

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

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Friday, 27 March 2015

Pope Francis visits Pompeii and Naples and proclaims to every sector of society that there is hope

The future of a people

Through the power of young people, the love of families and the wisdom of the elderly



On the first day of spring

Spring couldn't have gotten off to a better start in Naples, that beautiful and passionate city which welcomed Pope Francis so warmly, as he himself said upon his return to Rome. In the span of roughly 10 hours on the first day of spring, Bergoglio physically touched the most diverse social situations: from his arrival in troubled Scampia to his meeting on the Caracciolo Seafront, illuminated by the soft colours of sunset.

In turn, Neapolitans showed their gratitude for his presence with spontaneous gestures of love: the inmates in Poggioreale who joined the Pope for lunch, the patients at the Gesù Nuovo after praying before the tomb of Giuseppe Moscati, the holy doctor, and even the pizza chefs who managed like acrobats to slip a cheese pizza to the Pope as he was leaving.

Bergoglio found a simple and effective way to speak directly to everyone he met, inserting extensive, off-the-cuff remarks into his prepared speeches and even delivering whole addresses extemporaneously. But at the centre of everything was Jesus. How can we be sure that Jesus is at the centre? Look to the Mother who always points to him, he said. And there are other signs: a spirit of poverty and corporal and spiritual works of mercy, oft-forgotten but still being "carried out by elderly women and simple people in neighbourhood parishes".

Following the Lord is being on the move, going to Naples and anywhere else in the world, "everyone needs a little more conversion", as the Pontiff said to the clergy and religious. After blessing the faithful with the relic of St Januarius, he advised them to do three things: adore God, love the Church and be missionaries.

Before leaving, the Pope listened to the hopes and fears of the people of Naples and once again he found just the right words to touch their hearts and ours. God speaks, acts, and sometimes God remains silent, but no matter what God will not fail us. And so we look with trust to the future, "young and old together", on the first day of Spring.

On Saturday, 21 March, Pope Francis traveled to Naples, first stopping at the Shrine of Pompeii where he entrusted the day's visit to Our Lady. From there, he went to Scampia, on the northern outskirts of Naples, where he called for an end to evil, and specifically to organized crime which runs rampant in that neighbourhood. The next stop was in the heart of the city where he celebrated Mass with tens of thousands of Neapolitans. There he urged them not to let themselves be robbed of hope. "Corruption and crime must not disfigure the face of this beautiful city", he said. His message was one of hope, and his

mission – as he said at lunch with inmates of a local prison – was to bring "the word and love of Jesus". Throughout the rest of the day, the Holy Father visited the priests and religious of the Archdiocese, as well

as the sick and young people. Warming the hearts of the Neapolitans, he concluded his addresses with a blessing in dialect.

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The Holy Father's dismay over the plane crash in France

Europe in mourning

Sad details continue to emerge as to what happened on the Germanwings flight that crashed into the French Alps on Tuesday, 24 March, claiming the lives of 150 people. Pope Francis reached out to the relatives of the victims in a telegram signed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, sent to Bishop Jean-Philippe Nault of Digne.

The statement reads: "Having learned of the tragic plane crash in the region of Digne, which caused many casualties, including many children, His Holiness Pope Francis joins in the grief of the families, expressing his closeness to them in sorrow. He prays for peace for the deceased, entrusting them to the mercy of God that He might welcome them into His dwelling place of peace and light. He expresses his deep sympathy for all those touched by this tragedy, as well as for the rescue workers labouring under difficult conditions. The Holy Father asks the Lord to give strength and consolation to all, and, as a comfort, he invokes upon them an abundance of divine Blessings."



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G.M.V.

