to the apostolic life, be zealous in your love of the Church in Korea and your desire to contribute, through your own specific charism, to its mission of proclaiming the Gospel and building up God's people in unity, holiness and love.

I commend all of you to the loving care of Mary, Mother of the Church, and in a particular way I offer a heartfelt greeting to the aged and infirm members of your communities. And I cordially give you my blessing: May Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, bless you all.



With the Bishops of Asia at the Shrine of Haemi

How to dialogue

Not to conquer but to walk together

On Sunday morning, 17 August, Pope Francis began his day with a helicopter flight from Seoul to the town of Haemi, in the diocese of Daejeon, where he was welcomed informally by local Authorities. At the Shrine of Haemi, also known as the Shrine of Unknown Martyrs, at the main entrance to the Church, the Pope was met by the Rector, while Bishops from throughout Asia and other guest prelates awaited him inside. His Meeting with the Bishops of Asia began with a recitation of the Midday Prayer in English, followed by a greeting by Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Mumbai and President of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences. Before individual introductions of the Bishops present, Pope Francis delivered his address in Italian. The following is the English text.

I offer you a warm and fraternal greeting in the Lord as we gather together at this holy site where so many Christians gave their lives in fidelity to Christ. I have been told that some are nameless martyrs, since we do not know all their names: they are saints without a name. But this makes me think about the many, many holy Christians in our churches: children and young people, men, women, elderly persons... so very many of them! We do not know their names, but they are saints. It is good for us to think of these ordinary people who are persevering in their lives as Christians, and the Lord alone recognizes their sanctity. Their testimony of charity has brought blessings and graces not only to the Church in Korea but also beyond; may their prayers help us to be faithful shepherds of the souls entrusted to our care. I thank Cardinal Gracias for his kind words of welcome and for the work of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences in fostering solidarity and promoting effective pastoral outreach in your local Churches.

On this vast continent which is home to a great variety of cultures, the Church is called to be versatile and creative in her witness to the Gospel through dialogue and openness to all. This is the challenge before you! Dialogue, in fact, is an essential part of the mission of the Church in Asia (cf. *Ecclesia in Asia*, 29). But in undertaking the path of dialogue with individuals and cultures, what should be our point of departure and our fundamental point of reference, which guides us to our destination? Surely it is our own identity, our identity as Christians. We cannot engage in real dialogue unless we are conscious of our

own identity. We can't dialogue, we can't start dialoguing from nothing, from zero, from a foggy sense of who we are. Nor can there be authentic dialogue unless we are capable of opening our minds and hearts, in empathy and sincere receptivity, to those with whom we speak. In other words, an attentiveness in which the Holy Spirit is our guide. A clear sense of one's own identity and a capacity for empathy are thus the point of departure for all dialogue. If we are to speak freely, openly and fruitfully with others, we must be clear about who we are, what God has done for us, and what it is that he asks of us. And if our communication is not to be a monologue, there has to be openness of heart and mind to accepting individuals and cultures. Fearlessly, for fear is the enemy of this kind of openness.

The task of appropriating and expressing our identity does not always prove easy, however, since – being sinners – we will always be tempted by the spirit of the world, which shows itself in a variety of ways. I would like to point to three of these. One is the deceptive light of relativism, which obscures the splendor of truth and, shaking the earth beneath our feet, pulls us toward the shifting sands of confusion and despair. It is a temptation which nowadays also affects Christian communities, causing people to forget that in a world of rapid and disorienting change, “there is much that is unchanging, much that has its ultimate foundation in Christ, who is



the same yesterday, and today, and forever” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 10; cf. *Heb* 13:8). Here I am not speaking about relativism merely as a system of thought, but about that everyday practical relativism which almost imperceptibly saps our sense of identity.

A second way in which the world threatens the solidity of our Christian identity is superficiality, a tendency to toy with the latest fads, gadgets and distractions, rather than attending to the things that really matter (cf. *Phil* 1:10). In a culture which glorifies the ephemeral, and

Faith by nature is not self-absorbed; it “goes out”. It seeks understanding; it gives rise to testimony; it generates mission. In this sense, faith enables us to be both fearless and unassuming in our witness of hope and love

offers so many avenues of avoidance and escape, this can present a serious pastoral problem. For the ministers of the Church, it can also make itself felt in an enchantment with pastoral programs and theories, to the detriment of direct, fruitful encounter with our faithful, and others too, especially the young who need solid catechesis and sound spiritual guidance. Without a grounding in Christ, the truths by which we live our lives can gradually recede, the practice of the virtues can become formalistic, and dialogue can be reduced to a form of negotiation or an agreement to disagree. An agreement to disagree... so as not to make waves.... This sort of superficiality does us great harm.

Then too, there is a third temptation: that of the apparent security to be found in hiding behind easy answers, ready formulas, rules and regulations. Jesus clashed with people who would hide behind laws, regulations and easy answers... He called them hypocrites. Faith by nature is not self-absorbed; it “goes out”. It seeks understanding; it gives rise to testimony; it generates mission. In this sense, faith enables us to be both fearless and unassuming in our witness of hope and love. Saint Peter tells us that we should be ever ready to respond to all who ask the reason for the hope within us (cf. *1 Pet* 3:15). Our identity as Christians is ultimately seen in our quiet efforts to worship God alone, to love one

another, to serve one another, and to show by our example not only what we believe, but also what we hope for, and the One in whom we put our trust (cf. *2 Tim* 1:12).

Once again, it is our living faith in Christ which is our deepest identity, our being rooted in the Lord. If we have this, everything else is secondary. It is from this deep identity – our being grounded in a living faith in Christ – it is from this profound reality that our dialogue begins, and this is what we are asked to share, sincerely, honestly and without pretence, in the dialogue of everyday life, in the dialogue of charity, and in those more formal opportunities which may present themselves. Because Christ is our life (cf. *Phil* 1:21), let us speak “from him and of him” readily and without hesitation or fear. The simplicity of his word becomes evident in the simplicity of our lives, in the simplicity of our communication, in the simplicity of our works of loving service to our brothers and sisters.

I would now touch on one further aspect of our Christian identity. It is fruitful. Because it is born of, and constantly nourished by, the grace of our dialogue with the Lord and the promptings of his Spirit, it bears a harvest of justice, goodness and peace. Let me ask you, then, about the fruits which it is bearing in your own lives and in the lives of the communities entrusted to your care. Does the Christian identity of your particular Churches shine forth in your programs of catechesis and youth ministry, in your service to the poor and those languishing on the margins of our prosperous societies, and in your efforts to nourish vocations to the priesthood and the religious life? Does it make itself felt in their fruitfulness? This is a question I raise, for each of you to think about.

Finally, together with a clear sense of our own Christian identity, authentic dialogue also demands a capacity for empathy. For dialogue to take place, there has to be this empathy. We are challenged to listen not only to the words which others speak, but to the unspoken communication of their experiences, their hopes and aspirations, their struggles and their deepest concerns. Such empathy must be the fruit of our spiritual insight and personal experience, which lead us to see others as brothers and sisters, and to



Concluding Mass for the Sixth Continental gathering

Duty and responsibility

Young people of Asia, Wake up!

