

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH*Unicuique suum Non praevalent*

Forty-seventh year, number 16 (2342)

Vatican City

Friday, 18 April 2014

At Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday the Pope reflects on the institution of the priesthood

Anointed with the oil of gladness

Poverty, fidelity and obedience the three sisters of a good priest

On Holy Thursday morning, 17 April, Pope Francis concelebrated Chrism Mass with over 1,700 priests, 44 cardinals and many more bishops. He spoke to them about the "guarded joy" of the priesthood. This joy is guarded not only by the flock but also by the "three sisters who surround it, tend it and defend it: sister poverty, sister fidelity and sister obedience". The following is the English text of the Pope's homily, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brother Priests,

In the eternal "today" of Holy Thursday, when Christ showed his love for us to the end (cf. Jn 13:1), we recall the happy day of the institution of the priesthood, as well as the day of our own priestly ordination. The Lord anointed us in Christ with the oil of gladness, and this anointing invites us to accept and appreciate this great gift: the gladness, the joy of being a priest. Priestly joy is a priceless treasure, not only for the priest himself but for the entire faithful people of God: that faithful people from which he is called to be anointed and which he, in turn, is sent to anoint.

Anointed with the oil of gladness so as to anoint others with the oil of gladness. Priestly joy has its source in the Father's love, and the Lord wishes the joy of this Love to be "ours" and to be "complete" (Jn 15:11). I like to reflect on joy by con-



templating Our Lady, for Mary, the "Mother of the living Gospel, is a wellspring of joy for God's little ones" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 288). I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that the priest is very little indeed: the incomparable grandeur of the gift granted us for the ministry sets us among the least of men. The priest is the poorest of men unless Jesus enriches him by his poverty, the most useless of servants unless Jesus calls him his friend, the most ignorant of men unless Jesus patiently teaches him as he did Peter, the frailest of Christians unless the Good Shepherd strengthens him in the midst of the flock. No one is more "little" than a priest left to his own devices; and so our prayer of protection against every snare of the Evil One is the prayer of our Mother: I am a priest because he has regarded my littleness (cf. Lk 1:48). And in that littleness we find our joy. Joy in our littleness!

For me, there are three significant features of our priestly joy. It is a joy which *anoints us* (not one which "greases" us, making us unctuous, sumptuous and presumptuous), it is a joy which is *imperishable* and it is a

missionary joy which spreads and attracts, starting backwards – with those farthest away from us.

A joy which anoints us. In a word: it has penetrated deep within our hearts, it has shaped them and strengthened them sacramentally. The signs of the ordination liturgy speak to us of the Church's maternal desire to pass on and share with others all that the Lord has given us: the laying on of hands, the anointing with sacred chrism, the clothing with sacred vestments, the first consecration which immediately follows... Grace fills us to the brim and overflows, fully, abundantly and entirely in each priest. We are anointed down to our very bones... and our joy, which wells up from deep within, is the echo of this anointing.

An imperishable joy. The fullness of the Gift, which no one can take away or increase, is an unending source of joy: an imperishable joy which the Lord has promised no one can take from us (Jn 16:22). It can lie dormant, or be clogged by sin or by life's troubles, yet deep down it remains intact, like the embers of a burnt log beneath the ashes, and it can always be renewed. Paul's exhortation to Timothy remains ever timely: I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands (cf. 2 Tim 1:6).

A missionary joy. I would like especially to share with you and to stress this third feature: priestly joy is deeply bound up with God's holy

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Palm Sunday homily

Who am I?



PAGE 16

General Audience catechesis

A humble victory

PAGE 5

Meditations for the Way of the Cross at the Colosseum on Good Friday

The Face of Christ the Face of Man

PAGE 8/9

To seminarians

No room for the mediocre

PAGE 6

Pope Francis asks forgiveness for the abuse

On the children's side

And reaffirms his support for pro-life movements



PAGE 7

VATICAN BULLETIN

AUDIENCES

Thursday, 10 April

Archbishop Petar Raječ, titular Archbishop of Sarsenterum, Apostolic Nuncio in Kuwait, Bahrein, Yemen, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates; Apostolic Delegate in the Arabian Peninsula

H.E. Mr Zvonimir Jankuloski, Ambassador of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Friday, 11 April

Cardinal Gerhard Ludwig Müller, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

Bishop Oscar Cantoni of Crema, Italy

Saturday, 12 April

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

Monday, 14 April

Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches

Cardinal Agostino Vallini, Vicar General of His Holiness for the Diocese of Rome

Tuesday, 15 April

Cardinal Angelo Amato, SDB, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints

Bishop Chabrel Georges Merhi, Bishop emeritus of San Charbel en Buenos Aires, Argentina

Bishop Marcello Semeraro of Albano, Italy; Secretary of the College of Cardinals

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Giovanni D'Ercole, FDP, as Bishop of Ascoli Piceno, Italy. Until now he has been titular Bishop of Dusa and Auxiliary of the Archdiocese of L'Aquila (12 Apr.).

Bishop D'Ercole, 66, was born in Morino, Italy. He was ordained a priest on 5 October 1974. He was ordained a bishop on 12 December 2009, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Dusa and Auxiliary of L'Aquila.

Master of Ceremonies confirmed

On Saturday, 12, April, Pope Francis confirmed Msgr Guido Marini in his current position as Master of Apostolic Ceremonies.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Marian Buczek of the Diocese of Kharkiv-Zaporizhia, Ukraine. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 2 of the Code of Canon Law (12 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Stanislav Szyrokoradiuk, OFM, as Bishop of Kharkiv-Zaporizhia, Ukraine. Until now he has been titular Bishop of Surista, Auxiliary Bishop of Kyiv-Zhytomyr and Apostolic Administrator *ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* of Lutsk (12 Apr.).

Bishop Szyrokoradiuk, 57, was born in Kornachovka, Ukraine. He was ordained a priest on 4 June 1984 and made his perpetual profession in 1988. He was ordained a bishop on 6 January 1995, subsequent to his appointment as Auxiliary Bishop of Kyiv-Zhytomyr.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Vitaliy Skomarovskyi, as Bishop of Lutsk, Ukraine. Until now he has been titular Bishop of Bencenna and Auxiliary Bishop of Kyiv-Zhytomyr (12 Apr.).

Bishop Skomarovskyi, 50, was born in Berdytchiv, Ukraine. He was ordained a priest on 27 May 1990. He was ordained a bishop on 7 June 2003, subsequent to his appointment as Auxiliary Bishop of Kyiv-Zhytomyr.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Columba Macbeth-Green, OSPPE, as Bishop of Wilcannia-Forbes, Australia. Until now he has been Provincial Vicar of the Order of St Paul the First Hermit and Rector at the Marian Valley Shrine, Brisbane (12 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Macbeth-Green, 45, was born in Forbes, Australia. He completed his studies at the Catholic Theological College in Melbourne and at the Vianney College in Wagga Wagga. He made his solemn profession on 15 September 1996. He was ordained a priest on 22 November 1997. He has served in parish ministry; as prefect and master of novices; as first counselor, as secretary and vicar of the Order's Australian Province; vice-prior of the

Penrose Park Monastery; as chaplain to the Queensland Police Force.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Thomas McMahon of Brentwood, England. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (14 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Alan Williams, SM, from the clergy of the Society of Mary, as Bishop of Brentwood, England. Until now he has been Director of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham (14 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Williams, 63, was born in Blackburn, Lancashire, England. He made his final vows in the Society of Mary (Marist Fathers) in 1981 and was ordained a priest on 30 April 1983. He holds a licence in theology, and a master's in religious education. He has served in a number of pastoral roles, and as chaplain at Sheffield Hallam University and taught Christian spirituality at a postgraduate level. He has served as parish priest in the Archdiocese of Southwark; as Regional Superior of the Marist Fathers in England.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Peter Kayode Odetoyinbo as Bishop of Abeokuta, Nigeria. Until now he has been parish priest and Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Ibadan (15 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Odetoyinbo, 50, was born in Ibadan, Nigeria. He was ordained a priest on 7 October 1989. He holds a licence and doctorate in Church history. He has served in parish ministry and as vice-director of the "Renew Process Ibadan Archdiocese" and as secretary of "Diocesan Priests of All Yorubaland". He has taught in various seminaries and other institutions.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Egidio Nkaijanabwo of Kasese, Uganda. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (15 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Acquirino Francis Kibira as Bishop of Kasese. Until now he has been Rector of St Paul's National Seminary Kinyamasika, in Fort Portal (15 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Kibira, 56, was born in the village of Kigoto-Bulyansungwe, Uganda. He was ordained a priest on 23 September 1984. He has studied philosophy and Sacred Scripture. He has served in parish ministry and as professor at the Katigondo National Major Seminary, Masaka; as head of permanent formation of the clergy, as professor

Ambassador of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia presents his credentials


H.E. Mr Zvonimir Jankuloski, 55, was born in Skopje. He is married and has one son. He holds a law degree and a doctorate in law. He has served as: assistant at the district court in Skopje (1982-83); assistant of international public law at the Department of Criminology at the University of Sts Cyril and Methodius in Skopje (1983-90); professor of international relations and diplomacy at the same university (1991-98); head of a team of experts for elaborating the *Report of Compatibility of the Republic of Macedonia with that of the European Convention for the protection of human rights and of fundamental freedoms* (1996); member of the Delegation of Macedonia for negotiating the Treaty of association and stabilization for the European Union (2000-01); head of the center for refugees and for the study of migration flows at the Institute for sociological, political and juridical research at the University of Sts Cyril and Methodius in Skopje (1998-2000); head of the center for national security and for strategic studies at the institute of sociological, political and juridical research at the University of Sts Cyril and Methodius in Skopje (2000-2002); ambassador and permanent representative at the Council of Europe (2002-05); professor and senior researcher at the Institute for sociological, political and juridical research at the University of Sts Cyril and Methodius in Skopje (1998-2007); dean of the School of Law at the University American College in Skopje (2008). He is currently a professor at the said university and a visiting professor at Euro Balkan in Skopje.



On Thursday morning, 10 April, Pope Francis received H.E. Mr Zvonimir Jankuloski, Ambassador of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, for the presentation of the Letters by which he is accredited to the Holy See

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH
Unicuique suum  Non praevalent

00120 Vatican City
cd.english@ossrom.va
http://www.osservatoreromano.va

Tipografia Vaticana Editrice «L'Osservatore Romano»

GIOVANNI MARIA VIAN

Editor-in-Chief

Carlo Di Cicco
Assistant Editor

don Sergio Pellini S.D.B.
Director General

Editorial office
via del Pellegrino, 00120 Vatican City
telephone +390669899300, fax +390669883675

Service photo
photo@ossrom.va www.photo.va
Advertising Agency
Il Sole 24 Ore S.p.A.
System Comunicazione Pubblicitaria
Via Monte Rosa 91, 20149 Milano
segreteria@redirezionesystem@ilsol24ore.com

Subscription rates: Italy - Vatican: € 58,00; Europe: € 100,00 - US\$ 118,00; Latin America, Africa, Asia: € 100,00 - US\$ 160,00 - £ 88,00; Oceania, North America: € 160,00 - US\$ 240,00 - £ 130,00.
Management Office: phone +390669899480; fax +390669885064; e-mail subscriptions@ossrom.va.
For India: The weekly English Edition of L'Osservatore Romano is published and distributed in India by Camel International Publishing House, Cotton Hill, Tivandrum - 695 014, Kerala-India; phone: +9147232723; fax: +9147232819; e-mail: ciph@mdc4onsl.net.in.
For North America: L'Osservatore Romano (USPS 066-419) is published fifty times per year (weekly, except third week in August and last week in December) by Our Sunday Visitor, L'Osservatore Romano, English Edition, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46730. Periodicals Postage Pending at Huntington, IN, and additional mailing offices, USA - phone: 800-318-2440 ext.7; fax: 866-891-7330 - e-mail: ossale@ossrom.com.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Our Sunday Visitor, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46730

Anointed with the oil of gladness

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and faithful people, for it is an eminently missionary joy. Our anointing is meant for anointing God's holy and faithful people: for baptizing and confirming them, healing and sanctifying them, blessing, comforting and evangelizing them.

And since this joy is one which only springs up when the shepherd is in the midst of his flock (for even in the silence of his prayer, the shepherd who worships the Father is with his sheep), it is a "guarded joy", watched over by the flock itself. Even in those gloomy moments when everything looks dark and a feeling of isolation takes hold of us, in those moments of listlessness and boredom which at times overcome us in our priestly life (and which I too have experienced), even in those moments God's people are able to "guard" that joy; they are able to protect you, to embrace you and to help you open your heart to find renewed joy.