VATICAN BULLETIN

AUDIENCES

Wednesday, 18 March

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

Friday, 20 March

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

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization

Members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan, on a visit *ad Limina Apostolorum*:

– Archbishop Joseph Mitsuaki Takami, PSS, of Nagasaki

– Archbishop Thomas Aquino Manyo Maeda of Osaka with Auxiliary Michael Gorō Matsuura, titular Bishop of Sfasferia

– Archbishop Peter Takeo Okada of Tokyo, Apostolic Administrator “*sede vacante et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis*” of Saitama with Auxiliary James Kazuo Koda, titular Bishop of Sinnada in Mauretania

– Bishop Dominic Ryōji Miyahara of Fukuoka

– Bishop Paul Kenjiro Koriyama of Kagoshima

– Bishop Berard Toshio Oshikawa, OFM Conv., of Naha

– Bishop Paul Suco Hamaguchi of Oita

– Bishop Paul Yoshinao Otsuka of Kyōto

– Bishop Augustinus Jun-ichi Nomura of Nagoya

– Bishop John Eijiro Suwa of Takamatsu

– Bishop Tarcisius Isao Kikuchi, SVD, of Niigata

– Bishop Bernard Taiji Katsuya of Sapporo

– Bishop Martin Tetsuo Hiraga of Sendai

– Bishop Rafaël Masahiro Umemura of Yokohama

A delegation of the “Red Ser Fiscal” (Fiscal network for electoral transparency)

NEW DIOCESE

The Holy Father established the new Diocese of Nogales, Mexico, with territory taken from the Archdiocese of Hermosillo, Mexico, making it a suffragan of the same Archdiocese. He also appointed Bishop José Leopoldo González González, as the first Bishop of the new Dio-

cese of Nogales. Until now he has been titular Bishop of Thuburnica and Auxiliary of the Archdiocese of Guadalajara, Mexico (19 Mar.).

Bishop González González, 60, was born in Cañadas de Obregón, Mexico. He was ordained a priest on 27 May 1984. He was ordained a bishop on 25 January 2006, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Thuburnica and Auxiliary of Guadalajara, Mexico.

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Abbot Joseph Roduit, CR, from his office as Abbot Ordinary of the Territorial Abbey of Saint-Maurice, Switzerland. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (18 Mar.).

From the Congregation for the Causes of Saints

Promulgation of decrees

On Wednesday, 18 March, the Holy Father received in audience Cardinal Angelo Amato, SDB, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, and authorized the Congregation to promulgate the following decrees:

– a miracle attributed to the intercession of the married couple Louis Martin, layman and father, born in Bordeaux, France on 22 August 1823 and died in Arnières-sur-Iton, France on 29 July 1894 and Marie-Azélie Guérin Martin, laywoman and mother, born in Saint-Denis-sur-Sarthon, France on 23 December 1831 and died in Alençon, France on 28 August 1877.

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Francesco Gattola, diocesan priest and founder of the Daughters of the Most Holy Immaculate Virgin of Lourdes, born in Naples, Italy on 19 September 1822 and died there on 20 January 1899;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Peter Barbarić, Jesuit novice, born in Klobuk, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 19 May 1874

and died in Travnik, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 15 April 1897;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Mary Aikenhead, Foundress of the Religious Sisters of Charity of Ireland, born in Cork, Ireland on 19 January 1787 and died in Dublin, Ireland on 22 July 1858;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Elisabetta Baldo, widow, foundress of the Holy Home of St Joseph in Gavardo, and co-foundress of the Humble Servants of the Lord, born in Gavardo, Italy on 29 October 1862 and died there on 4 July 1926;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Vincentia of the Passion of the Lord (in the world: Hedvigis Jaroszweska), foundress of the Benedictine Samaritan Sisters of the Cross of Christ, born in Piotrkow Trybunalski, Poland on 7 March 1900 and died in Warsaw, Poland on 10 November 1937;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Juana of the Cross (in the world: Juana Vázquez Gutiérrez) professed religious of the Franciscan Nuns of the Third Order Regular and Abbess of the Santa Maria de la Cruz convent in Cubas, born in Villa de Azaña (today: Numancia de la Sagra), Spain on 3 May 1481 and died in Cubas de la Sagra, Spain on 3 May 1534;

– the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Maria Orsola Bussoni, young layperson of the Focolare Movement, born in Vallo Torinese, Italy on 2 October 1954 and died in Ca' Savio, Italy on 10 July 1970.