On Sunday afternoon, 17 August, Pope Francis arrived at Haemi Castle to celebrate Holy Mass for the conclusion of the Sixth Asian Youth Day. Before his arrival at the Sacristy, the Holy Father travelled in the popemobile among the faithful, comprised of young people from at least 22 nations of Asia. The Mass, which began at approximately 4:30, was celebrated in Latin and in various Asian languages. The Pope delivered the Homily in English and was interpreted into Korean; it was also broadcast by radio

in other Asian languages. At the end of the Mass, Bishop Peter Kang U-il of Cheju, President of CBCK, bid farewell to the Holy Father, and Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Mumbai and President of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, announced the date and place of the next Asian Youth Day. After the concluding celebrations, His Holiness returned by helicopter to Seoul, where he spent the night at the Apostolic Nunciature. The following is the Holy Father's Homily.

Dear Young Friends,

The glory of the martyrs shines upon you! These words – a part of the theme of the Sixth Asian Youth Day – console and strengthen us all. Young people of Asia: you are the heirs of a great testimony, a precious witness to Christ. He is the light of the world; he is the light of our lives! The martyrs of Korea – and innumerable others throughout Asia – handed over their bodies to their persecutors; to us they have handed on a perennial witness that the light of Christ's truth dispels all darkness, and the love of Christ is gloriously triumphant. With the certainty of his victory over death, and our participation in it, we can face the challenge of Christian discipleship today, in our own circumstances and time.

The words which we have just reflected upon are a consolation. The other part of this Day's theme – *Asian Youth! Wake up!* – speaks to you of a duty, a responsibility. Let us consider for a moment each of these words.

First, the word "Asian". You have gathered here in Korea from all parts of Asia. Each of you has a unique place and context where you are called to reflect God's love. The Asian continent, imbued with rich philosophical and religious traditions, remains a great frontier for



your testimony to Christ, "the way, and the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6). As young people not only in Asia, but also as sons and daughters of this great continent, you have a right and a duty to take full part in the life of your societies. Do not be afraid to bring the wisdom of faith to every aspect of social life!

As Asians too, you see and love, from within, all that is beautiful, noble and true in your cultures and traditions. Yet as Christians, you also know that the Gospel has the power to purify, elevate and perfect

this heritage. Through the presence of the Holy Spirit given you in Baptism and sealed within you at Confirmation, and in union with your pastors, you can appreciate the many positive values of the diverse Asian cultures. You are also able to discern what is incompatible with your Catholic faith, what is contrary to the life of grace bestowed in Baptism, and what aspects of contemporary culture are sinful, corrupt, and lead to death.

Returning to the theme of this Day, let us reflect on a second word: "Youth". You and your friends are filled with the optimism, energy and good will which are so characteristic of this period of life. Let Christ turn your natural optimism into Christian hope, your energy into moral virtue, your good will into genuine self-sacrificing love! This is the path you are called to take. This is the path to overcoming all that threatens hope, virtue and love in your lives and in your culture. In this way your youth will be a gift to Jesus and to the world.

As young Christians, whether you are workers or students, whether you have already begun a career or have answered the call to marriage, religious life or the priesthood, you are not only a part of the future of the Church; you are also a necessary and beloved part of the Church's present! You are the Church's present! Keep close to one another, draw ever closer to God, and with your bishops and priests spend these years in building a holier, more missionary and humble Church, a holier, more missionary and humble Church, a Church which loves and worships God by seeking to serve

the poor, the lonely, the infirm and the marginalized.

In your Christian lives, you will find many occasions that will tempt you, like the disciples in today's Gospel, to push away the stranger, the needy, the poor and the broken-hearted. It is these people especially who repeat the cry of the woman of the Gospel: "Lord, help me!". The Canaanite woman's plea is the cry of everyone who searches for love, acceptance, and friendship with Christ. It is the cry of so many people in our anonymous cities, the cry of so many of your own contemporaries, and the cry of all those martyrs who even today suffer persecution and death for the name of Jesus: "Lord, help me!" It is often a cry which rises from our own hearts as well: "Lord, help me!" Let us respond, not like those who push away people who make demands on us, as if serving the needy gets in the way of our being close to the Lord. No! We are to be like Christ, who responds to every plea for his help with love, mercy and compassion.

Finally, the third part of this Day's theme – "Wake up!" – This word speaks of a responsibility which the Lord gives you. It is the duty to be vigilant, not to allow the pressures, the temptations and the sins of ourselves or others to dull our sensitivity to the beauty of holiness, to the joy of the Gospel.

Each of you has a unique place and context where you are called to reflect God's love.... Do not be afraid to bring the wisdom of faith to every aspect of social life

Today's responsorial psalm invites us constantly to "be glad and sing for joy". No one who sleeps can sing, dance or rejoice. I don't like to see young people who are sleeping. No! Wake up! Go! Go Forward! Dear young people, "God, our God, has blessed us!" (Ps 67:6); from him we have "received mercy" (Rom 11:30). Assured of God's love, go out to the world so that, "by the mercy shown to you", they – your friends, co-workers, neighbors, countrymen, everyone on this great continent – "may now receive the mercy of God" (cf. Rom 11:31). It is by his mercy that we are saved.

Dear young people of Asia, it is my hope that, in union with Christ and the Church, you will take up this path, which will surely bring you much joy. Now, as we approach the table of the Eucharist, let us turn to our Mother Mary, who brought Jesus to the world. Yes, Mother Mary, we long to have Jesus; in your maternal affection help us to bring him to others, to serve him faithfully, and to honor him in every time and place, in this country and throughout Asia. Amen.

Asian youth, wake up!



Mass in the Cathedral of Seoul

A future of reconciliation and peace

One people, one language, one family

In Seoul on Monday morning, 18 August, before the Farewell Ceremony at the Apostolic Nunciature, Pope Francis left for the Myeong-Dong Cathedral, dedicated to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. In front of the old curia building, the Rector of the Cathedral welcomed him for a brief meeting with Korean Religious Leaders which began at approximately 9:00, and then accompanied him to the Cathedral's main entrance. There, the Pope celebrated Holy Mass for Peace and Reconciliation in

Korea; the Mass was celebrated in Latin and Korean, and was concelebrated with all the Bishops of Korea. The Pope's Homily was delivered in Italian. Prayers of the faithful were recited in Korean and included prayers for peace, for the places at war, for those suffering because of division, and for the poor and the marginalized. Following the Mass, the Holy Father bid farewell to the Korean Bishops individually, blessed the plaque dedicated to the new curia building and a gift was offered. Afterwards,

behind the apse the Pope went to the crypt to pray before the relics of nine martyrs killed during the persecutions of 1839 and 1866, before leaving the Cathedral for the Seoul Air Base. The Farewell Ceremony was simple. There were no speeches, only handshakes before the departure of the Pontiff's Korean Airlines flight from Seoul to Rome. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's Homily delivered during the Mass.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As my stay in Korea draws to a close, I thank God for the many blessings he has bestowed upon this beloved country, and in a special way, upon the Church in Korea. Among those blessings I especially treasure the experience we have all had in these recent days of the presence of so many young pilgrims from throughout Asia. Their love of Jesus and their enthusiasm for the spread of his Kingdom have been an inspiration to us all.