A "guarded joy": one guarded by the flock but also guarded by three sisters who surround it, tend it and defend it: sister poverty, sister fidelity and sister obedience.

The joy of priests is a joy which is sister to poverty. The priest is poor in terms of purely human joy. He has given up so much! And because he is poor, he, who gives so much to others, has to seek his joy from the Lord and from God's faithful people. He doesn't need to try to create it for himself. We know that our people are very generous in thanking priests for their slightest blessing and especially for the sacraments. Many people, in speaking of the crisis of priestly identity, fail to realize that identity presupposes belonging. There is no identity – and consequently joy of life – without an active and unwavering sense of belonging to God's faithful people (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 268). The priest who tries to find his priestly identity by soul-searching and introspection may well encounter nothing more than "exit" signs, signs that say: exit from yourself, exit to seek God in adoration, go out and give your people what was entrusted to you, for your people will make you feel and taste who you are, what your name is, what your identity is, and they will make you rejoice in that hundredfold which the Lord has promised to those who serve him. Unless you "exit" from yourself, the oil grows rancid and the anointing cannot be fruitful. Going out from ourselves presupposes self-denial; it means poverty.

Priestly joy is a joy which is sister to fidelity. Not primarily in the sense that we are all "immaculate" (would that by God's grace we were!), for we are sinners, but in the sense of an ever renewed fidelity to the one Bride, to the Church. Here fruitfulness is key. The spiritual children which the Lord gives each priest, the children he has baptized, the families he has blessed and helped on their way, the sick he has comforted, the young people he catechizes and helps to grow, the poor he assists... all these are the "Bride" whom he rejoices to treat as his supreme and only love and to whom he is con-



stantly faithful. It is the living Church, with a first name and a last name, which the priest shepherds in his parish or in the mission entrusted to him. That mission brings him joy whenever he is faithful to it, whenever he does all that he has to do and lets go of everything that he has to let go of, as long as he stands firm amid the flock which the Lord has entrusted to him: Feed my sheep (cf. Jn 21:16,17).

Priestly joy is a joy which is sister to obedience. An obedience to the Church in the hierarchy which gives us, as it were, not simply the external framework for our obedience: the parish to which I am sent, my ministerial assignments, my particular work ... but also union with God the Father, the source of all fatherhood. It is likewise an obedience to the Church in service: in availability and readiness to serve everyone, always and as best I can, following the example of "Our Lady of Promptness" (cf. Lk 1:39, *meta spoudes*), who hastens to serve Elizabeth her kinswoman and is concerned for the kitchen of Cana when the wine runs out. The availability of her priests makes the Church a house with open doors, a refuge for sinners, a home for people living on the streets, a place of loving care for the sick, a camp for the young, a classroom for catechizing children about to make their First Communion... Wherever God's people have desires or needs, there is the priest, who knows how to listen (*ob-audire*) and feels a loving mandate from Christ who sends him to relieve that need with mercy or to encourage those good desires with resourceful charity.

All who are called should know that genuine and complete joy does exist in this world: it is the joy of being taken from the people we love and then being sent back to them as dispensers of the gifts and counsels of Jesus, the one Good Shepherd who, with deep compassion for all the little ones and the outcasts of this earth, wearied and oppressed like sheep without a shepherd, wants to associate many others to his ministry, so as himself to remain with us and to work, in the person of his priests, for the good of his people.

On this Holy Thursday, I ask the Lord Jesus to enable many young people to discover that burning zeal which joy kindles in our hearts as

soon as we have the stroke of boldness needed to respond willingly to his call.

On this Holy Thursday, I ask the Lord Jesus to preserve the joy sparkling in the eyes of the recently ordained who go forth to devour the world, to spend themselves fully in the midst of God's faithful people, rejoicing as they prepare their first homily, their first Mass, their first Baptism, their first confession... It is the joy of being able to share with wonder, and for the first time as God's anointed, the treasure of the Gospel and to feel the faithful people anointing you again and in yet another way: by their requests, by bowing their heads for your blessing, by taking your hands, by

bringing you their children, by pleading for their sick... Preserve, Lord, in your young priests the joy of going forth, of doing everything as if for the first time, the joy of spending their lives fully for you.

On this Thursday of the priesthood, I ask the Lord Jesus to confirm the priestly joy of those who have already ministered for some years. The joy which, without leaving their eyes, is also found on the shoulders of those who bear the burden of the ministry, those priests who, having experienced the labours of the apostolate, gather their strength and rearm themselves: "get a second wind", as the athletes say. Lord, preserve the depth, wisdom and maturity of the joy felt by these older priests. May they be able to pray with Nehemiah: "the joy of the Lord is my strength" (cf. Neh 8:10).

Finally, on this Thursday of the priesthood, I ask the Lord Jesus to make better known the joy of elderly priests, whether healthy or infirm. It is the joy of the Cross, which springs from the knowledge that we possess an imperishable treasure in perishable earthen vessels. May these priests find happiness wherever they are; may they experience already, in the passage of the years, a taste of eternity (Guardini). May they know, Lord, the joy of handing on the torch, the joy of seeing new generations of their spiritual children, and of hailing the promises from afar, smiling and at peace, in that hope which does not disappoint.

Over a thousand copies to a prison in Rome

The Pope's pocket-Gospel to inmates

The inmates of Rome's Regina Coeli prison received an Easter gift from Pope Francis. The Almoner Archbishop Konrad Krajewski, delivered 1,200 copies of the pocket-size Gospel on Wednesday, 16 April, during his visit to the prison.

It was the same book of the Gospels, including the Acts of the Apostles, which was given to the faithful at the Angelus on 6 April and at the Mass celebrated by the Holy Father in the Parish of San Gregorio Magno in Rome.

The prison was built between 1881 and 1884 on a location which had previously been used for monasteries. The Polish Archbishop explained that Regina Coeli has always been the first point of contact in the prison system. In fact "all those arrested in the territory of Court of Appeals of Rome are brought to this penitentiary". Archbishop Krajewski called it "the transitional jail".

There is an average of 1,000 inmates in the prison, 65 percent of which are immigrants: a number which is comparable to the percentage of immigrants present in Rome. The Friars Minor Conventual of the Province of Rome are in charge of the pastoral care of the prison. The current chaplains are Fr Vittorio Trani and Ernesto Piacentini, who work closely with 14 priests and Neocatechumenal catechists.

Every Sunday three Masses are celebrated in the prison. In addition, priests who speak other languages are available for those inmates from Spanish-speaking countries, Africa, Romania and Poland.

This year for Easter the inmates' rooms are being blessed and during Holy Week they will follow the Way of the Cross, led by various sections of the prison.



Patriarch emeritus of Babylon for Chaldeans

Cardinal Emmanuel Delly dies



Cardinal Emmanuel III Delly, Patriarch emeritus of Babylon of Chaldeans, died on Wednesday morning, 9 April, at a hospital in San Diego, United States of America, at the age of 87 years. The funeral was celebrated on Thursday, 10 April, in San Diego. The

Cardinal was laid to rest on Saturday, 12, in Detroit, where his immediate family resides. Upon hearing the news Pope Francis sent the following telegram to the current Chaldean Patriarch Raphaël Louis Sako of Babylon.

I was deeply saddened to hear of the death of His Beatitude Cardinal Emmanuel III Delly, Patriarch Emeritus of Babylon of the Chaldeans. I offer you, the clergy, men and women religious and lay faithful of the Patriarchate, both in Iraq and in the diaspora, my condolences and the assurance of my prayers. I recall with deep gratitude the late Patriarch's dedication to his people and to the promotion of respect-

ful, just and peaceful relations with followers of other religious traditions. I join you and all who mourn the passing of this esteemed Pastor in commending his noble soul to the infinite mercy of God our loving Father, and I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of peace and hope in the Lord.

FRANCISCUS PP.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, also sent a message of condolence to Chaldean Patriarch Raphaël Louis Sako.

I offer you, your brother Bishops and the entire Church in Iraq my heartfelt sympathy on the passing of His Beatitude Cardinal Emmanuel III Delly. I pray that the Lord whom he served with fidelity will grant him eternal rest.

Emmanuel Delly was born in Telkaif in the Archdiocese of Mossul for Chaldeans on 27 September 1927. He was baptized on 6 October of that same year. He earned degrees in sacred theology and in canon law, as well as a licence in philosophy at various Pontifical Universities in Rome. He was ordained a priest on 21 December 1952. In 1960 he returned to Baghdad and began serving as the secretary of the Patriarch. Elected to the titular Church of Paleopolis in Asia on 7 December 1962 and as Auxiliary Patriarch for Chaldeans, he was ordained a bishop on 19 April 1963. That year, as bishop, he became a member of the Second Vatican Council and served as a *peritus*. On 6 May 1967 he was promoted to the titular Archdiocese of Kaškar and continued to serve as Auxiliary. He also served as a consultant for the Commission to Revise the Code of Canons for the Eastern Churches and of the Commission for Relations with Islam under what is now called the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

On 19 October 2002 he resigned as Auxiliary Patriarch for reasons of age. However, on 3 December 2003 he was appointed Patriarch of Babylon during the dramatic moment in the history of his country: the previous March the war in Iraq had begun. On the day he was appointed he asked for and obtained ecclesiastical communion from John Paul II. On that occasion, the Patriarch wished to underline the faithfulness of the Chaldean Church to the Successor of Peter and assured his personal commitment on the path to Church unity.

During his ministry he encountered various difficulties including the attacks in 2004 of various places of worship in Baghdad and Mossul. In October 2005 he participated in the 11th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, and in November 2005 he presided over the Special Synod of Chaldean Bishops.

In a meeting at the end of 2006, the Patriarch told the Holy Father about the enormous problems which Christians in Iraq were facing daily. He spoke about his homeland as a place where Christians and Muslims have lived together for four centuries as children of the same land. A few months later, on 3 June 2007,

one priest and three subdeacons were killed after having had celebrated Mass in the Chaldean Church of the Holy Spirit in Mossul.

Benedict XVI created him a cardinal at the Consistory of 24 November 2007. After learning of the Pope's decision, he called it "an honour for the entire country, for all Iraqis without distinction. The Lord gave us the gift of intelligence to speak among ourselves and to dialogue because there can be no peace until there is security". He also added: "I would like to make it clear that there is no persecution against Christians as such, but against the

people of Iraq, because car bombs kill Christians and Muslims alike, without looking at ethnicity or religion. The sufferings of Christians are those of the Muslims and vice versa. Not only churches but also mosques were destroyed."

Following the path of dialogue, he relaunched an appeal for peace, brotherhood and love during the funeral of Archbishop Paulos Faraj Rahho of Mossul for Chaldeans, who was kidnapped on 29 February 2008 and later found dead. The Patriarch's voice returned to denounce the suffering of his people at the Synod of Bishops in October 2008,

at the Special Assembly for Middle East in October 2010. On 19 December 2012 he resigned from the pastoral governance of the Chaldean Church and retired to California.

The Cardinal died on Wednesday morning, 9 April, in a hospital in San Diego, California, USA, at the age of 87. His funeral was celebrated on Thursday, 10 April, in San Diego.

Delly served the Chaldean Church for 60 years and never abandoned his people, always praying for the faithful, helping and encouraging them even when Christians were being targeted.

The Pope's condolences

Fire in Valparaíso

A large fire devastated a portion of the city of Valparaíso, Chile, located on the Pacific coast. On Saturday night, 12 April, the high flames began engulfing the area, which was declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 2003. It has been estimated that 15 people have died and 500 were injured. More than 500 homes were destroyed and more than 10,000 people have been displaced.

Pope Francis expressed his spiritual closeness to the people of the city in a telegram signed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, to Bishop Gonzalo Duarte García de Cortázar. The Holy Father expressed his sorrow for the victims and the injured, and his support to the rescue teams. He invited the authorities and the people not to give up in the face of adversity.

The President of Chile, Michelle Bachelet, declared a state of emergency and mobilized the armed forces to aid the people of the city, which is located 120 kilometres from the capital. The President came to Valparaíso on Sunday, where she met with the Interior Minister Rodrigo Peñailillo and held an emergency meeting on the state of operations. "It's a tremendous tragedy," she said. The flames were put out on Monday morning; however, several outbreaks followed. According to the Mayor of Valparaíso, Jorge Castro, the terrible fire began in the forests of La Pólvora and moved quickly through residential areas, devastating almost 300 hectares.