The Holy Father appointed Archbishop Esmeraldo Barreto de Farias, Ist. del Prado, as Auxiliary Bishop of São Luís do Maranhão, Brazil, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Summula. Until now he has been Archbishop of Porto Velho, Brazil (18 Mar.).

Archbishop Barreto de Farias, 65, was born in Santo Antônio de Jesus, Brazil. He was ordained a priest on 9 January 1977. He was ordained a bishop on 11 June 2000, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Paulo Afonso. On 30 November 2011 he was raised to dignity of Archbishop and appointed to the Archdiocese of Porto Velho, Brazil.

The Holy Father appointed Msgr Vlastimil Kročil as Bishop of České Budějovice, Czech Republic. Until now he has been professor of patrology and early Christian literature at the Faculty of Theology and parish administrator of Veselí nad Lužnicí (19 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Kročil, 53, was born in Brno, Czech Republic. He holds a degree in theology and philosophy. He was ordained a priest on 16 July 1994. He has served in parish ministry and as: chaplain of Jindřichův Hradec; member of the presbyteral council and of the college of consultors, and diocesan representative for pastoral ministry.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Mario Eduardo Dorsonville-Rodríguez, from the clergy of Washington, as Auxiliary Bishop of Washington, USA, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Kearney. Until now he has been director of the Spanish Catholic Centre, and vice-president for the Mission of Catholic Charities (20 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Dorsonville-Rodríguez, 54, was born in Bogota, Colombia. He holds a BA in philosophy and theology, a licence in theology and a D.Min. He was ordained a priest on 23 November 1985. In Bogota, he served in parish ministry and as: associate chaplain and professor of ethics at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia; professor of pastoral counsel and catechesis at the Major Seminary of Bogota. In Washington, he served in parish ministry and as: adjunct spiritual director at the St John Paul II Seminary; and member of the college of consultors and of the presbyteral council.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Vladimír Filo of Rožňava, Slovakia. It was presented in accord with can. 401 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law (21 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Stanislav Stolárik as Bishop of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

An exchange of best wishes

Pope Francis telephoned Pope emeritus Benedict XVI around noon on Thursday, 19 March, the Solemnity of St Joseph, to send him his best wishes on his Saint's day. During the phone call, the Pope emeritus also congratulated Francis on the second anniversary of his pontificate.

Statement by the Dean of the College of Cardinals

Renewal for the Church in Scotland

The Holy Father has accepted the resignation of the rights and privileges of a Cardinal, expressed in canons 349, 353 and 356 of the Code of Canon Law, presented by Cardinal Keith Michael Patrick O'Brien, Archbishop Emeritus of Saint Andrews and Edinburgh, after a long period of prayer. With this provision, His Holiness would like to manifest his pastoral solicitude to all the faithful of the Church in Scotland and to encourage them to continue with hope the path of renewal and reconciliation.

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At the General Audience Pope Francis calls all to pray for families and to renew prayer for the Synod

Within the fold and without

A special "pause in prayer" for the family and for life: this was the heart of the General Audience on Wednesday, 25 March, the Solemnity of the Annunciation. The Pope asked the faithful present in St Peter's Square to recite the Hail Mary and the Prayer to the Holy Family composed for the Synod of Bishops, recalling that the Church "as a mother, never abandons the family, even when it is downhearted, wounded and humiliated in so many ways. Neither when it falls into sin nor moves away from the Church; she will always do anything to try to take care of it and heal it, to call it to conversion and to reconcile it to the Lord". The following is a translation of the Pope's catechesis, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

In our series of catecheses on the family, today's is a special step: it will be a pause in prayer.

Indeed, on 25 March in the Church we solemnly celebrate the Annunciation, the mystery of the Incarnation begins. The Archangel Gabriel visits a humble girl in Nazareth and proclaims to her that she will conceive and bear the Son of God. With this Annunciation the Lord illuminates and strengthens Mary's faith, as He will also do for her spouse Joseph, so that Jesus could be born into a human family. This is very beautiful: it shows us how deeply the mystery of the Incarnation, as God desired, encom-

passes not only conception in the mother's womb, but also acceptance in a real family. Today I would like to contemplate with you the beauty of this bond, the beauty of God's condescension; and we can do this by reciting the *Hail Mary* together, the first part of which takes up the words of the Angel, those he addressed to the Virgin. I invite you to pray together:

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you.
blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners
now and at the hour of our
death. Amen.