My visit now culminates in this celebration of Mass, in which we implore from God the grace of peace and reconciliation. This prayer has a particular resonance on the Korean peninsula. Today's Mass is first and

foremost a prayer for reconciliation in this Korean family. In the Gospel, Jesus tells us how powerful is our prayer when two or three of us join in asking for something (cf. *Mt 18:19-20*). How much more when an entire people raises its heartfelt plea to heaven!

The first reading presents God's promise to restore to unity and prosperity a people dispersed by disaster and division. For us, as for the people of Israel, this is a promise full of hope: it points to a future which God is even now preparing for us. Yet this promise is inseparably tied to a command: the command to return to God and wholeheartedly obey his law (cf. *Dt 30:2-3*). God's gifts of reconciliation, unity and peace are inseparably linked to the grace of conversion, a change of heart which can alter the course of our lives and our history, as individuals and as a people.

At this Mass, we naturally hear this promise in the context of the historical experience of the Korean people, an experience of division and conflict which has lasted for well over sixty years. But God's urgent summons to conversion also challenges Christ's followers in Korea to examine the quality of their own contribution to the building of a truly just and humane society. It challenges each of you to reflect on the extent to which you, as individuals and communities, show evangelical concern for the less fortunate, the marginalized, those without work and those who do not share in the prosperity of the many.



And it challenges you, as Christians and Koreans, firmly to reject a mindset shaped by suspicion, confrontation and competition, and instead to shape a culture formed by the teaching of the Gospel and the noblest traditional values of the Korean people.

In today's Gospel, Peter asks the Lord: "If my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" To which the Lord replies: "Not seven times, I tell you, but seventy times seven" (*Mt 18:21-22*). These words go to the very heart of Jesus' message of reconciliation and peace. In obedience to his command, we ask our heavenly Father daily to forgive us our

sins, "as we forgive those who sin against us". Unless we are prepared to do this, how can we honestly pray for peace and reconciliation?

Jesus asks us to believe that forgiveness is the door which leads to reconciliation. In telling us to forgive our brothers unreservedly, he is asking us to do something utterly radical, but he also gives us the grace to do it. What appears, from a human perspective, to be impossible, impractical and even at times repugnant, he makes possible and fruitful through the infinite power of his cross. The cross of Christ reveals the power of God to bridge every division, to heal every wound, and to reestablish the original bonds of brotherly love.

This, then, is the message which I leave you as I conclude my visit to Korea. Trust in the power of Christ's cross! Welcome its reconciling grace into your own hearts and share that grace with others! I ask you to bear convincing witness to Christ's message of reconciliation in your homes, in your communities and at every level of national life. I am confident that, in a spirit of friendship and cooperation with other Christians, with the followers of other religions, and with all men and women of good will concerned for the future of Korean society, you will be a leaven of the Kingdom of God in this land. Thus our prayers for peace and reconciliation will rise to God from ever more pure hearts and, by his gracious gift, obtain that precious good for which we all long.

Let us pray, then, for the emer-

Meeting with religious leaders

A journey that cannot be made alone

On Monday morning, 18 August, during the meeting with Religious Leaders in Seoul, the Pope greeted them extemporaneously in Spanish. The following is the English text.

I thank you for the kindness and affection which you have shown by coming here to meet me. Life is a journey, a long journey, but a journey which we cannot make by ourselves. We need to walk together with our brothers and sisters in the presence of God. So I thank you for this gesture of walking together in the presence of God: that is what God asked of Abraham. We are brothers and sisters. Let us acknowledge one another as brothers and sisters, and walk together. May the Lord bless you. And please, pray for me. Thank you!



How to dialogue

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

“hear”, in and beyond their words and actions, what their hearts wish to communicate. In this sense, dialogue demands of us a truly contemplative spirit of openness and receptivity to the other. I cannot engage in dialogue if I am closed to others. Openness? Even more: acceptance! Come to my house, enter my heart. My heart welcomes you. It wants to hear you. This capacity for empathy enables a true human dialogue in which words, ideas and questions arise from an experience of fraternity and shared humanity. If we want to get to the theological

basis of this, we have to go to the Father: he created us all; all of us are children of one Father. This capacity for empathy leads to a genuine encounter – we have to progress toward this culture of encounter – in which heart speaks to heart. We are enriched by the wisdom of the other and become open to travelling together the path to greater understanding, friendship and solidarity. “But, brother Pope, this is what we

are doing, but perhaps we are converting no one or very few people...” But you are doing it anyway: with your identity, you are hearing the other. What was the first commandment of God our Father to our father Abraham? “Walk in my presence and be blameless”. And so, with my identity and my empathy, my openness, I walk with the other. I don't try to make him come over to me, I don't proselytize. Pope Be-

nedict told us clearly: “The Church does not grow by proselytizing, but by attracting”. In the meantime, let us walk in the Father's presence, let us be blameless; let us practice this first commandment. That is where encounter, dialogue, will take place. With identity, with openness. It is a path to greater knowledge, friendship and solidarity. As Saint John Paul II rightly recognized, our commitment to dialogue is grounded in the very logic of the incarnation: in Jesus, God himself became one of us, shared in our life and spoke to us in our own language (cf. *Ecclesia in Asia*, 29). In this spirit of openness to others, I earnestly hope that those countries of your continent with whom the Holy See does not yet enjoy a full relationship, may not hesitate to further a dialogue for the benefit of all. I am not referring to political dialogue alone, but to fraternal dialogue... “But these Christians don't come as conquerors, they don't come to take away our identity: they bring us their own, but they want to walk with us”. And the Lord will grant his grace: sometimes he will move hearts and someone will ask for baptism, sometimes not. But always let us walk together. This is the heart of dialogue.

Dear brothers, I thank you for your warm and fraternal welcome. When we look out at the great Asian continent, with its vast expanses of land, its ancient cultures and traditions, we are aware that, in God's plan, your Christian communities are indeed a *pusillus grex*, a small flock which nonetheless is charged to bring the light of the Gospel to the ends of the earth. A true mustard seed! A very small seed... May the Good Shepherd, who knows and loves each of his sheep, guide and strengthen your efforts to build up their unity with him and with all the members of his flock throughout the world. And now, together, let us entrust your Churches, and the continent of Asia, to Our Lady, so that as our Mother she may teach us what only a mother can teach: who you are, what your name is, and how you get along with others in life. Let us all pray to Our Lady.