The Chilean city on 12 April (AFP)

Catholic missionaries under threat

Kidnapping in Cameroon



"The people have been deeply struck by this kidnapping, they are showing us kindness and solidarity, no one wants us to leave", wrote the *Fidei Donum* Brothers currently in the Diocese of Maroua-Mokolo, Cameroon, the same area where, on the night of 4 and 5 April, two priests of the Diocese of Vicenza, Fr Giampaolo Marta and Fr Gianantonio Allegri, and a Canadian nun, Sr Gilberte Bussière, were kidnapped. "The authorities of Cameroon", they wrote in a letter sent to *Il Settimanale* – a periodical of the Diocese of Como – "have assured us that they will strengthen the security around our missions, and not only where whites are, because they believe that the Church's work is very important to building the values of peace and brotherhood. Until now in Cameroon the various religions have lived together peacefully and no one wants war".

At the General Audience the Holy Father speaks about the mystery of the suffering and death of the innocent

A humble victory

The only answer to the suffering and death of children is the humility of Christ's victory. At the Wednesday General Audience on 16 April in St Peter's Square, Pope Francis prepared the faithful to celebrate the Lord's passion, death and resurrection by reflecting on the mystery of suffering, especially the suffering of the innocent. He then explained the nature of Jesus' victory over sin and death. The following is a translation of the Pope's catechesis, which was delivered in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

Today, midway through Holy Week, the liturgy presents us with a regrettable episode: the account of the betrayal of Judas, who goes to the leaders of the Sanhedrin to bargain for and deliver his Master to them: "What will you give me if I deliver him to you?". At that moment, a price was set on Jesus. This tragic act marks the beginning of Christ's Passion, a dolorous path which he chooses with absolute freedom. He himself says it clearly: "I lay down my life.... No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (Jn

10:17-18). And thus by this betrayal Jesus' journey of humiliation and despoliation begins. As though he were an article for sale: this one costs 30 pieces of silver.... Once he has taken the path of humiliation and self-abandonment, Jesus travels along it to the very end.

Jesus attains complete humiliation through "death on the Cross". It was the worst form of death, that reserved for slaves and criminals. Jesus was considered a prophet but he died like a criminal. As we contemplate Jesus in his Passion, we see reflected the suffering of humanity, and we discover the divine answer to the mystery of evil, suffering and death. Many times we feel horror at the evil and suffering that surrounds us and we ask ourselves: "Why does God allow it?". It deeply wounds us to see suffering and death, especially that of the innocent! When we see children suffer it wounds our hearts: it is the mystery of evil. And Jesus takes all of this evil, all of this suffering upon himself. This week it would benefit all of us to look at the crucifix, to kiss the wounds of Jesus, to kiss them on the crucifix. He took upon himself all human suffering, he clothed himself in this suffering.

We expect God in His omnipotence to defeat injustice, evil, sin and suffering with a triumphant di-

vine victory. Yet God shows us a humble victory that, in human terms, appears to be failure. We can say that God conquers in failure! Indeed, the Son of God appears on the Cross as a defeated man: he suffers, is betrayed, reviled and finally dies. But Jesus allows evil to be unleashed on him and he takes it upon himself in order to conquer it. His Passion is not an accident: his death – that death – was "written". Truly we cannot find many explanations.

It is a puzzling mystery, the mystery of God's great humility: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son" (Jn 3:16). This week let us think deeply about the suffering of Jesus and let us say to ourselves: this is for my sake. Even if I had been the only person in the world, he would have done it. He did it for me. Let us kiss the crucifix and say: for my sake, thank you Jesus, for me.

When all seems lost, when no one remains, for they will strike "the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered" (Mt 26:31), it is then that God intervenes with the power of his Resurrection. The Resurrection of Jesus is not the happy ending to a nice story, it is not the "happy end" of a film; rather, it is God the Father's intervention there where human hope is shattered. At the moment when all seems to be lost, at the moment of suffering, when many people feel the need to get down from the Cross, it is the moment closest to the Resurrection. Night becomes darkest precisely before morning dawns, before the light dawns. In the darkest moment God intervenes and raises.

Jesus, who chose to pass by this way, calls us to follow him on his own path of humiliation. When at



certain moments in life we fail to find any way out of our difficulties, when we sink in the thickest darkness, it is the moment of our total humiliation and despoliation, the hour in which we experience that we are frail and are sinners. It is precisely then, at that moment, what we must not deny our failure but rather open ourselves trustingly to hope in God, as Jesus did. Dear brothers and sisters, this week it will do us good to take the crucifix in hand and kiss it many, many times and say: thank you Jesus, thank you Lord. So be it.

SPECIAL GROUPS

I greet all the English-speaking pilgrims taking part in today's Audience, including those from England, Australia, Canada and the United States. My special greeting goes to the delegation from the NATO Defense College and to the many young people present. Upon all of you, and upon your families, I invoke the gifts of the Spirit for a fruitful celebration of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord. God bless you all!

I extend a special thought to *young people*, the *sick* and *newlyweds*. Tomorrow the Easter Triduum, the heart of the liturgical year, begins. Dear *young people*, may you reflect on the price of blood which the Lord paid for your salvation. Dear *sick* people, may Good Friday teach you patience in moments of the cross. And may you, dear *newlyweds*, fill the walls of your homes with the joy of the Resurrection.

Pope Francis visits Secretariat of State

On Tuesday morning, 15 April, Pope Francis visited the offices of the Secretariat of State. He kindly wished the officials and employees a happy Easter. And accompanied by Archbishop Angelo Becciu, Substitute, and Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, Secretary for Relations with States, he greeted each person, thanking them for their work for the Holy See.



Cardinal Parolin celebrates the memory of the new Christian martyrs

The strength of weakness

Nigeria, Pakistan, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Tanzania, the Central African Republic. There is a long list of areas where Christians still today are enduring persecution, discrimination, privation of religious liberty and martyrdom. It was no accident that, during the Holy Mass he celebrated on 6 April at Santa Marta, Pope Francis recalled that "today, in the 21st century, our Church is a Church of martyrs". It is within this context that the Community of Sant'Egidio gathers in prayer each year during Holy Week to remember the new Christian martyrs in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere. On Tuesday, 15 April, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, led the community in prayer remembering these men and women who were ready to offer their lives for the Gospel. Also present at the gathering were representatives from the various Churches and Christian communities that have been marked by the blood of martyrs.

Commenting on the passage from the Gospel of Mark proclaimed in the liturgy of the Word, Cardinal Parolin pointed to the union of the loving witness borne by Christians who do not flee derision and the prospect of death for their fidelity to God, and Christ himself who out of love for the Father endured deri-

sion from those who passed beneath the Cross. "Today's prayer keeps their memory alive, so that their legacy lives on. This legacy flows from lives that were often humble and frail, but that were steeped in love".

Still today "in various contexts many of our brothers and sisters remain the object of anti-Christian hatred. They are not being persecuted because they are vying for worldly, political, economic or military power, but precisely because they are tenacious witnesses of another vision of life, one of abasement, service, freedom, which is based on faith".

In their weakness, the Secretary of State said, "they are close to us, they show us that strength comes from God and that it is always possible to go forth and reach out to those who are far away, even those who see you as an enemy". The Cardinal then emphasized the point by quoting the profound certainty expressed by Pope Francis in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*: "The disciple is ready to put his or her whole life on the line, even to accepting martyrdom, in bearing witness to Jesus Christ, yet the goal is not to make enemies but to see God's word accepted and its capacity for liberation and renewal revealed".

To the Pontifical Leonine College Seminary in Anagni

No room for the mediocre

Woe to bad shepherds who feed themselves and not the flock

In following Jesus, there is no place for mediocrity. Pope Francis explained this to seminarians from the Pontifical Leonine College in Anagni, whom he received on Monday morning, 14 April, in the Clementine Hall. The following is a translation of the Pope's address, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brother Bishops,
Priests and Seminarians,

I greet all of you who form the community of the Pontifical Leonine College in Anagni. I thank the Rector for the words which he addressed to me on your behalf. A special greeting to you, dear seminarians, who chose to come to Rome on foot! Courageous! This pilgrimage is a very beautiful symbol of your formative journey, which should be travelled with enthusiasm and perseverance, in Christ's love and in fraternal communion.

The "Leonine", as a regional seminary, serves several of the dioceses in Lazio. In line with its formative tradition it is called, in the Church today, to offer candidates to the priesthood a vital experience that transforms their vocational aspiration into a fruitful apostolic reality. Every Seminary, yours too, aims to prepare future ordained ministers in a climate of prayer, study and fraternity. It is this evangelical atmosphere, this life full of the Holy Spirit and of humanity, that allows those who immerse themselves therein to assimilate day by day the mind of Jesus Christ, his love for the Father and for the Church, his unreserved dedication to the People of God. Prayer, study, fraternity and also apostolic life: these are the four pillars of formation, which interact. A strong spiritual life; a deep intellectual life; community life; and lastly, apostolic life; with no order of importance. All four are important. If one of them is missing, formation is not comprehensive. And these



four interact. Four pillars, four elements on which a seminary must base its life.

You, dear seminarians, are not preparing for a career to become officials in a company or office. We have many, many priests who have only gone halfway. It is a source of sorrow that they have not attained fullness: there is something of an official in them, a bureaucratic element which does not benefit the Church. I urge you, be careful not to fall into this! You are becoming shepherds in the image of Jesus the Good Shepherd, in order to be like him and to act *in His person* amid his flock, to feed his sheep.

In view of this vocation, we might respond as Mary did to the angel: "How can this be?" (Lk 1:34). Becoming "good shepherds" in the image of Jesus is something too great, and we are too little... It is true! Over the last days, I have been thinking of the Holy Thursday Chrism Mass and I have felt this, that our littleness is made strong through this great gift that we receive: we are among the least of men. It is true, it is too great; however, it is not our work! It is the work of the Holy Spirit, with our cooperation. It is a matter of humbly offering oneself as clay to

be moulded, so that the potter, who is God, may work it with water and fire, with the Word and the Spirit. It is a matter of entering into what St Paul says: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). Only thus can one be a deacon or priest in the Church, only thus can we feed God's people and guide them, not along our ways but on the way of Jesus; indeed, on the *Way* that is Jesus.

It is true that there is not always a complete rectitude of intention right from the start. However, I would dare say: it is difficult that this be so. All of us have always had these little things that were not consistent with an upright intention, but this resolves itself in time, through ongoing daily conversion. Let us think about the Apostles! Think of James and John, one wanted to become the prime minister and the other the minister of the economy, because it was more important. The Apostles still did not have this uprightness, their minds were elsewhere, and the Lord with great patience corrected their intention and ultimately their intention was so upright that they gave their lives in preaching and martyrdom. Do not be afraid! "But I'm not sure whether I want to be a priest in order to be promoted..." "But do you love Jesus?" "Yes".

"Speak with your spiritual father, speak with your formators, pray, pray, pray and you will see that the uprightness of your intention will grow and progress".

And this journey means meditating on the Gospel every day, in order to transmit it by your life and preaching; it means experiencing the mercy of God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Never omit this! Always go to confession! And thus shall you become generous and merciful ministers because you will feel God's mercy upon you. It means nourishing yourselves with faith and love for the Eucharist, in order to nourish the Christian people; it means being men of prayer so as to become the voice of Christ praising the Father and interceding continually for the brethren (cf. Heb 7:25). The prayer of intercession, that made by those great men – Moses, Abraham – who contended with God for the people, that courageous prayer before God. If you – but I say this from the heart, without wishing to give offense – if you, if someone among you is not ready to follow this path, with these attitudes and these experiences, it is better that you have the courage to seek another path. There are many ways in the Church of bearing Christian witness and there are many paths that lead to holiness. In following as a minister of Jesus Christ there is no place for mediocrity, that mediocrity that always leads to using the People of God to one's own advantage. Woe to the bad shepherds who feed themselves and not the flock! – the Prophets so forcefully exclaimed (cf. Ez 34:1-6)! And Augustine takes up this prophetic phrase in his *De Pastoribus*, which I recommend you read and meditate upon. But woe to the bad shepherds, because the seminary, to tell the truth, is not a refuge for the many limitations we might have, a refuge for psychological defects or a refuge because I don't have the courage to go on with life and I am looking for a place to protect me. No, it is not this. If your seminary were this, it would become a hypothecary of the Church! No, the seminary is intended precisely to go forward, proceeding along this path. And when we hear the prophets say "woe!", may this "woe!" make you reflect seriously on your future. Pius XI once said that it was better to lose a vocation than risk accepting an unsure candidate. He was a mountain climber, he knew about these things.

Beloved, I thank you for your visit. I thank you for having come on foot. I accompany you with my prayer and blessing, and I entrust you to the Virgin, who is our Mother. Never forget her! The Russian mystics said that in moments of spiritual turmoil we need to take refuge under the mantle of the Holy Mother of God. Never leave there! Covered with her mantle. And please, pray for me!