And now a second aspect: on 25 March, the Solemnity of the Annunciation, in many countries the *Day for Life* is celebrated. That is why, 20 years ago, St John Paul II on this day signed the Encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*. In order to commemorate this anniversary there are many followers of the Pro-Life Movement present in the Square today. In *Evangelium Vitae*, the family occupies a central place, as it is the womb of human life. The word of my venerable Predecessor reminds us that a human couple was blessed from the beginning to form a community of love and life, entrusted with the mission to generate life. Christian spouses, celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage,



make themselves open to honour this blessing, with the grace of Christ, for their whole lives. The Church, for her part, is solemnly committed to care for the family that is born, as a gift of God for her life, in good times and in bad: *the bond between the Church and the family is sacred and inviolable*. The Church, as a mother, never abandons the family, even when it is downhearted, wounded and humiliated in so many ways. Neither when it falls into sin nor moves away from the Church; she will always do everything to try to care for and heal it, to call it to conversion and to reconcile it to the Lord.

If this then is the task, it is clear how much prayer the Church needs in order to be able, in every age, to carry out this mission! Prayer full of love for the family and for life. Prayer that can rejoice with the rejoicing and suffer with the suffering.

Here then is what I, together with my co-workers, have thought to offer today: *renewal of prayer for the Synod of Bishops on the Family*. We relaunch this commitment until this coming October, when the Ordinary Synodal Assembly dedicated to the family will take place. I would like

this prayer, as the whole journey of the Synod, to be animated by the compassion of the Good Shepherd for his flock, especially for people and families who, for different reasons, are "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Mt 9:36). Thus, sustained and animated by the grace of God, the Church can be ever more committed, and ever more united, in the witness of the truth of the love of God and of his mercy for the world's families, none excluded, both within the fold and without.

I ask you, please do not fail to pray. Everyone – the pope, cardinals, bishops, priests, men and women religious, lay faithful – we are all called to pray for the Synod. This is what is needed, not gossip! I also call to prayer those who feel distant or who are no longer used to it. This *prayer for the Synod on the Family* is for the good of everyone. I know that this morning you were given a holy card, which you are holding in your hands. I invite you to keep it and carry it with you, so that in the coming months you can recite it often, with holy persistence, as Jesus asked us to. Now let us recite it together:

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
in you we contemplate
the splendour of true love,
to you we turn with trust.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
grant that our families too may be
places of communion and prayer,
authentic schools of the Gospel
and small domestic Churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
may families never again experience
violence, rejection and division:
May all who have been hurt
or scandalized
find ready comfort and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth, may the
approaching Synod of Bishops
make us more mindful of the sacred-
ness and inviolability of the family,
and its beauty in God's plan.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
graciously hear our prayer. Amen.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, including those



Love will overcome hatred

The path of charity and love is the only way to defeat the terror of the Islamic State. This was the appeal of the relatives of David Haines and Alan Henning, two British citizens who were decapitated by the Islamic State in Syria on 13 September and 3 October 2014, respectively. Mike Haines, David's brother, and Barbara Henning, Alan's wife, wished to meet the Pope in order to "bear witness together", which they previously expressed in a joint letter calling churches, mosques and synagogues to "open their doors and welcome people of all faiths". Accompanying them at the audience was the British Ambassador to the Holy See, Mr Nigel Baker, and London-based Imam Shah Nawaz Haque. "My brother", said Mike Haines, "was passionate about his work as a humanitarian aid worker: he helped everyone without regard for race or religion". A veteran of the Royal Air Force, he decided to dedicate

himself full-time to volunteer work. After serving in the Balkans, he worked in Lebanon, and South Sudan. Then the husband and father of two left for Syria "full of joy and with the desire to stand beside the poorest of the poor". That same spirit inspired Alan Henning, recalled his wife, also on behalf of his two children: "It's up

to us to prevent that the violent actions of a few people hinder the unity of peoples of all religions". They described to Pope Francis their commitment to promoting charity in order to defeat hate: "The murderers will not stop believing in what led to the death of our loved ones: serving those in need".