The Gospel at heart

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ies in Iraq, he also shared his hopes before the Bishops of Asia that ever more fraternal relationships may open up between the countries of the continent, including those which still do not have full diplomatic relations with the Holy See.

The crystal clear message of the Pope resounded throughout the Korean peninsula and the whole Asian continent, where the majority of humanity lives, introducing himself as a brother who, by coming close, can open his arms to everyone, without distinctions. And the instructions that Francis imparted by this visit to Asia is the very heart of Christ's Gospel: to worship God and to do good. The Pontiff said this to the thousands of young people who came to Korea from all over the continent and who now return to their countries with this message.

Francis allows the Gospel to shine through his actions and his words: this is why the essence of the Christian message lived so profoundly by the Pope is felt to be authentic by believers but also by those who do not adhere to any religion. The origins of the Church in Korea came about in this way, in the life of the martyrs, largely nameless lay people, and long before, when the path of Christ was witnessed to in few regions of the Asian continent.

His most essential address was that to the Bishops of Asia on dialogue, which is fundamental to Christian identity and is therefore the very basis of the Church's mission: half a century later, it was a strong reproposal of Paul VI's programmatic Encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*, in content and fact. Furthermore, the Pope recalled that the Church grows not through proselytism but through attraction, quoting the words of Benedict XVI. Attraction comes from opening oneself to others so as to walk together in the presence of God.

G.M.V.



A future of reconciliation and peace

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

gence of new opportunities for dialogue, encounter and the resolution of differences, for continued generosity in providing humanitarian assistance to those in need, and for an ever greater recognition that all Koreans are brothers and sisters, members of one family, one people. They speak the same language.

Before leaving Korea, I wish to thank President Park Geun-hye, the civil and ecclesiastical authorities and all those who in any way helped to make this visit possible. I especially wish to address a word of personal appreciation to the priests of Korea, who labour daily in the service of the Gospel and the build-

ing up of God's people in faith, hope and love. I ask you, as ambassadors of Christ and ministers of his reconciling love (cf. *2 Cor* 5:18-20), to continue to build bridges of respect, trust and harmonious cooperation in your parishes, among yourselves, and with your bishops. Your example of unreserved love for the Lord, your faithfulness and dedication to your ministry, and your charitable concern for those in need, contribute greatly to the work of reconciliation and peace in this country.

Dear brothers and sisters, God calls us to return to him and to hearken to his voice, and he promises to establish us on the land in even greater peace and prosperity

than our ancestors knew. May Christ's followers in Korea prepare for the dawning of that new day, when this land of the morning calm will rejoice in God's richest blessings of harmony and peace! Amen.

After the Mass for Peace and Reconciliation concluded the Holy Father said the following prayer for Cardinal Filoni and for Iraq:

For Cardinal Fernando Filoni, who cannot be with us because he was sent by the Pope to the suffering people of Iraq in order to assist our persecuted and dispossessed brothers and sisters, and all the religious minorities who are afflicted in that country. May the Lord be close to him in his mission.

Before the visit, the Bishop of Daejeon on Asia's youth

An explosion of faith

MARIO PONZI

When it was announced that the Sixth Asian Youth Day would be celebrated in South Korea this year from 14 to 18 August, the organizers began preparations estimating a maximum of 6,000 participants. That was indeed the enrolment up to the day of the announcement that Pope Francis would attend. From that moment the number spiked at approximately 90,000. Bishop Lazaro You Heung-sik of Daejeon, the host diocese for Pope Francis' meeting with the youth of Asia, calls this a "miracle due to the intercession of the Virgin". Bishop You Heung-sik described Pope Francis' words to him, that "Miracles happen. They still happen. We have to be able to understand the sign".

But are you really certain that Pope Francis' coming among Korea's youth is the result of a miracle?

Not only am I certain of it, but I am trying to help our young people live these days of waiting in the light of this grace. I speak with them a lot, I tell them the history of our martyrs, those who were canonized by John Paul II and those who Pope Francis will beatify. Their lives, their martyrdom, were they not the result of many miracles? The Church continually needs miracles. And She needs them above all in a moment like the present one. It is essential that the young know about and know how to recognize miracles. I do not think that Francis had a visit to our country in mind when I wrote my first letter to him. Knowing how much the Pope has young people and the Church at heart, and how so many young people have the Pope and the Church at heart, I told him that many of our boys and girls suffered from not being able to attend the WYD [World Youth Day] in Rio de Janeiro. Some for financial reasons, some even for political reasons. Of course, I wrote, they would have suffered much less had they known that the Pontiff would participate in the next gathering for Asian Youth Day. Pope Francis probably had not even finished reading my letter before setting pen to paper to assure us that he would come. So why shouldn't I say it is a miracle bestowed on our young people through the intercession of the Virgin Mary?

Let us talk about these young people. More than 50% of the world's population under 25 years of age lives in Asia.

Right. There are so many young Asians. Countless. Speaking about them means reviewing the history of our continent. Which is naturally different from the others. It is populated by a multitude of diverse peoples, races and cultures. Especially of diverse religions. Christians are a small minority, except for the Philippines. In South Korea and Indonesia there are more, but basically they remain a minority. In other countries there are not even estimates. Thus it was predictable that

our Day would not have a very large attendance. Nevertheless we knew that a certain number would be present. Here in Korea, for example, young people can boast a history firmly linked to the witness of Christian martyrs. During the period of the great persecution in our country, Christians sought refuge in the mountains and in the most remote places. They lived in small communities like the first Christians, with the same style of mutual love, of solidarity, of brotherhood, of communion. Many of the young Koreans who identify with Catholicism today have their roots in these very areas. Consider that of the 124 martyrs whom Pope Francis will beatify during his visit, 49 are actually from Daejeon. And so are many of those who live in the border lands, who, let us hope, will be able to participate in [Asian Youth] Day.

Could the young people on their way to Daejeon actually be Asia's new Evangelists?

That is what we hope. We think it will be a very important experience for them. An experience of communion among them and with the Pope. We hope that they will draw the strength from this meeting to live as missionaries in daily life in order to communicate to others, to their peers especially, the joy of co-existence in peace and in brotherhood. And our continent, like the rest of the world, desperately needs it.

We suppose that these young people have the same problems as the others in every country of the world.

I could perhaps speak about Korea's young people, because I know the context in which they have to live. But it is not the same for the youth in the rest of Asia, because in every country there are different conditions that are not always easy to know about or understand. Indeed, the problems of youth are largely linked to those of their society. Our primary concern is to continually update the pastoral care of young people, because things change ever more rapidly and sometimes there are radical changes also due to the increasingly more frequent exchanges between the different eastern and western cultures. Certainly we expect a great leap forward from the Pope's visit.

Young people are the future of the Church. This affirmation has been repeated for years. How do you interpret it with respect to Korea?