VATICAN BULLETIN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

and dean of studies at St Paul's National Seminary Kinyamasika, Fort Portal.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Stefan Cichy of Legnica, Poland. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (16 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Zbigniew Kiernikowski, as Bishop of Legnica, Poland. Until now he has been Bishop of Siedlce (16 Apr.).

Bishop Kiernikowski, 67, was born in Szamorzewo, Poland. He was ordained a priest on 6 June 1971. He was was ordained a Bishop

on 20 May 2002, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Siedlce.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Ercilio Turco of Osasco, Brazil. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (16 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop João Bosco Barbosa de Sousa, OFM, as Bishop of Osasco, Brazil. Until now he has been Bishop of União da Vitória (16 Apr.).

Bishop Barbosa de Sousa, 61, was born in Guaratinguetá, São Paulo. He was ordained a priest on 7 January 1978. He was ordained a Bishop on 25 March 2007, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of União da Vitória.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Kazimierz Gurda as Bishop of Siedlce, Poland. Until now he has been Auxiliary Bishop of Kielce and titular Bishop of Chusira (16 Apr.).

Bishop Gurda, 60, was born in Książnice Wielkie, Poland. He was ordained a priest on 11 June 1978. He was ordained a bishop on 5 February 2005, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Chusira and Auxiliary Bishop of Kielce.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Giuseppe Piemontese OFM. Conv., as Bishop of Terni-Narni-Amelia, Italy. Until now he has been Gen-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

The Pontiff warns that manipulation in the education of children is still a danger

On the children's side

And he asks forgiveness for the abuse perpetrated by priests

Pope Francis asked for forgiveness for the abuse of minors perpetrated by some priests and requested that the correction of these abuses continue. He spoke of this in the presence of members of the International Catholic Child Bureau (BICE), whom he received in audience on Friday morning, 11 April, in his private library. In his off-the-cuff speech, replying to Mr Oliver Duval, President of BICE, he said he felt called to take responsibility for "all the evil" perpetuated by some priests and "to ask forgiveness for the harm that had been done, for the sexual abuse of children". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's words which were given in Italian.

I thank you for this meeting. I appreciate your commitment on behalf of children: it is an effective and current expression of the Lord Jesus' predilection for them. I have to say that in a well-structured society privileges must only be for children and the elderly. For the future of a people is in their hands! Children, because they will certainly have the strength to carry history forward, and the elderly because they carry within them the wisdom of a people and they must pass on this wisdom.

We can say that the BICE came into being through the motherhood of the Church. In fact, it originates from Pope Pius XII's intervention in defense of children in the aftermath of World War II. Since then, this organization has always been committed to promoting the protection of children's rights, and to contributing to the 1989 UN Convention. And in its work it constantly cooperates with the Holy See offices in New York, in Strasbourg and especially Geneva.

You spoke discreetly of the sensitive treatment in defence of the abused. I thank you for this discreet expression. But I feel compelled to personally assume all the evil which some priests – really quite a number, but not in proportion to the total number – to assume the burden myself and to ask for forgiveness for the harm they have done for having sexually abused children. The Church is aware of this damage. It is a personal, moral damage carried out by men of the Church, and we will not take one step backward concerning the treatment of this problem and the sanctions that must be imposed. On the contrary, I believe that we have to be very strong. There is no messing around when it comes to children!

In our day, it is important to implement the projects against slave-labour, against the recruitment of child soldiers and all forms of violence against minors.

On a positive note, we must reaffirm the right of children to grow up in a family with a father and a mother capable of creating a suitable environment for the child's development and emotional maturity. Continuing to grow up and mature in a correct relationship represented by the masculinity and femininity of a father and a mother and thus preparing for affective maturity.

At the same time, this implies supporting the right of parents to decide the moral and religious education of their children. And in this regard I would like to express my rejection of any kind of educational

experimentation on children. We cannot experiment on children and young people. They are not lab specimens! The horrors of the manipulation of education that we experienced in the great genocidal dictatorships of the 20th century have not disappeared; they have retained a current relevance under various guises and proposals and, with the pretense of modernity, push children and young people to walk on the dictatorial path of "only one form of thought". A little over a week ago a great teacher said to me... "At times with these projects – referring to actual educational projects – one doesn't know whether the child is

going to school or to a re-education camp".

Working for human rights presupposes the vital aim of fostering anthropological formation, of proper knowledge of the reality of the human person, and knowing how to respond to the problems and challenges posed by contemporary culture and the mentality propagated by the mass media. Obviously this does not mean we should take refuge in hidden protected areas, that today are unable to foster life, that belong to a past culture... No, not this, this is not good... We should face the challenges the new culture launches with the positive values of the human person. For you, this means offering your managers and operators continuing formation on the anthropology of the child, because that is where rights and duties have their foundation. It is against this background that educational projects must be planned and developed, mature and adapt to the signs of the times, al-



ways respecting the human identity and freedom of conscience.

Thank you again. I wish your work success!

The logo that the Commission of the protection of children and adolescents in Buenos Aires I had comes to mind, and which Norberto knows very well. The logo of the Holy Family on a donkey fleeing to Egypt to protect their child. Sometimes it is necessary to escape in order to defend; sometimes it is necessary to stop in order to protect; sometimes it is necessary to fight. But we must always have tenderness.

Thank you for the work you do!

Pope Francis denounces the economy of exclusion and inequality

Discarded lives

We must provide the "strongest possible opposition to every direct attack on life", the Holy Father affirmed, addressing the Italian Pro-life Movement on Friday morning, 11 April, in the Vatican's Clementine Hall. The following is a translation of the Pope's address, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

When I entered I thought I had mistaken the door, that I had entered a kindergarten... Please excuse me!

I cordially welcome each one of you. I greet Hon. Mr Carlo Casini and I thank him for his words, but

I especially wish to express my gratitude for all the work he has done over many years in the Movement for Life. I hope that when the Lord calls him, it will be children to open the door above! I greet the Presidents of Pro-life Help Centres and those in charge of the various services, especially "Project Gemma", which in these 20 years has permitted, through a special form of concrete solidarity, the birth of many children who otherwise would not have seen the light of day. Thank you for the testimony you give by promoting and defending human life from the moment of conception! We know that

human life is sacred and inviolable. Every civil right rests on the recognition of the first and fundamental right, that of life, which is not subordinate to any condition, be it quantitative, economic or, least of all, ideological. "Just as the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' sets a clear limit in order to safeguard the value of human life, today we also have to say 'thou shalt not' to an economy of exclusion and inequality. Such an economy kills... Human beings are themselves considered consumer goods to be used and then discarded. We have created a 'throw away' culture which is now spreading" (Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 53). And in this way life, too, ends up being thrown away.

One of the gravest risks our epoch faces, amid the opportunities offered by a market equipped with every technological innovation, is the divorce between economics and morality, the basic ethical norms of human nature are increasingly neglected. It is therefore necessary to express the strongest possible opposition to every direct attack on life, especially against the innocent and defenseless, and the unborn in a mother's womb is the example of innocence *par excellence*. Let us remember the words of the Second Vatican Council: "Life must be protected with the utmost care from the moment of conception: abortion and infanticide are abominable crimes" (Pastoral Constitution



Meditations for the Way of the Cross at the Colosseum led by the Holy Father on Good Friday

The Face of Christ, the Face of Man

The meditations for the 14 Stations of the Via Crucis – which Pope Francis will lead at the Colosseum in Rome on Good Friday, 18 April – were prepared by Archbishop Giancarlo Maria Bregantini of Campobasso-Boiano, President of the Commission for issues regarding social welfare, employment, justice and peace for the Italian Episcopal Conference. The following text is the English translation provided by the Vatican Publishing House.

Introduction

"He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth. These things occurred so that the Scripture might be fulfilled: 'None of his bones shall be broken'. And again



Jacob Ehrbahn, "Dining hall at the Society of St Vincent de Paul in Youngstown, Ohio" (2013, in "Poliitken")

another passage of Scripture says: "They will look on the one whom they have pierced" (Jn 19:35-37).

Loving Jesus, you went up to Golgotha without hesitation, in utter love, and let yourself be crucified without complaint. Lowly Son of Mary, you shouldered the burden of our night to show us the immense light with which you wanted to fill our hearts. In your suffering is our redemption; in your tears we see "the hour" when God's gracious love is revealed. In your final breath, as a man among men, you lead us back, seven times forgiven, to the heart of the Father, and you show us, in your last words, the path to the redemption of all our sorrows. You, the Incarnate All, empty yourself on the cross, understood only by her, your Mother, who stood faithfully beneath that gibbet. Your thirst is a wellspring of hope, a hand extended even to the repentant thief who this day, thanks to you, enters paradise. To all of us, cruci-

fied Lord Jesus, grant your infinite mercy, a fragrance of Bethany upon the world, a cry of life for all humanity. And at last, as we commend ourselves into the hands of your Father, open unto us the doors of undying Life! Amen.

First Station

Fingers pointed in accusation

"Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; but they kept shouting: 'Crucify him, crucify him!'. A third time he said to them: 'Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him'. But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished" (Lk 23:21-25).

Pilate, timid and afraid of the truth, fingers pointed in accusation, and the growing clamour of the raging crowd: these are the first stages in Jesus' death. Innocent, like a lamb, whose blood saves his people, Jesus, who walked among us bringing healing and blessing, is now sentenced to capital punishment. Not a word of gratitude from the crowd, which instead chooses Barab-

as, for Pilate, the case is an embarrassment. He hands it over to the crowd and washes his hands of it, concerned only for his own power. He delivers Jesus to be crucified. He wants to know nothing more of him. For Pilate, the case is closed.

Jesus' hasty condemnation thus embraces the easy accusations, the superficial judgements of the crowd, the insinuations and the prejudices which harden hearts and create a culture of racism and exclusion, a throw-away culture of anonymous letters and vicious slanders. Once we are accused, our name is immediately played across the front page; once acquitted, it ends up on the last!

And what about us? Will we have a clear, upright and responsible conscience, one which never forsakes the innocent but courageously takes the side of the weak, resisting injustice and defending truth whenever it is violated?

Second Station

The heavy wood of the cross

"Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls" (1 Pet 2:24-25).

The wood of the cross is heavy, for on it Jesus bears the sins of us all. He staggers under that burden, too great for one man alone (Jn 19:17).

It is also the burden of all those wrongs which created the economic crisis and its grave social consequences: job insecurity, unemployment, dismissals, an economy that rules rather than serves, financial speculation, suicide among business owners, corruption and usury, the loss of local industry.

This is the cross which weighs upon the world of labour, the injustice shouldered by workers. Jesus shoulders it himself and teaches us to reject injustice and to learn, with his help, to build bridges of solidarity and of hope, lest we be like sheep who have lost our way amid this crisis.

Let us return, then, to Christ, the shepherd and guardian of our souls. Let us strive, side by side, to provide work, to overcome our fears and our isolation, to recover a respect for political life and to work to resolve our problems together.

The cross will become lighter if carried with Jesus, and if all of us lift it together, for "by his wounds – which are now windows opening to his heart – we have been healed" (cf. 1 Pet 2:24).

Third Station

Weakness opening to acceptance

"He has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole" (Is 53:4-5).

It is a frail, utterly human Jesus whom we contemplate in wonder in this most sorrowful station. Yet it is precisely by falling that he shows ever more fully his infinite love. He is hemmed in by the crowd, dazed by the screaming of the soldiers, smarting from the wounds inflicted at his flogging, grief-stricken at the depths of human ingratitude. And so he falls. He falls to the ground.

But in this fall, crushed by the weight of the cross and sheer fatigue, Jesus once more becomes the Teacher of life. He teaches us to accept our weaknesses, not to be disheartened by our failures, and frankly to acknow-

ledge our limits: I can will what is right – says Saint Paul – but I cannot do it (Rom 7:18).

With the inner strength which comes to him from the Father, Jesus also helps us to accept the failings of others; to show mercy to the fallen and concern for those who are wavering. And he gives us the strength not to shut the door to those who knock and ask us for asylum, dignity and a homeland. In the awareness of our own weakness, we will embrace the vulnerability of immigrants, and help them to find security and hope.

For it is in the dirty water of the basin in the Upper Room, that is, in our own weakness, that we see reflected the true face of our God! For "every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God" (1 Jn 4:2).

Fourth Station

Tears of solidarity

"Simone blessed them and said to his mother Mary: 'This child is destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed – and a sword will pierce your own soul also' (Lk 2:34-35). Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another" (Rom 12:15-16).