I think one must begin by considering the laity's role in the life of the Church. For South Korea, as is known, the laity is at the root of the Church's introduction. The laity have been the true protagonists of the Church's history in Korea. But it is essential that they continue to be leaders and that this is perpetuated over time. Of course much depends on us pastors. That is, we must spur them on and prepare them to take on an important, responsible role. And to do this one must not think about the hierarchy of the Church;



At the holy Father's meeting with young people on 15 August at the Shrine of Somoe, Korea

we must allow the Second Vatican Council to penetrate deeper into the soul of our Church. Pope Francis is pointing out the way to a new Pentecost. His teaching is a compass to guide humanity and to bring it back to the Gospel's paths. In fact, I notice a return to the Catechumenate. I even told the Pope: the credit is his.

And he?

He was happy to hear me say it, even though right afterward he asked me how we can accompany this Neocatechumenate. Above all, he asked me if among these people there are many youths.

Are there many? And how many of them will take part in the meeting?

I shall answer you as I answered the Pope. Young Asians are a changing reality. Today more money and new ideas are circulating. It is very difficult, most of all in certain countries, to propose the Christian message. South Korea is a bit the opposite with respect to other nations: material wellbeing does not hinder the dissemination of the Gospel message. Just as the recognized and guaranteed freedom of religion fosters exchanges and dialogue. It is difficult to know how many will come to the meeting with the Pontiff. There is no absolutely free passage between one border and the other. Only with Japan are there no difficulties of this type. For other situations however, I had to send a handwritten invitation to each of the young people who were pointed out to me by their respective bishops. Once the invitation was received they were able to start the process to obtain the necessary documents to leave their country. Of course there is no shortage of problems, but I think that in the end many will come.

Have you thought about their reception?

First, we had to think about providing appropriate accommodation. Fortunately our diocesan faithful are very welcoming. Many families have said they are ready to host these young people. And they are taking great interest in doing so. I think that this will provide a unique opportunity for young foreigners to

know and feel the warmth of a family that is open and ready welcome all as brothers and sisters. On the eve of the Pope's arrival there will be the first great gathering, which will inaugurate a series of group celebrations, conferences and cultural encounter. Then two hours of dialogue with the Pontiff.

And what do you think might happen in the heart of the young people from the encounter with the Pope?

I expect a volcanic explosion.

Can you explain in more detail?

I mean to say that I expect that thousands of priestly vocations, thousands of girls' vocations to the consecrated life, thousands of missionary vocations, thousands of vocations to the permanent diaconate will blossom on this Day. The encounter with Jesus is life-changing. I hope that in these days of grace a great number will encounter Jesus. This way our young people will understand that even if they are part of a small minority on the Asian continent, they belong to a great universal family, the family of Christ whose heart is the heart of the world. So they must learn to live this universal dimension, which is also a missionary dimension. They love Pope Francis in a passionate manner. And I hope their great love will lead them to the path that he is coming to show them. Then, here in South Korea, that path has been taken by so many other young people and has been paved by the blood of martyrs.

Do you think the young people of Asia meeting in Daejeon will have the power to infect their peers with the joy of the faith even on the continent that is the most closed with regard to the Gospel?

It is our hope. We are also counting on our young people that they may be able to heal old wounds and rediscover the reciprocal joy of all being brothers and sisters, with no distinction between north and south. But for their witness to be understood by those who control the future of peoples a miracle is still needed. This time we can count on an exceptional mediator, Pope Francis. He is welcome among us, for this reason too!

The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue on the jihadists violence in Iraq

Unspeakable criminal acts

The whole world has witnessed with incredulity what is now called the "Restoration of the Caliphate", which had been abolished on 29 October 1923 by Kamal Atatürk, founder of modern Turkey. Opposition to this "restoration" by the majority of religious institutions and Muslim politicians has not prevented the "Islamic State" jihadists from committing and continuing to commit unspeakable criminal acts.

This Pontifical Council, together with all those engaged in interreligious dialogue, followers of all religions, and all men and women of good will, can only unambiguously denounce and condemn these practices which bring shame on humanity:

- the massacre of people on the sole basis of their religious affiliation;
- the despicable practice of beheading, crucifying and hanging bodies in public places;
- the choice imposed on Christians and Yezidis between conversion to Islam, payment of a tax (jizya) or forced exile;
- the forced expulsion of tens of thousands of people, including children, elderly, pregnant women and the sick;
- the abduction of girls and women belonging to the Yezidi and Christian communities as spoils of war (sabaya);
- the imposition of the barbaric practice of infibulation;



- the destruction of places of worship and Christian and Muslim burial places;

- the forced occupation or desecration of churches and monasteries;

- the removal of crucifixes and other Christian religious symbols as well as those of other religious communities;

- the destruction of a priceless Christian religious and cultural heritage;

- indiscriminate violence aimed at terrorizing people to force them to surrender or flee.

No cause, and certainly no religion, can justify such barbarity. This

constitutes an extremely serious offense to humanity and to God who is the Creator, as Pope Francis has often reminded us. We cannot forget, however, that Christians and Muslims have lived together – it is true with ups and downs – over the centuries, building a culture of peaceful coexistence and civilization of which they are proud. Moreover, it is on this basis that, in recent years, dialogue between Christians and Muslims has continued and intensified.

The dramatic plight of Christians, Yezidis and other religious communities and ethnic minorities in Ir-

aq requires a clear and courageous stance on the part of religious leaders, especially Muslims, as well as those engaged in interreligious dialogue and all people of good will. All must be unanimous in condemning unequivocally these crimes and in denouncing the use of religion to justify them. If not, what credibility will religions, their followers and their leaders have? What credibility can the interreligious dialogue that we have patiently pursued over recent years have? Religious leaders are also called to exercise their influence with the authorities to end these crimes, to punish those who commit them and to reestablish the rule of law throughout the land, ensuring the return home of those who have been displaced. While recalling the need for an ethical management of human societies, these same religious leaders must not fail to stress that the support, funding and arming of terrorism is morally reprehensible.

That said, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue is grateful to all those who have already raised their voices to denounce terrorism, especially that which uses religion to justify it.

Let us therefore unite our voices with that of Pope Francis: "May the God of peace stir up in each one of us a genuine desire for dialogue and reconciliation. Violence is never defeated by violence. Violence is defeated by peace".

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India makes an appeal

Peace is primarily a gift from God

JOSEPH CHINNAYAN

The Standing Committee of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI), gathered at St John's Medical College Bangalore on 6-8 August 2014, expressed, on 12 August, its deep concern over the on-

going violence and bloodshed in the Gaza strip causing untold miseries to thousands of innocent people. The apex body of the Catholic Bishops of India earnestly appeals to the Israeli and Palestinian authorities to heed to global efforts to end the continuing conflict and establish lasting peace in the Holy Land, for which Pope Francis and other world leaders have taken several initiatives, including the prayer meeting, held in the Vatican, in which both the Israeli and Palestinian Prime Ministers prayed together for peace.

The Bishops' Committee also expressed its anguish over the escalation of violence in Iraq, showing signs of genocide. It is a matter of great concern that thousands of people belonging to religious minorities, including Christians and Yezidis are subjected to persecution, torture, exile and even to the most dastardly acts of burying women and children alive in mass graves. While expressing solidarity with those who are suffering, especially those persecuted on account of their faith, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India exhorts all people of goodwill to pray unceasingly for peace in Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East.

The Standing Committee, surveying the Indian scenario, reiterated the support of the Catholic Church to the democratically elected NDA Government and extended their greetings to Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modiji, to support his efforts to lead the nation to new heights of peace and prosperity for all. However, concern was expressed over certain sporadic events of violence against Christians in certain parts of India. The Bishops' Committee took strong exception to an unprecedented move in Chhattisgarh where 50 villages passed a resolution in Gram Sabha, denying entry to Christian Priests in the villages, a move fortunately foiled by the timely intervention of the District Administration. The Catholic Bishops' Committee urges the Central Government and the State Governments to keep constant vigil over such sinister moves designed to weaken the very character and nature of our secular and democratic Constitution.

The Bishops' Committee also expressed deep concern and anxiety over certain statements made by responsible and highly placed persons in the Judiciary favouring particular religion and its sacred books to be included in the school curriculum.

The Bishops' Committee is equally apprehensive of certain moves on the part of the Government and the Judiciary to bring about the uniform civil code and to legalize euthanasia. Such moves without taking into account the views and concerns of all will eventually weaken the unity of our nation and lead to the erosion of moral values cherished by the Indian society.

The Standing Committee of the CBCI finally exhorted the Catholics and people of goodwill all over the world not to lose hope in the midst of the tragic situation in the Middle East and elsewhere, and the distressing developments in certain parts of our country.

Peace is primarily a gift from God and a treasure to be constantly striven for. The Bishops of the Standing Committee exhorts all the people to pray unceasingly for the gift of Peace in the troubled parts of the world.

As we celebrate India's 67th Independence Day, let us all resolve to work steadfastly for the growth and development of all our people, ensuring justice, peace and equality in our dear Motherland, India.

* Spokesperson for Catholic Bishops' Conference of India



In the heart of Asia

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

sion. Above all, young people are called to become Evangelizers to their peers, always keeping their evangelizing mission alive; this is the message the Pope will be taking to Korea. Of course, he will also urge young people not to be blinded by the ephemeral values of our societies and to find in Jesus the true answer to their questions and fears.

What testimony can the Korean martyrs, whom Pope Francis will be beatifying in Seoul, offer the young generations of Asian Catholics?

This is another reason why the Pope is going to Korea, to beatify the 124 Korean martyrs. I think it is important to highlight that there was only one priest in this group, all the others were lay people who had all kinds of professions, from the most humble to the most prestigious on the social scale. This echoes one of the characteristic features of the Korean Church, which is that it was born from the testimony and effort of the laity who managed to preserve and transmit the faith. I think this is the core message; that is, that in the Church we are all called to work together on this mission of proclaiming the Gospel and we are all called to holiness, a holiness which can be shown in many different ways but which must involve an effort on each one's part. We are not Christians if this constant draw to holiness is not inside of us every day, this call to holiness in the form of a sincere, authentic and complete testimony, which can go as far as the gift of life in the case of those who have the grace to be called to martyrdom. This is the task the Pope will assign to these young people and to the whole Korean Church.

Korea can certainly represent the hopes and difficulties of the Asian continent, and Pope Francis will visit a rehabilitation centre for disabled people and pray in the "cemetery for aborted babies". Was the great expansion of the "Asian tigers" unfortunately accompanied by the throwaway culture?

There is certainly an evaluation we can make, and it is here, once again, that the Church can say a word, she can offer a witness, the witness of charity. Charity has always been an "instrument", let us use this word, to proclaim the Gospel, precisely attention to the least, attention to vulnerable people, attention to the poor, attention to the disadvantaged and to those who are placed on the margin of society has always been a feature of Christians and of the Church. And it seems to me that in Asian culture this may be brought to bear, that is, these two acts that the Pope will perform will also highlight this very approach, and highlight the missionary task of the Church through attention to the most needy. Thus charity can serve as a means to proclaim the Gospel, to proclaim the Gospel effectively in difficult situations, in situations of exclusion.



Economist Thomas Han, who was also the Ambassador of Korea to the Holy See, pointed out that Korea may be the only country in the world where the Catholic Church is growing hand in hand with economic development. Indeed, it has often been said that faith diminishes as financial wellbeing and materialism increase. How do you interpret this countertrend in Korean society?

It really is a countertrend, which in a certain sense, at least personally, astonishes me, because what we usually feel is a certain abandonment, a certain indifference, on the part of our technically and materially advanced societies. I would say that one interpretation could be, at least my reading of it, is that there is no culture, not even contemporary culture, which would be impermeable to the Gospel. Any culture, even the seemingly most refractory, has areas where the Gospel can be proclaimed, and these areas are those found deep in the human heart, when all is said and done. Man is always the same, whatever his situation, even when heavily conditioned by culture. However, the heart of man has its aspirations. Let us recall that St Augustine said that our heart is restless "until it finds rest in Thee". And that there is no material situation that can satisfy this thirst of the heart. I would interpret it a bit this way even in these very advanced societies, evolved from a material point of view and from a technological point of view, in which however this profound aspiration persists in the heart which does not find an adequate response in material things nor in progress. And Korea offers us great hope in this sense; our societies that also live the same reality, that anticipated these realities can still offer paths.... It is up to us! The Church's great challenge is to find these paths and follow them to the end so that the water of the Gospel can once more quench every person's heart.

Pope Francis will meet with survivors and relatives of the victims of the Sewol tragedy. Can the pastoral care of tenderness and closeness to the suffering also make its mark in Korea?

Yes, of course. We know that this dramatic, sorrowful event has caused much pain. It has opened so many wounds and fed such controversy in Korean society. The Pope wants to show that the method to soothe this

pain and to try to heal these wounds, is just that of being close to the people. This is the clear sign: this closeness, which is the closeness of Jesus to all those who suffer, must be the Church's closeness to all those who are suffering. Then this approach too is a very meaningful act of charity and of love towards the relatives of the victims of this tragedy.

VATICAN BULLETIN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

nation of Archbishop Leo Jun Ikenaga, SJ, of Osaka, Japan. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (20 Aug.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Thomas Aquino Manyo Maeda as Archbishop of Osaka, Japan. Until now he has been Bishop of Hiroshima (20 Aug.).

Archbishop Maeda, 65, was born in Tsuwasaki. He was ordained a priest on 19 March 1975. He was ordained a bishop on 16 June 1985, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Hiroshima.

EASTERN CHURCHES

The Holy Father appointed Fr Bohdan Danylo from the clergy of Stamford for Ukrainians, USA, as Bishop of Saint Josaphat in Parma for Ukrainians, USA. Until now he has been Rector of St Basil Seminary in Stamford (7 Aug.).