This encounter of Jesus and Mary his mother is poignant and fearful. It expresses the invincible strength of that maternal love which overcomes all obstacles and always finds a way. But even more powerful is Mary's gaze of compassion as she sympathizes with and comforts her Son. Our own hearts are full of wonder as we contemplate the grandeur of Mary, who, although a creature, becomes a "neighbour" to her God and Lord.

Mary's gaze gathers up the tears shed by every mother for her distant children, for young people condemned to death, slaughtered or sent off to war,



Migrants arrive on the island of Lampedusa (2013, Reuters)

especially child soldiers. We hear in it the grief-stricken lament of mothers for their children who are dying of tumours caused by the burning of toxic waste.

Tears of bitterness! Tears of solidarity with the suffering of their children! Mothers keeping watch by night, their lamps lit, anxious and worried for their young who lack prospects or who fall into the abyss of drugs or alcohol, especially on Saturday nights!

At Mary's side, we will never be a people of orphans! As with St Juan Diego, Mary also offers us the caress of her maternal comfort and she tells us: Let not your heart be troubled... Am I not here who am your Mother?" (Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 286).

Fifth Station

A friendly, supportive hand

"They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus" (Mk 15:21).

Simon of Cyrene just happened to be passing by. But it becomes a decisive moment in his life. He was returning from the fields. A working man, a strong man. And so he was forced to carry the cross of Jesus, condemned to a shameful death (cf. Phil 2:8).

But this casual encounter leads to a life-changing decision to follow Jesus and to take up his cross each day in self-denial (cf. Mt 16:24-25). Mark tells us that Simon was the father of two Christians known to the community of Rome, Alexander and Rufus. A father who clearly impressed upon the hearts of his children the power of Jesus' cross. Life, if you grasp it too tightly, decays and turns to dust. But if you give it away, it blossoms and bears fruit, for you and for the entire community!

Sixth Station

A woman's tender love

"Come", my heart says, 'seek his face!' Your face, Lord, do I seek. Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help" (Ps 27:8-9).

Jesus drags himself along, gasping. Yet the radiance of his countenance is undiminished. No amount of abuse can dim his beauty. The spittle and the blows were unable to obscure it. His face appears as a burning bush which, the more it is buffeted, the more it radiates salvation. Silent tears fall from the Master's eyes. He bears the burden of one forsaken. And yet Jesus advances, he does not stop, he does not turn back. He confronts affliction. He is distressed by the cruelty all around him, yet he knows that his dying will not be in vain!

Jesus then halts before a woman who resolutely approaches him. It is Veronica, a true image of a woman's tender love.

Here the Lord embodies our need for love freely given, for the knowledge that we are loved and kept safe by acts of kindness and concern. Veronica's gesture is bathed in the precious blood of Jesus; it seems to wipe away the acts of irreverence which he endured in those hours of torture. Veronica is able to touch the gentle Jesus, to feel



The Via Crucis at the Colosseum last year

Christ is always there, Christ who suffers, is imprisoned and tortured. Even in our greatest suffering, he helps us not to yield to fear. Only with help can those who fall rise again, aided by skilled personnel, sustained by the fraternal support of volunteers, and put on their feet by a society which takes responsibility for the many injustices which occur within the walls of our prisons.

Eighth Station

Solidarity and compassion

"Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and your children" (Lk 23:28).

Like so many tapers of light, we see women lining the path of pain. Women of fidelity and courage, neither intimidated by the soldiers nor cringing before the wounds of the Good Master. They are prepared to approach him and to comfort him. Jesus stands there before them. Others trample on him as he falls exhausted to the ground. But the women are there, ready to give him the warmth of a loving heart. First they gaze at him from afar, but then they draw near, as would any friend, any brother or sister, who realizes that someone whom they love is in trouble.

Jesus is moved by their bitter lament, yet he tells them not to be disheartened by his sufferings; he tells them to be women not of grief but of faith! He asks for their solidarity in suffering, not merely a barren and plaintive sympathy. No more waiting, but a resolve to be reborn, to walk to the future, to advance with faith and hope towards that dawn which will break even more radiantly upon those who journey with their eyes fixed on God. Let us weep for ourselves if we do not yet believe in Jesus, who proclaimed the kingdom of salvation. Let us weep for the sins we have not confessed.

Then too, let us weep for those men who vent on women all their pent-up violence. Let us weep for women enslaved by fear and exploitation. But it is not enough to beat our breast and to feel compassion. Jesus demands more. Women need to be given reassurance, following his example; they need to be cherished as an inviolable gift for all humanity. So that our children may grow in dignity and hope.

Ninth Station

Leaving behind unhealthy nostalgia

"Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us!" (Rom 8:35, 37).

St Paul lists all his sufferings, yet he knows that Jesus was there before him: Jesus, who on the way to Golgotha fell once, twice, three times. Overwhelmed by hardship, persecution, the sword; weighed down by the wood of the

something of his radiance. Not only to alleviate his pain, but to share in his suffering. In Jesus, she sees all our neighbours who need to be consoled with a tender touch, and comes to hear the cries of pain of all those who, in our own day, receive neither practical assistance nor the warmth of compassion. Who die of loneliness.

Seventh Station

The anguish of imprisonment and torture

"They surrounded me like bees, they blazed like a fire of thorns; in the name of the Lord I cut them off! I was pushed hard, so that I was falling, but the Lord helped me. The Lord has punished me severely, but he did not give me over to death" (Ps 118:21, 12-13, 18).

Truly we see fulfilled in Jesus the ancient prophecies of the lowly and obedient Servant who takes upon himself all our history of sorrows. And so Jesus, prodded by the soldiers, stumbles, overcome by fatigue, surrounded by violence, utterly exhausted. Increasingly alone, amid the encircling gloom! His flesh is torn, his bones are weary.

In him we glimpse the bitter experience of those locked in prisons of every sort, with all their inhumane contradictions. Confined and surrounded, "pushed hard" and "falling". Prisons today continue to be set apart, overlooked, rejected by society. Marked by bureaucratic nightmares and justice delayed. Punishment is doubled by overcrowding; an aggravated penalty, an unjust affliction, one which consumes flesh and bone. Some – too many! – do not survive... And when one of our brothers and sisters is released, we still see them as "ex-convicts", and we bar before them the doors of social and economic redemption.

More serious is the practice of torture, which tragically is still practiced in different ways throughout our world. As it was in the case of Jesus, beaten, reviled by the soldiers, tortured with a crown of thorns, cruelly flogged.

Today, as we contemplate this second fall, how truly do those words of Jesus ring: "I was in prison and you visited me" (Mt 25:36). In every prison, at the side of each person being tortured,

The Face of Christ, the Face of Man

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

cross. Drained! He seems to say, as we do, in our darkest moments: I can't take it any more!

It is the cry of those persecuted, the dying, the terminally ill, those who strain under the yoke.

But in Jesus we also see strength: "Although he causes grief, he will have compassion" (Lam 3:32). He shows us that in affliction, his consolation is always present, a "surplus" to be glimpsed in hope. Like the pruning which the heavenly Father, in his wisdom, performs on the branches that will bear fruit (cf. Jn 15:8). Not to lop them off, but to make them bloom anew. Like a mother in labour: in pain, she cries out, she endures the pangs of childbirth. Yet she knows that they are the pangs of new life, of spring flowers blossoming on branches recently pruned.

May our contemplation of Jesus, who falls yet rises once more, help us to overcome the kinds of narrowness which fear of the future impresses on our hearts, especially at this time of crisis. Let us leave behind our unhealthy nostalgia for the past, our complacency and our refusal to change, and the attitude that says: "But we've always done it this way!". Jesus who stumbles and falls, but then rises, points us to a sure hope which, nourished by intense prayer, is born precisely at the moment of trial, not after or apart from it!

We will be more than conquerors, because of his love!

Tenth Station

Unity and dignity

"When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another: 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it'. This was to fulfil what the Scripture says: 'They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my tunic they cast lots'. And that is what the soldiers did" (Jn 19:23-24).

They didn't leave even a patch of cloth to cover Jesus' body. They stripped him naked. He was without his cloak, his tunic, any garment whatsoever. They stripped him as an act of utter humiliation. He was covered only by the blood which flowed from his gaping wounds.

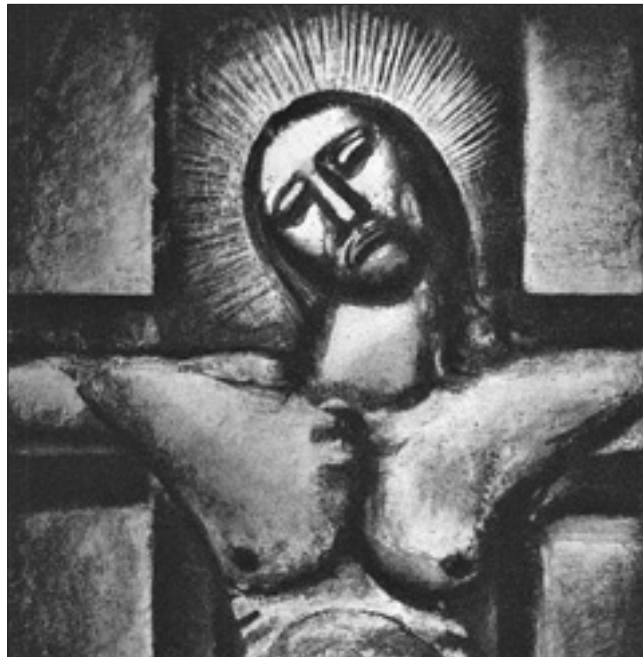
The tunic remained intact, a symbol of the Church's unity, a unity found in patient journeying, in a peace that is crafted, in a tapestry woven with the golden threads of fraternity, in reconciliation and in mutual forgiveness.

In Jesus, innocent, stripped and tortured, we see the outraged dignity of all the innocent, especially the little ones. God did not prevent his naked body from being exposed on the cross. He did this in order to redeem every abuse wrongly concealed, and to show that he, God, is irrevocably and unreservedly on the side of victims.

Eleventh Station

At the bedside of the sick

"And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take. It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read: 'The King of the Jews'. And with him they crucified two thieves, one on his right and one on his left. And the Scripture was ful-



Georges Rouault "Obedient until death and death on the Cross" (1914-1927, from *The Misereere Series*)

filled that says: 'And he was counted among the lawless'" (Mk 15:24-28).

And they crucified him! The punishment reserved for the despicable, for traitors and rebellious slaves. This is the punishment meted out to our Lord Jesus: coarse nails, spasms of pain, the anguish of his mother, the shame of being associated with two thieves, his garments divided like spoils among the soldiers, the cruel jeers of passers-by: "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him!" (Mt 27:42).

And they crucified him! Jesus does not come down, he does not leave the cross. He stays there, obedient to the Father's will to the very end. He loves and he forgives.

Today many of our brothers and sisters, like Jesus, are nailed to a bed of pain, at hospital, in homes for the elderly, in our families. It is a time of hardship, with bitter days of solitude and even despair: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mt 27:46).

May we never use our hands to inflict harm, but only to draw near, to comfort and to accompany the sick, raising them from their bed of pain. Sickness does not ask permis-

sion. It always comes unannounced. At times it upsets us, it narrows our horizons, it tests our hope. It is a bitter gall. Only if we find at our side someone able to listen to us, to remain close to us, to sit at our bedside... can sickness become a great school of wisdom, an encounter with God, who is ever patient. Whenever someone shares our infirmities out of love, even in the night of pain there dawns the paschal light of Christ, crucified and risen. What, in human terms, is a chastisement can

on the cross: Jesus himself, the eternal Word who out of love became man; he is God's answer Remember me..." (Lk 23:42). The fraternal plea of the thief who became his companion in suffering, pierces Jesus' heart; it is an echo of his own pain. And Jesus grants that request: "Today you will be with me in paradise" The pain of others always redeems us, since it draws us out of ourselves.

"Woman, here is your son! ..." (Jn 19:26). But it is his mother, Mary, who stood with John at the foot of the cross, who dispels all fear. She fills that scene with tenderness and hope. Jesus no longer feels alone. So it is with us, if beside our bed of pain there is someone who loves us! Faithfully. To the end.

"I am thirsty" (Jn 19:28). Like the child who asks his mother for drink, like the patient burning with fever... Jesus' thirst is the thirst of all those who yearn for life, freedom and justice. And it is the thirst of the one who is thirstiest of all: God, who, infinitely more than ourselves, thirsts for our salvation.

"It is finished" (Jn 19:30). Everything: every word, every action, every prophecy, every moment of Jesus' life. The tapestry is complete. The thousand colours of love now shine forth in beauty. Nothing is wasted. Nothing thrown away. Everything has become love. Everything completed for me and for you! And so, even dying becomes meaningful!

"Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Lk 23:34). Now, heroically, Jesus emerges from the fear of death. For if we live freely in love, everything is life. Forgiveness renews, heals, transforms and comforts! It creates a new people. It ends wars.

"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Lk 23:46). No longer emptiness and anguish. But complete trust in the Father's hands, complete repose in his heart. For in God, all the fragments at last come together to form a whole!

Twelfth Station

The seven last words

"After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the Scripture): 'I am thirsty'. A jar full of vinegar was standing there. So they put a sponge full of wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said: 'It is finished'. Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit" (Jn 19:28-30).

Jesus' seven last words on the cross are the perfection of hope. Slowly, with steps that are also our own, Jesus traverses all the darkness of night and abandons himself trustingly into the arms of his Father. It is the cry of the dying, the groan of the despairing, the entreaty of the lost. It is Jesus!

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mt 27:46). It is the cry of Job, of everyone struck by misfortune. And God is silent. He is silent because his response is there,

Thirteenth Station

Love is stronger than death

"When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him" (Mt 27:57-58).

Before burial, Jesus is at last given back to his mother. She is the icon of a broken hearted, yet she tells us that death does not forbid a mother's final kiss to her son. Bent over Jesus' body, Mary is bound to him in a total embrace. This icon is known simply as Pietà - pity. It is heartrending, but it shows that death does not break the bond of love. For love is stronger than death! Pure love is the love that lasts. Evening has come. The battle is won. The bond of love has not been broken. Those who are prepared to sacrifice their life for Christ will find

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

At the beginning of Holy Week the Pope explores the meaning of pain

The scandal of innocent suffering

Only Christ gives meaning to the scandal of innocent suffering. Pope Francis spoke to the Conference of the Italian Society of Surgical Oncology – organized by the Sapienza University of Rome and by Sant'Andrea Hospital – on Saturday, 12 April, in the Clementine Hall. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's address which was delivered in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I welcome all of you who are taking part in the Conference of the Italian Society of Surgical Oncology, organized by the Sapienza University of Rome and Sant'Andrea Hospital. In welcoming you, I call to mind all the men and women under your care, and I pray for them.

Scientific research has increased the possibilities for prevention and care; it has discovered therapies to treat a wide variety of diseases. You have also worked for this most worthy commitment: to respond to the needs and hopes of the sick throughout the world.

But in order to talk about total health, it is necessary not to lose sight of the fact that the human person, created in the image and likeness of God, is a unity of body and



spirit. The Greeks were more precise: body, soul and spirit. The human person is unity. These two elements may be distinguished but not separated, because the person is one. Thus also illness, the experience of pain and suffering, involves not only the physical dimension, but man in his totality. That is why there is need for integral treatment, which considers the person as a whole and joins medical care – “technical” care – to human, psychological and social support, for the physician has to

care for all aspects: the human body in its psychological, social and spiritual dimensions, as well as the spiritual accompaniment and support for the sick person's family. It is, therefore, imperative that healthcare workers be those who are “led by an integrally human view of illness and who as a result are able to effect a fully human approach to the sick person who is suffering” (John Paul II, *Motu Proprio Dolentium hominum*, 11 February 1985).

Fraternal sharing with the sick opens us up to the true beauty of human life, which also includes its fragility, thus enabling us to recognize the dignity and value of every human being, in whatever situation they may find themselves, from conception to death.

Dear friends, tomorrow is the start of Holy Week, which culminates in

the Triduum of the Passion, death and Resurrection of Jesus. Here, human suffering is completely taken on and redeemed by God. By God-Love. Only Christ gives meaning to the scandal of innocent suffering. Many times, the agonizing question of Dostoyevsky comes to the heart: why do children suffer? Only Christ can give meaning to this “scandal”. You can always look to Him, crucified and Risen, in carrying out your daily work. And at the foot of the Cross of Jesus, we also meet the Sorrowful Mother. She is the Mother of all humanity, and she is always close to her sick and ailing children. If our faith waivers, hers does not. May Mary always sustain you and your commitment to research and action in your work. And I pray, I ask the Lord to bless all of you. Thank you.

The Stations of the Via Crucis

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

it. Transfigured, on the other side of death.

Tears and blood mingle in this tragic embrace. So it is in the lives of our families whenever we suffer an unexpected and grievous loss, an emptiness and a pain which cannot be soothed, especially at the death of a child.

“Pity” means being a neighbour to our brothers and sisters who grieve and cannot be consoled. It is great act of charity to care for those suffering from bodily wounds, from mental depression, from a despairing heart. To love to the very end is the supreme teaching which Jesus and Mary have left us. It is the daily fraternal mission of consolation which is entrusted to us in this faithful embrace of the dead Jesus and his sorrowful Mother.

Fourteenth Station

The new garden

“Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. They laid Jesus there” (Jn 19:41-42).

That garden, with the tomb in which Jesus was buried, makes us think of another garden: the garden of Eden. A garden which through disobedience lost its beauty and became a wilderness, a

place of death where once there was life.

The overgrown branches which block us from savouring the fragrance of God's will – our attachment to money, our pride, our squandering of human lives – must now be trimmed back and grafted onto the wood of the Cross. This is the new garden: the cross planted upon the earth!

From on high, Jesus will now bring everything back to life. After his return from the pit of hell, where Satan had imprisoned so many souls, the renewal of all things will begin. His tomb represents the end of the old man. With as Jesus, God has not allowed his children to be punished by a relentless death. In the death of Christ all the thrones of evil, built on greed and hardness of heart, are toppled.

Death disarms us; it makes us realize that we are subject here on earth to a life that will come to an end. And yet, before the body of Jesus, laid in the tomb, we come to realize who we really are. Creatures who, in order to escape death, need their Creator.

The silence which fills that garden enables us to hear the whisper of a gentle breeze: “I am the Living One and I am with you” (cf. Ex 3:14). The curtain of the temple is torn in two. At last we see our Lord's face. And we know fully his name: mercy and faithfulness. We will never be confounded, even in the face of death, for the Son of God was free among the dead (cf. Ps 88:6 Vg.).

Discarded lives

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Gaudium et Spes, n. 51). I remember once, a long time ago, I had a conference with medical doctors. After the conference I greeted the doctors – this happened a long, long time ago. I was greeting the doctors, speaking to them, and one called me aside. He was holding a parcel and said to me: “Father, I want to leave this with you. These are the instruments that I used to perform abortions. I have met the Lord, I have repented and now I fight for life”. He handed me all these instruments. Pray for this good man!

Anyone who is Christian has a duty to bear witness to the Gospel: to protect life courageously and lovingly in all its phases. I encourage you to do this always with closeness, proximity: so that every woman may feel respected as a person, heard, accepted and supported.

We spoke of children: there are so many! But I would also like to speak about their grandparents, the other side of life! Because we must also take care of our grandparents, for both babies and grandparents are the hope of a people: children and young people because they will

carry it forward, they will carry the people forward; and grandparents, because they have the wisdom of history, they are the memory of a people. To protect life in an age when babies and grandparents enter this “throw-away” culture and become thought of as disposable material. No! Children and grandparents are the hope of a people!

Dear brothers and sisters, may the Lord sustain the work you carry out as Pro-life Help Centres and as the Movement for Life, especially the project “One of us”. I entrust you to the heavenly intercession of the Virgin Mother Mary and from my heart I bless you and your families, your children, your grandparents, and pray for me because I need it!

When one speaks about life one immediately thinks of one's mother. Let us turn to our Mother that she may watch over us all. *Hail Mary...*

After the blessing, the Pope said before leaving:

One last thing. The sound of children crying, complaining, screaming is the most beautiful music to me. But some of these babies are crying because they are hungry. Please feed them here in peace!



To the Pontifical Committee for Historical Sciences

In dialogue with the world today

In commemorating the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Pontifical Committee for Historical Sciences by Pius XII, Pope Francis congratulated the members and invited them to continue contributing through their expertise to the dialogue between the Church and the modern world. This was said at the private audience in the Vatican's Hall of the Popes, Saturday morning, 12 April, at the conclusion of the Pontifical Committee's Plenary Assembly. The following is a translation of the Pope's address, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am meeting you at the conclusion of your Plenary Assembly, during which, as recalled by the President, you are commemorating the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Pontifical Committee for Historical Sciences by Venerable Pius XII. I am grateful for the sentiments which Fr Ardura expressed on your behalf, and I am especially grateful for the commitment with which you place your expertise and your professionalism at the service of the Church and the Holy See.

Cicero's famous statement from *De Oratore* which Blessed John XXIII – who was so fond of the study of history – borrowed in his inaugural address at the Second Vatican Council, still holds true: “*Historia vero testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae*”. The study of history indeed represents one of the paths for the passionate search for truth that has always imbued the mind of man.

In your studies and in your teaching, you deal especially with the vicissitudes of the Church that journeys through time, with her glorious history of evangelization, of hope and daily struggle, of lives spent in service and fidelity to work, tiring as it may be (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 96), as well as infidelity, denial, sin. Your research, which is marked both by authentic passion for the Church and by sincere love for the truth, can be a great help to those whose task it is to discern what the Holy Spirit wishes to say to the Church today.

The Committee for Historical Sciences has long since entered into dialogue and cooperation with cultural institutions and academic centres from many nations, and has respectfully been welcomed into the global structure of historical studies. In meeting and working together with researchers from every culture and religion, you can offer a specific contribution to dialogue between the Church and the modern world.

Among the initiatives you have planned, I think particularly of the international conference to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. In it you will review re-

search's most recent findings, paying special attention to the Holy See's diplomatic initiatives during the tragic conflict and the contribution Catholics and other Christians made by coming to the aid of the wounded, refugees, orphans and widows, by searching for the missing, as well as by rebuilding a world torn apart by what Benedict XV termed “needless carnage” (*Letter to Leaders of the Peoples at War*, 1 August 1917). And the heartfelt appeal of Pius XII still resonates today as timely as ever: “Nothing is lost by peace. Everything may be lost by war” (*Radio message: Un'ora grave to the Heads of State and peoples of the world*, 24 August 1939). When we listen again to these prophetic words, truly we realize that history is the “*magistra vitae*”.

Dear friends, I wish you an ever more fruitful journey of study, and I encourage you to continue your research in the service of truth with enthusiasm. I bless you from the heart and I ask you to remember me in prayer. Thank you!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

eral Custos of the Custody of the Sacred Convent of Assisi (16 Apr.).

Fr Piemontese, 67, was born in Monte Sant'Angelo, Italy. He holds degrees in theology and canon law. He made his perpetual profession on 8 October 1967. He was ordained a priest on 5 April 1971. He has served as educator for formation houses; as animator for youth ministry; as parish priest in Bari, Italy; as member of the provincial chapter; as provincial minister.

PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Holy Father appointed Ms Prof. Margaret Scotford Archer as

For the meeting of the Government and the Opposition

Respect for differences in Venezuela

On Thursday, 10 April, the Holy Father sent a message to Caracas through the Apostolic Nuncio in Venezuela, Archbishop Aldo Giordano, on the occasion of the first formal and public encounter of dialogue between the Government and the Opposition. The following is a translation of the Pope's message, which was sent in Spanish.

To H.E. President
Nicolás Maduro Moros,
to the Hon. Members of the
Government of the Bolivarian
Republic of Venezuela,
Representatives of the *Mesa de
Unidad Democrática*
and Chancellors of UNASUR

First of all, I would like to thank you for inviting the Holy See to participate in the dialogue and peace process for your beloved country. I would like to assure each of you of my prayer, so that the meeting and the process you are undertaking may bear the fruits of national reconciliation and peace that you desire, gifts that we invoke from God for the entire people of Venezuela.

I am conscious of the anxiety and grief that many people are suffering, and I am also greatly concerned by what is happening, and I reaffirm my affection for all Venezuelans, particularly the victims of violence and their families. I am deeply convinced that violence can never bring peace and wellbeing to a country, because it creates – always and only – violence. On the contrary, through dialogue you can rediscover your common and shared foundation, which can lead to overcoming the present moment of conflict and polarization, which wounds Venezuela so deeply, and thereby find ways to work together. Respecting and re-

cognizing the differences that exist between the Parties will foster the common good. All of you, indeed, share a love for your country and for your people, as well as the serious anxiety caused by the economic crisis, violence and crime. You all have at heart the future of your children and the desire for peace, which characterizes the Venezuelan people. You all have in common faith in God and the will to defend human dignity.