Bishop-elect Danylo, 43, was born in Giżycko, Poland. He was ordained a priest for the Eparchy of Stamford on 1 October 1996. He holds a licence in theology. He has served as assistant parish priest at St Michael's parish, Hartford, before being appointed vice-rector at St Basil Seminary, Stamford, in 2005, and responsible for vocations in the Eparchy.

SPECIAL ENVOY

The Holy Father appointed Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, as his Special Envoy to Iraq, to express the

The Pope will conclude his visit to Korea, which the bishops have described as "the last victim of the Cold War", with a Mass for peace and reconciliation. Will this trip succeed in opening up new channels for dialogue between the leaders of the two Koreas and give hope to North Korea's Catholics?

This has always been the Holy See's great hope and it has worked hard to try to achieve this. Obviously, there is still a great deal of tension on the peninsula, and peace and reconciliation are needed. I think the Pope's trip will also be a help in this sense; it will help to ensure continued solidarity towards the needy and to open areas for communication and dialogue, to the extent that it is able. Because in my view – and the Pope has stressed this conviction on a number of occasions – that only through communication and dialogue can existing problems be resolved, and that the means for communication and dialogue can always be found as long as there is willingness on everyone's part.

The Holy Father appointed Cardinal Giovanni Lajolo, President emeritus of the Governorate of Vatican City State, as his Special Envoy to the celebrations for the centenary of the foundation of the Apostolic Movement of Schönstatt, Germany, to be held from 16 to 19 October 2014 in Schönstatt in Vallendar, Germany (8 Aug.).

START OF MISSION

On 21 July, Archbishop Anselmo Guido Pecorari, titular Archbishop of Populonia, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio in Bulgaria with the presentation of his Letter of Credence to H.E. Mr Rosen Plevneliev, President of the Republic.

NECROLOGY

Archbishop emeritus Luciano Bux of Oppido Mamertina-Palmi, Italy, at age 78 (8 Aug.).

Archbishop emeritus Leonardo Z. Legaspi, OP, of Caceres, the Philippines, at age 78 (8 Aug.).

Bishop emeritus Edmund John Patrick Collins, MSC, of Darwin, Australia, at age 83 (8 Aug.).

Bishop emeritus Morkos Hakim, OFM, of Sohag for Copts, Egypt, at age 83 (11 Aug.).

Archbishop emeritus Armando Cirio, OSI, of Cascavel, Brazil, at age 98 (11 Aug.).

Bishop emeritus Paul Nguyễn Thanh Hoan of Phan Thiết, Vietnam, at age 74 (18 Aug.).

At the Angelus on 10 August, the Pope asked the faithful to pray for his trip to Korea

In the boat that is the Church

Thoughts turn to Iraqi Christians, people in Gaza and victims of the Ebola virus

The Church is like "a boat which must brave the storms and sometimes seems on the point of capsizing". These were the words of the Pontiff at the Angelus in St Peter's Square on Sunday, 10 August, recalling that what saves her "is not the qualities and courage of her crew, but faith".

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning,

In today's Gospel, we are presented with the account of Jesus walking on the water of the lake (cf. Mt 14:22-23). After the multiplication of loaves and fish, He asks the disciples to get into the boat and go before him to the other side of the lake while He dismisses the crowds. He then goes up into the hills by himself to pray until late at night. Meanwhile a strong storm blows up on the lake and right in the middle of the storm Jesus reaches the disciples' boat, walking upon the water of the lake. When they see him, the disciples are terrified, but He calms them: "Take heart, it is I; have no fear!" (v. 27). Peter, with his usual passion, practically puts him to the test: "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water"; and Jesus answers "Come!" (vv. 28-29). Peter gets out of the boat and walks on the water; but a strong wind hits him and he begins to sink. And so he yells: "Lord, save me!" (30), and Jesus reaches out his hand and catches him.

This story is a beautiful icon of the faith of the Apostle Peter. In the voice of Jesus who tells him: "Come!", he recognizes the echo of the first encounter on the shore of that very lake, and right away, once again, he leaves the boat and goes toward the Teacher. And he walks on the waters! The faithful and ready response to the Lord's call always enables one to achieve extraordinary things. But Jesus himself told us that we are capable of performing miracles with our faith, faith in Him, faith in his word, faith in his voice. Peter however begins to sink the moment he looks away from Jesus and he allows himself to be overwhelmed by the hardships around him. But the Lord is always there, and when Peter calls him, Jesus saves him from danger. Peter's character, with his passion and his weaknesses, can describe our faith: ever fragile and impoverished, anxious yet victorious, Christian faith walks to meet the Risen Lord, amid the world's storms and dangers.

And the final scene is also very important. "And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God!'" (vv. 32-33). All the disciples are on the boat, united in the experience of weakness, of doubt, of fear and of "little faith". But when Jesus climbs into that boat again, the weather suddenly changes: they all feel united in their faith in Him. All the little and frightened ones become great at the moment in which



they fall on their knees and recognize the Son of God in their Teacher. How many times the same thing happens to us! Without Jesus, far from Jesus, we feel frightened and inadequate to the point of thinking we cannot succeed. Faith is lacking! But Jesus is always with us, hidden perhaps, but present and ready to support us.

This is an effective image of the Church: a boat which must brave the storms and sometimes seems on the point of capsizing. What saves her is not the skill and courage of her crew members, but faith which allows her to walk, even in the dark, amid hardships. Faith gives us the certainty of Jesus' presence always beside us, of his hand which grasps us to pull us back from danger. We are all on this boat, and we feel secure here despite our limitations and our weaknesses. We are safe especially when we are ready to kneel and worship Jesus, the only Lord of

our life. This is what our Mother, Our Lady always reminds us. We turn to her trustingly.

After the Angelus, the Pope made the following appeals:

Dear brothers and sisters,

The news from Iraq leaves us incredulous and alarmed: thousands of people, many Christians among them, are being driven from their homes in a brutal way; children are dying of thirst and hunger while fleeing; women abducted; people massacred; every type of violence; destruction everywhere; destruction of houses, of religious, historic and cultural heritage. Yet all of this grievously offends God and grievously offends humanity. Hatred is not borne in the name of God! War is not waged in the name of God! All of us, thinking about this situation, about these people, let us be silent now and pray.

After pausing to pray, he continued:

I thank those who, with courage, are taking aid to these brothers and sisters, and I hope that an effective political solution, both at the international and local levels, can put an end to these crimes and restore law. The better to ensure to those dear peoples of my closeness I have appointed as my Personal Envoy to Iraq Cardinal Fernando Filoni, who will leave Rome tomorrow.

In Gaza as well, after a ceasefire, war has broken out again, claiming innocent victims, children... and does nothing but worsen the conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians.

Let us pray together to the God of Peace, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary: *Grant peace, Lord, in our day, and make us builders of justice and peace. Mary, Queen of Peace, pray for us.*

Let us also pray for the victims of the "Ebola" virus and for the many who are fighting to stop it.

I greet all the pilgrims and people of Rome, in particular the young people from Verona, Cazzago San Martino, Sarmeda and Mestrino, and the girl scouts from Treviso.

From next Wednesday until Monday the 18th I will be making an Apostolic Journey to Korea: please accompany me with prayer, I need it! Thank you. And to all I wish a happy Sunday and a good lunch. *Arrivederci!*

Pontiff via livefeed to 30,000 guides and scouts

Young people, not pensioners

On Sunday morning, 10 August, Pope Francis – by live voice broadcast – addressed the over 30,000 members of the Association of Catholic Guides and Scouts of Italy (AGESCI) gathered in St Rossore, Pisa, for the concluding celebrations of the third National Route, on the theme:

"I cordially greet you all. And I'm happy for this gathering. I'm sorry that I was not able to come, but I accompany you from here, with great affection. I hope that these roads of courage, which go straight toward the future, may be a great asset for you. Courage! This is a virtue and an attribute of young people. The world needs courageous, not fearful young people. It needs young people on the move, not standing still: there is no progress if the young stand still! Young people who are always motivated, not young people who retire! It's sad! It's sad to see a retired young person. No, a young person should go forward on this road of courage. Go forward! This will be your victory; your job is to help change this world, to make it so much better. I know that you have reflected on the Apocalypse,

thinking of the New City. This is your task: to build a new city. Always onward with a new city: with the truth, with goodness, with the beauty that the Lord has given us.

Dear young people, dear boys and girls, I greet you here and I wish you all the best. Do not be afraid, do not let your hope be stolen. Life is yours! It's yours to make flourish, to bear fruit for everyone. Humanity is watching us and is also watching you on this road of courage. And remember: retirement is at age 65! A young person must never retire, never! You must go forward with courage.

I pray for you and I ask the Lord to give you His blessing.

I bless you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And please, I ask you to pray for me.

"Road of courage... straight to the future". After the Mass celebrated by Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco, President of the Italian Episcopal Conference, the Pope addressed the young people with words of encouragement. The following is a translation of the Pope's words spoken in Italian.





St Peter's Square

Theme for the 2015 World Day of Peace

Slaves no more but brothers and sisters

"Slaves no more, but brothers and sisters" is the theme chosen by Pope Francis for the 48th World Day of Peace, which will be celebrated on 1 January 2015.

A statement of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace underlined that many people think that slavery is a thing of the past. In fact, this social plague remains all too real in today's world.

Last year's Message for 1 January 2014 was dedicated to brotherhood: "Fraternity, the Foundation and Pathway to Peace". Being children of God gives all human beings equal dignity as brothers and sisters.

Slavery deals a murderous blow to this fundamental fraternity, and so to peace as well. Peace can only exist when each human being recognizes every other person as a brother or sister with the same dignity.

Too many abominable forms of slavery persist in today's world: human trafficking, trade in migrants and prostitutes, slave labour, exploitation, and the mental enslavement of women and children.

Shamefully, individuals and groups around the world profit from this slavery. They take advantage

of the world's many conflicts, of the economic crisis and of corruption in order to carry out their evil.

Slavery is a terrible open wound on the contemporary social body, a fatal running sore on the flesh of Christ, as Pope Francis has denounced many times.

To counter slavery effectively, the inviolable dignity of every person must be recognized above all. Moreover, this acceptance of dignity must be anchored solidly in fraternity. Fraternity requires us to reject any inequality which would allow one person to enslave another. It demands instead that we act everywhere with proximity and generosity, thus leading to liberation and inclusion for everyone.

Our purpose is to build a civilization based on the equal dignity of every person without discrimination. To achieve this will also require the commitment of the media, of education and of culture to a renewed society pledged to freedom, justice and therefore peace.

The World Day of Peace, initiated by Pope Paul VI, is celebrated each year on the first day of January. The Holy Father's Message is sent to all the world's Foreign Ministers and also indicates the Holy See's diplomatic line during the coming year.

Lee Mi-Kyung is the parliamentarian who has fought the hardest for the rights of Korean women in the past 30 years

Ninety days for mothers

"I was only baptized in 1995 but I come from a Protestant family", says Lee Mi-Kyung who – like many Korean women – became a Catholic after a critical phase in her life.

Lee Mi-Kyung is the woman parliamentarian who has fought the hardest for the rights of Korean women in the past 30 years. It was she who, in January 1992, instigated a series of demonstrations for the rights of Korean women, reduced to sexual slaves during the Second World War.

For decades Lee Mi-Kyung fought for women's rights. "The Korean Women's Association United, the movement I founded, is concerned with the emancipation of women and with equal rights between men and women. It also attempts to eradicate prostitution in Korea and to prevent the trafficking of sexually exploited women. The movement came into being when, after the rapid spread of industrialization, many women moved from the countryside to cities in order to work in factories. This decision improved their standard of living but, since they were women alone and came from rural backgrounds, the urban context, totally unknown to them, made them easy victims of abuse and harassment, also on the part of those who provided them with work. There was no law and no trade union to protect them. Together with other women, I organized the first trade unions and taught them their rights".

For example, "we made sure that the pregnant workers were not fired. We sought volunteers who would care for their children during working hours. We studied laws to punish the abuse of women more

severely, to create the conditions for teaching female workers how to defend themselves from violence and how to prevent assaults. We created volunteer groups to support the victims of sexual violence perpetrated at work. If today all State employees in Korea must attend classes on the prevention of violence in the work place, it is thanks to the battles we waged".

And when, in 1996, "I entered politics, I brought to parliament all my experience in women's rights. I worked to reinforce maternity protection legislation, for example, by means of the law that extended maternity leave by 30 days, so that today it totals 90 days".

There's a famous photo, taken in 1999, that portrays her in the parliament hall. She was the only one in her party who voted for support of the United Nations resolution to send a peacekeeping force to East Timor. "Violence broke out there after the referendum sanctioning its independence from Indonesia. It is estimated that about 1,500 civilians died because of the violence that followed the popular consultation. A United Nations force, known as INTERFET, was deployed to re-establish public order and keep the peace. My party at the time opposed sending peacekeeping forces because there were many Korean communities in Indonesia then that had various economic interests in the country which we didn't want to damage.



However – partly thanks to my previous battles for minority rights – I had various contacts with the refugees from East Timor and I listened to their accounts of oppression".

Korean women, Lee Mi-Kyung, explains, "still today receive a salary that corresponds to 70 per cent of the salary that men earn, and only half the number of women graduates have jobs. Competition at work is very tough and when a woman leaves after becoming pregnant she often never works again. This is because there are so many others ready to replace her and, of course, this certainly helps to foster the large

number of abortions we have in our country. It is only the "lucky" women, that is, those who find a husband with a decent salary, who can allow themselves to stay at home and be housewives".

And, Lee Mi-Kyung continues, "the Child Care policy itself is not well developed; there are very expensive private institutions but the public institutions are far from adequate; these are now the political goals to pursue if there is to be hope for an improvement in the plight of women in Korea". (Cristian Martini Grimaldi)