Precisely what you have in common is what urges you to undertake the dialogue that is beginning today, which must have as its foundation an authentic culture of encounter that is aware that unity always prevails over conflict. I encourage you therefore to look beyond the eventuality of conflict, with reciprocal readiness to become and be genuine peacemakers. At the heart of every authentic dialogue there is, first and foremost, recognition and respect for the other. There is, above all, the “heroism” of forgiveness and mercy, which frees us from resentment and hate, and which opens a truly new path. It is a long and difficult path, which requires patience and courage, but it is the only one that can lead to peace and justice. For the good of all the people and for the future of your children, I call upon you to have this courage.

With these sentiments I accompany the entire, beloved Nation of Venezuela, and from my heart I impart to each of you the Apostolic Blessing, invoking the Lord's assistance.

From the Vatican, 10 April 2014,
the second year of my
Pontificate.

FRANCIS

VATICAN BULLETIN

President of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences. She has previously served as Director of the Centre for Social Ontologies at *École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL)*, Pontifical Academician and member of the Board of the Academy in Great Britain (12 Apr.).

LENTEN SERMON

On 11 April, Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap., delivered the fifth Lenten Sermon in the Redemptoris Mater Chapel in the presence of the Holy Father.

NECROLOGY

Bishop Ján Hirka, Bishop emeritus of Prešov, Slovakia, at the age of 90 (10 Apr.).

Archbishop Robert-Casimir Tonyui Messan Dosshe-Anyron, Archbishop emeritus of Lomé, Togo, at the age of 88 (15 Apr.).

Bishop Anselmo Zarza Bernal, Bishop emeritus of León, Mexico, at the age of 97 (15 Apr.).

START OF MISSION

On 12 February Archbishop Miroslaw Adamczyk, titular Archbishop of Otricoli, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio in Sierra Leon with the presentation of his Letters of Credence to H.E. Mr Ernest Bai Koroma, President of the Republic.

To the community of the Pontifical Gregorian University and associated institutions

Theologians on their knees with open minds

Pope Francis addressed members of the Pontifical Gregorian University, whom he received in audience together with members of the Pontifical Biblical Institute and the Pontifical Oriental Institute, on Thursday morning, 10 April, in the Paul VI Hall. The following is a translation of the Pope's address, which was given in Italian.

Dear Cardinals,
Venerable Brothers in the
Episcopate and in the Priesthood,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I welcome all of you, professors, students and staff of the Pontifical Gregorian University, the Pontifical Biblical Institute and the Pontifical Oriental Institute. I greet Fr Nicolás, the Father Delegate, and all the other Superiors, as well as the Cardinals and Bishops present. Thank you!

The Institutions to which you belong – formed into a *Consortium* by Pope Pius XI in 1928 – are entrusted to the Society of Jesus, and share the same desire “to serve as a soldier of God beneath the banner of the Cross ... and to serve the Lord alone and the Church, His spouse, under the Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ on earth” (*Formula*, 1). It is important that collaboration and synergy develop among you, strong in the historic memory and at the same time informed of the present and looking to the future – the Father General used to say: look far ahead”, to the horizon” – looking to the future with creativity and imagination, seeking to form a global vision of the situations and present challenges and a shared manner of confronting them, finding new paths without fear.

The first aspect that I would like to focus on, thinking of your commitment both as teachers and as students, as well as staff of the Institution, is that of *appreciating the very place* in which you work and study, that is, *the City and above all the Church of Rome*. Here there is a past and there is a present. There are the roots of faith: the memory of the Apostles and of the Martyrs; and here there is the ecclesial “today”, there is the present journey of this Church which presides in charity, at the service of unity and universality. All of this should not be taken for granted! It must be experienced and appreciated, with a commitment that is partly institutional and partly personal, left to the initiative of each one.

But at the same time you bring the variety of your home Churches, of your own cultures. This is one of the inestimable richness of Rome's institutions. It offers a precious opportunity for growing in the faith and of opening the mind and heart to the horizon of catholicity. Within this horizon the dialectic between the “centre” and the “peripheries” assumes its proper form, namely the form of the Gospel, according to the logic of God who reaches the centre

from the peripheries in order to return to the peripheries.

The other aspect that I wish to share is that of the *relationship between study and spiritual life*. Your intellectual commitment, in teaching and in research, in study and in the most comprehensive formation, will be all the more fruitful and effective the more fully it is animated by love for Christ and for the Church, the more the relationship between study and prayer is strengthened and made more harmonious. This is not out-dated, this is the centre!

This is one of the challenges of our time: transmitting knowledge and offering a key for vital comprehension, not a heap of notions unconnected to one another. There is need of a true evangelical hermeneutic for better understanding life, the world and humanity, not of a synthesis but of a spiritual atmosphere of research and certainty based on the truths of reason and of faith. Philosophy and theology permit one to acquire the convictions



that structure and strengthen the intelligence and illuminate the will ... but this is fruitful only if it is done with an open mind and on one's knees. The theologian who is satis-

fied with his complete and conclusive thought is mediocre. The good theologian and philosopher has an open, that is, an incomplete, thought, always open to the *maius* of God and of the truth, always in development, according to the law that St. Vincent of Lerins describes as: “*annis consolidetur, dilatetur tempore, sublimetur aetate*” (*Commonitorium primum*, 23; *PL* 50, 668): it is strengthened over the years, it expands over time, it deepens with age. This is the theologian who has an open mind. And the theologian who does not pray and who does not worship God ends up sunk in the most disgusting narcissism. And this is an ecclesial illness. The narcissism of theologians, of thinkers, is disgusting.

The purpose of study at every Pontifical University is ecclesial. Research and study ought to be integrated with personal and community life, with missionary commitment, with fraternal charity and sharing with the poor, with care of the interior life in relationship with the Lord. Your Institutes are not machines for producing theologians and philosophers; they are communities in which one grows, and that growing occurs in the family. In the university family there is the charism of governance, entrusted to the superiors, and there is the diaconate of the non-teaching staff, which is indispensable for creating a family atmosphere in everyday life,



and also for creating the attitude of humanity and of practical wisdom, that will make the students of today people capable of building humanity, of transmitting the truth in a human dimension, of understanding that if one lacks the goodness and the beauty of belonging to a workaday family one ends up being an intellectual without talent, an ethicist without goodness, a thinker lacking in the splendour of beauty and only “made up” in formalism. The daily, respectful contact with hard work and the witness of the men and women who work in your Institutions will give you that dose of realism that is so necessary to ensure that your knowledge will be human and not that of the laboratory.

Dear brethren, I entrust each of you, your studies and your work, to the intercession of Mary, *Sedes Sapientiae*, of St Ignatius of Loyola and of your other Patron Saints. I bless you from the heart, and I pray for you. And you, please, pray for me too! Thank you!

And now, before I give you my blessing, I invite you to pray to Our Lady, the Mother, that she may help us and protect us. *Hail Mary...*

First monastery for men in Thailand

According to the rule of St Benedict

The first male monastery in Thailand recently opened. The monastery is located on the outskirts of Chiang Mai in the province of Lamphun, in northern Thailand. It has 10 cells for monks, eight guest rooms and a ground-floor chapel. The five monks follow the ancient rule of St Benedict and alternate between moments of prayer (the Liturgy of the Hours) and work. The monks grow corn, rice and fruit. All the monks are from Vietnam which already has three Benedictine monasteries. However in recent years there has been a great increase in vocations and the Government has forbidden the Benedictines to open another monastery. Therefore the proposal to open a monastery nearby in Thailand was welcomed.

At the opening of the monastery Bishop Francis Xavier Vira Arprondratana of Chiang Mai and Bishop Antonio Mattiazzo of Padua, Italy, were present. At the ceremony the Bishop of Padua underlined that “thanks to the support of many people who believed in this project this dream has been realized. May Mary accompany and mark your steps, daily prayer and work, may you be a sign, God's gaze among these beautiful people who today are called to a new beginning”. The Church of the Triveneto region is in charge of Asian missions and there are two areas entrusted to six *fidei donum* in the Diocese of Chiang Mai.



Morning Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae

Thursday, 10 April
The dictatorship
of uniformity

In his homily at Holy Mass, Pope Francis commented on the day's Readings from the Book of Genesis (17:3-9) and the Gospel of John (8:51-59). The Pope introduced his remarks noting how "the day's readings set before us God's promise to our father Abraham" to make him "the father of a multitude of nations".

The Bishop of Rome explained that "from that moment on, the people of God began to journey in search" of a way for this promise to be fulfilled, for it to become a reality. It was a promise, he said, "which even for Abraham, took the form of a covenant". God in fact said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations".

In this way, the Pope continued, "we understand that the commandments are not a cold law; the commandments were born out of this relationship of love, this promise, this covenant".

Drawing on the day's Gospel, the Pope expanded upon his reflection: "the mistake of the doctors of the law who were not good and wanted to stone Jesus — at the time there were also good Pharisees and doctors of the law — was to separate the commandments from the promise, from the covenant"; that is, "to separate the commandments from the heart of God, who had commanded Abraham to journey on".

According to Pope Francis, their mistake came from "not understanding the path of hope: they believed that everything had been completed and fulfilled with the commandments". However, he said, "the commandments find their origin in love for God's faithfulness and are rules for going forward, indications for not erring; they help us to continue on until we reach the end of our journey in an encounter with Jesus". Yet "the people of whom the Gospel speaks today did not know how to connect the fulfillment of the commandments with God's covenant with their father Abraham". Continually they repeat: "there are laws we must observe!". They did so "because their hearts were closed, their minds were closed to everything that was new and to all that the prophets had foretold". For them the only thing that mattered was this: that "we have to do it this way, and this is the way to proceed!".

This is "the tragedy of the closed mind and heart," the Pope said. "When the heart and mind are closed there is no room for God". Yes, he explained, we are merely who we are, and yet we are convinced that "people have to do only what I say", and we are certain that we are doing "just what the commandments say".



"It is impossible for Jesus to convince a closed mind, impossible to give a new message" which, in fact, "is not new" but "is exactly what had been promised by God's faithfulness and the prophets". And yet Jesus' interlocutors "do not understand: their minds are closed, their thoughts are closed, because in their egoism, in their sins, they have closed their hearts". Theirs is "a closed way of thinking that is not open to dialogue, to the possibility that there is something else, to the possibility that God might speak to us and tell us what the journey is like, and how he journeyed with the prophets". Surely, the Pope said, "these people had not listened to the prophets, and they were not listening to Jesus". Yet theirs "went beyond simple stubbornness. No, it was

"Today too," the Pope said, "uniform thought has been made into an idol. Today one has to think in a certain way, and if you don't think in this way you aren't modern, you aren't open". Or worse, he said, many times "when some governments ask for financial help, we here them respond: 'if you want this help you have to think this way and you have to enact this law and that, and that other'".

Therefore "today, too, a dictatorship of uniform thought exists and this dictatorship is the same" as the one established by the people described in today's Gospel. The way of acting is the same. There are those today who "take up rocks to stone the freedom of nations, the freedom of the people, freedom of conscience, the people's relationship with God. And today Jesus is crucified once again".

Thus, "this is not a story of long ago, of evil Pharisees — but there were also good Pharisees — of certain people who were closed. It is also a story of our own day". The Pope added that, in the presence of such dictatorships, "the Lord's advice is always the same: watch and pray".

Pope Francis concluded his homily exhorting those present "not to be foolish" and to "be humble and pray that the Lord may always grant us the freedom of an open heart, to receive his word which is full of promise and joy! It is the covenant! And with this covenant may we continue on!"

Friday, 11 April

The devil exists

In his homily at Holy Mass, Pope Francis focused his reflection on the Christian's battle against Satan and the reality of the devil in the world today. "The devil also exists in the 21st century, and we need to learn from the Gospel how to battle against him"; and we must not be "naive" about his ways. In fact, he said, we need to be very aware of the strategies he employs to entrap us. For the devil is not a thing of the past.

In his comments Pope Francis spoke explicitly about our "battle" with the father of lies. Even "Jesus'

life was a battle: he came to conquer evil, to conquer the prince of this world, to conquer the devil". Jesus battled against the devil, who many times sought to tempt him. "During his earthly life, he experienced temptation and persecution". Thus, Pope Francis observed, "we who want to follow Jesus, and who by our baptism have taken to the Lord's path, must be well aware of this truth: we too are tempted, we too are objects of the demon's attacks", for "the spirit of evil does not want us to become holy, it does not us to bear witness to Christ, it does not want us to be disciples of Christ".

The Pope then asked: "What does the spirit of evil do to snatch us away from Jesus' path through temptation?". He replied: "the devil's temptations have three main characteristics, and we have to be aware of them in order to not to fall into his trap". First "the temptation begins subtly but then it grows and increasingly grows stronger". Then "it infects someone else ... it spreads to another and seeks to take root in the community". Finally, "to calm the soul, it seeks to justify itself". In short: it "grows, spreads and justifies itself".

Turning to the Scriptures, Pope Francis noted that we see this reality played out in "Jesus' temptation" in the desert, which "appears almost as a seduction". "The devil proceeds slowly" and says to Jesus: "But why not do this? Throw yourself from the temple and save thirty years; in just one day everyone will say of you: behold the Messiah!". The Pope remarked that this is the same tactic "he used with Adam and Eve". The devil said to them: "Taste the apple, it is good, it will make you wise!" The devil employs the tactics of seduction: he speaks "almost as though he were a spiritual master, as though he were an advisor".

However, "if the temptation is rejected, it grows and returns stronger". In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus warns that "when the devil is rejected, he turns around and goes looking for several companions and returns with this band". This is how "temptation grows and becomes stronger. It grows by involving others". This is exactly what happened with Jesus, as we read in the day's passage from the Gospel of John (10:31-42). The Pope said: "the devil involved Jesus' enemies, who at this point were speaking to him stone in hand", ready to kill him. Here we see clearly temptation's power to grow by spreading to others.

The third characteristic of the devil's temptation is that "in the end it seeks to justify itself". Here Pope Francis recalled the people's reaction when Jesus returned "for the first time to his home in Nazareth" and went to the Synagogue. First, they were struck by his words, and then immediately the temptation arose: "Is this not the son of Joseph the carpenter and Mary? By what authority does he speak if he never went to university and if he has never studied?". They sought to justify their desire "to kill him there and then, to



*Only trust in God can transform doubts
into certainty, evil into good,
night into radiant dawn.*

(@Pontifex on 11 April)

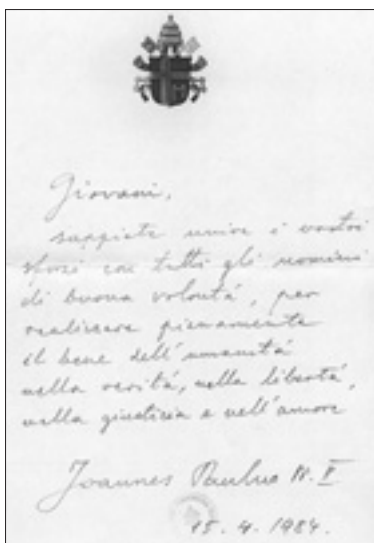
more! It was the idolatry of their own thought: 'I see it this way, this is how it must be and there is no other way!'"

The Pharisees in today's Gospel "had one single way of thinking and they wanted to impose this way of thinking on the people of God. Jesus therefore reproaches them for laying so many commandments on the backs of the people. He reproaches them for their inconsistency", which resulted from their way of thinking: "this is how it must be done!". They had adopted a "theology that was a slave to this one way of thinking". In the end "there was no possibility for dialogue, for opening oneself to the newness that God heralded through the prophets". Indeed, "these people killed the prophets" and they "closed the door to God's promise".

"The phenomenon of uniform thought" has caused "misfortune throughout human history", the Pope said. "Over the course of the last century we all saw how the dictatorship of uniform thought ended up killing many, many people". Those who were responsible for such atrocities were of the mind: "it is impossible to think otherwise, one has to think like this!"

Jubilee celebration for youth 30 years ago

The prologue of WYD



Thirty years ago on Palm Sunday, 15 April 1984, John Paul II celebrated the conclusion of the celebration for youth as part of the Jubilee Year of the Redemption. This event – which brought young people from around the world to Rome – was a kind of prologue to World Youth Day which Pope Wojtyła instituted the following year and convened in 1986. Published here is the dedication by the Pope for the booklet made by the Office of Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff for the occasion. In it, he encouraged young people to join with “all men of good will in order to fulfil completely the good of humanity in truth, in freedom, in justice and in love”.



Twenty thousand in Jerusalem at the palm procession

Waiting for peace in the Holy Land

It is an especially important Holy Week in the Holy Land because the Christian community there is waiting for Pope Francis. Approximately 20,000 faithful, many of whom were pilgrims from around the world, took part in the traditional procession of palms: a rite, which – according to the website of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem for Latins – ancient manuscripts testify that the tradition began in the holy

city in the fourth century. Seventeen centuries later, this tradition is more vibrant than ever and the Christian community – especially the Catholic community of the Latin rite – has made it an essential moment opening the week which leads to the Resurrection. Recalling the triumphal entrance of Christ into Jerusalem, the procession wound its way around the Shrine of Bethphage, the Church of St Anna, the entrance to the Old City. It was marked by an additional hope, that linked to Pope Francis' upcoming visit.

As the procession moved ahead, the faithful watched – some with welcome signs for the Pontiff recalling the hope of a better life for the faithful who live in the war-torn region. The Patriarch of Jerusalem for Latins Fouad Twal also expressed his hope for a future of peace, “Ours is a procession of salvation: Jesus, King of Peace, entered Jerusalem, the city that has never known peace”. The Patriarch in a short address, repeating the words of Pope Francis in St Peter's Square, asked the faithful “Where are we today? Are we disciples who stay with Jesus at all costs? Or are we with those who reject him?”.

Holy Week in Cuba

Good Friday is now officially a public holiday in Cuba. Parliament made the decision last December and it was announced on 16 April in the daily *Granma*, the official organ of the Communist party. The new law will take effect in June. However, the provisional regulation has been in effect since 2012, directly following Pope Benedict XVI's pastoral visit to the island in March of that year.

Furthermore, this year the Catholic Church in Cuba will be allowed to broadcast Holy Week Liturgies on television and radio. In

2012, Cardinal Jaime Lucas Ortega y Alamino, Archbishop of San Cristóbal de La Habana, was – for the first time in 40 years – able to broadcast a message on Good Friday.



Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

throw him off the mountain”.

In the day's Gospel from John, Jesus' interlocutors also want to kill him. So much so that “they have stone in hand as they speak to him”. “The temptation turned everyone against Jesus”; and everyone sought to justify himself. Pope Francis identified “the climax of this self-justification” in the high priest's statement: “Enough, you all know nothing! Do you not know that it is better that one man die for the people? He must die to save the people!”. Everyone agreed: thus it was a “complete justification”.

“When we are tempted, we travel down this same road”, the Pope warned. “We are tempted and it grows and spreads to others”. Just

think of gossip: if we are “a little envious of one person or another”, we don't contain our envy but sometimes share it with others by speaking badly about the person. This is how gossip “seeks to grow and spread to another person and yet another ...”. This “is the way gossip works, and we have all been tempted to gossip”. Pope Francis then confided: “I too have been tempted to gossip! It is a daily temptation”, that “begins slowly, like a trickle of water”.

This is why we have to “be careful when we feel something in our heart that would lead to destroying people, destroying reputations, destroying our lives, leading us into worldliness and sin”. We must be “careful because if we do not stop ourselves in time, that trickle of wa-

ter, when it grows and spreads, will become a tidal wave that leads us to justify ourselves”, just as the people from the day's Gospel justified themselves and eventually said of Jesus: “it is better than one man die for the people”.

“We are all tempted, because ... our spiritual life, our Christian life, is a battle”, the Pope said. This comes from the fact that “the devil does not want us to become holy, he does not want us to follow Jesus”. “Of course one of you will say: but Father, you are so old fashioned, speaking about the devil in the 21st century!”. To this Pope Francis replied: “watch out, the devil exists! The devil exists even in the 21st century. And we must not be naive. We must learn from the Gospel how to battle against him”.

Best wishes for the Jewish feast of Passover

Pope Francis sent a message for the great feast of Passover to the Chief Rabbi of Rome, Riccardo Di Segni. In his telegram the Pontiff expressed his wish that the memory of the freedom from oppression obtained by the Lord “may inspire thoughts of mercy, reconciliation and fraternal closeness” with those who suffer under the burden of slavery. The Holy Father also asked for prayers for his upcoming visit to Jerusalem.



On Palm Sunday the Bishop of Rome opens Holy Week with a question

Who am I?

At Palm Sunday Mass, 13 April, in St Peter's Square, the Pope opened Holy Week calling the faithful to look deep within themselves and contemplate their identity in relation to the Lord. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's extemporaneous homily.

This week begins with the festive procession with olive branches: the entire populace welcomes Jesus. The children and young people sing, praising Jesus.

But this week continues in the mystery of Jesus' death and his resurrection. We have just listened to the Passion of our Lord. We might well ask ourselves just one question: Who am I? Who am I, before my Lord? Who am I, before Jesus who enters Jerusalem amid the enthusiasm of the crowd? Am I ready to express my joy, to praise him? Or do I stand back? Who am I, before the suffering Jesus?

We have just heard many, many names. The group of leaders, some priests, the Pharisees, the teachers of the law, who had decided to kill Jesus. They were waiting for the chance to arrest him. Am I like one of them?

We have also heard another name: Judas. Thirty pieces of silver. Am I like Judas? We have heard other names too: the disciples who understand nothing, who fell asleep while the Lord was suffering. Has my life fallen asleep? Or am I like the disciples, who did not realize what it was to betray Jesus? Or like that other disciple, who wanted to settle everything with a sword? Am I like them? Am I like Judas, who feigns love and then kisses the Master in order to hand him over, to betray him? Am I a traitor? Am I like those people in power who hastily summon a tribunal and seek false witnesses: am I like them? And when I do these things, if I do them, do I think that in this way I am saving the people?

Am I like Pilate? When I see that the situation is difficult, do I wash my hands and dodge my responsibility, allowing people to be condemned – or condemning them myself?

Am I like that crowd which was not sure whether they were at a religious meeting, a trial or a circus, and then chose Barabbas? For them it was all the same: it was more entertaining to humiliate Jesus.

Am I like the soldiers who strike the Lord, spit on him, insult him, who find entertainment in humiliating him?

Am I like the Cyrenean, who was returning from work, weary, yet was good enough to help the Lord carry his cross?

Am I like those who walked by the cross and mocked Jesus: "He was so courageous! Let him come down from the cross and then we will believe in him!". Mocking Jesus....

Am I like those fearless women, and like the mother of Jesus, who were there, and who suffered in silence?

Am I like Joseph, the hidden disciple, who lovingly carries the body of Jesus to give it burial?

Am I like the two Marys, who remained at the Tomb, weeping and praying?

Am I like those leaders who went the next day to Pilate and said, "Look, this man said that he was going to rise again. We cannot let another fraud take place!", and who block life, who block the tomb, in order to maintain doctrine, lest life come forth?

Where is my heart? Which of these persons am I like? May this question remain with us throughout the entire week.



The Pontiff's staff, made of olive wood, was a hand-crafted gift from the inmates of a prison in Sanremo, Italy

At the Angelus Pope Francis announces his visit to Daejeon this 15 August

To Korea for an encounter with the youth of Asia

This August Pope Francis will travel to Korea for the purpose of meeting, among others, Asia's young people at a continental meeting in the city of Daejeon. The Bishop of Rome announced this at the Angelus on Palm Sunday, 13 April. The following is a translation of the Pope's words which were given in Italian.

At the conclusion of this celebration, I extend a special greeting to the 250 delegates – bishops, priests, religious and laity – who have participated in World Youth Days organized by the Pontifical Council for the Laity. Thus begins the journey of preparation for the next worldwide gathering, which will take

place in July 2016 in Krakow and will take the theme: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy" (Mt 5:7).

In a moment, the Brazilian youth will hand on the World Youth Day Cross to the Polish youth. Blessed Pope John Paul II entrusted the cross to youth 30 years ago: he asked them to carry it throughout the world as a sign of Christ's love for humanity.

This 27 April we will all have the joy of celebrating the canonization of this Pope, together with John XXIII. John Paul II, who initiated World Youth Day, shall become its great patron; in the Communion of

Saints he will continue to be a father and friend to the young people of the world.

Let us ask the Lord that the Cross, together with the Icon of Mary *Salus Populi Romani*, may be a sign of hope for everyone, by revealing to the world the invincible love of Christ.

Then, the World Youth Day Cross and Icon were passed from the hands of Brazilian youth to those of the Polish young people, who will carry the beloved symbols to Krakow for WYD 2016. The Pope then said the following:

I greet all the Romans and the pilgrims! In a special way I greet the delegations from Rio de Janeiro and Krakow who are being led by their Archbishops, Cardinal Orani João Tempesta and Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz.

Within this context it is my joy to announce that, please God, next 15 August, in Daejeon, in the Republic of Korea, I will meet with the youth of Asia in their great continental gathering.

And now let us turn to the Virgin Mother, that she may help us always to follow in faith the example of Jesus.

Angelus Domini....