The 14th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops will take place in the Vatican from 4 to 25 October, on the theme: "The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and in the Contemporary World". Published below is the list of Members and Substitutes elected by the entire parties, namely Bishops' Conferences and Eastern Churches, and was ratified by the Holy Father on 17 March.

A) Episcopal Conferences

AFRICA

Northern Africa (CERNA)

Member: Bishop Jean-Paul Vesco, OP, of Oran, Algeria

Substitute: Archbishop Santiago Agrelo Martínez, OFM, of Tanger, Morocco

Botswana - South Africa - Swaziland

Members: Archbishop Stephen Brislin of Cape Town, Kaapstad, President of the Bishops' Conference, South Africa

Bishop Zolile Peter Mpambani, SCI, of Kokstad, South Africa

Substitutes: Bishop Dabula Anton Mpako of Queenstown, South Africa
Bishop Jan de Groef, M.Afr., of Bethlehem, South Africa

Burkina Faso and Niger

Member: Bishop Joseph Sama of Nouna, Burkina Faso

Substitute: Archbishop Djalwana Laurent Lompo of Niamey, Niger

Chad

Member: Bishop Henri Coudray, SJ, titular Bishop of Silli, Vicar Apostolic of Mongo

Substitute: Bishop Joachim Kouraleyo Tarounga of Moundou

Congo (Dem. Rep.)

Members: Bishop Nicolas Djomo Lola of Tshumbe, President of the Episcopal Conference

Bishop Philibert Tembo Nlandu, CICM, of Budjala

Substitute: Bishop Joseph Banga Bane of Buta

Guinea

Member: Archbishop Vincent Coulibaly of Conakry

Substitute: Bishop Raphaël Balla Guilavogui of N'Zérékoré

Lesotho

Member: Archbishop Gerard Tlali Leretholi, OMI, of Maseru, President of the Episcopal Conference

Substitute: Bishop Augustinus Tumaole Bane, OMI, of Leribe

Liberia

Member: Bishop Anthony Fallah Borwah of Gbarnga

Substitute: Bishop Andrew Jagaye Karnley of Cape Palmas

Mali

Member: Bishop Jonas Dembélé of Kayes

Substitute: Archbishop Jean Zerbo of Bamako

Mozambique

Member: Archbishop Francisco Chimoio, OFM Cap, of Maputo

Members and Substitutes elected

Approaching the Synod



Substitute: Bishop Adriano Langa, OFM, of Inhambane

Namibia

Member: Bishop Philipp Pöllitzer, OMI, of Keetmanshoop

Substitute: Bishop Joseph Shipandeni Shikongo, OMI, titular Bishop of Capra, Vicar Apostolic of Rundu

Nigeria

Members: Archbishop Matthew Man-oso Ndagoso of Kaduna

Bishop Camillus Raymond Umoh of Ikot Ekpene

Bishop Jude Ayodeji Arogundade of Ondo

Substitute: Bishop Hilary Paul Odili Okeke of Nnewi

Archbishop Ignatius Ayau Kaigama of Jos, President of the Bishops' Conference

Togo

Member: Bishop Jacques Danka Longa of Kara

Substitute: Bishop Benoît Comlan Messan Alowonou of Kpalimé

Uganda

Members: Archbishop John Baptist Odama of Gulu, President of the Episcopal Conference

Bishop Joseph Anthony Zziwa of Kiyinda-Mityana, Vice-President of the Episcopal Conference

Substitutes: Bishop Lambert Bainomugisha, titular Bishop of Tacia montana, Auxiliary of Mbarara

Bishop Sanctus Lino Wanok of Nebbi

AMERICA

Antilles

Member: Bishop Francis Alleyne, OSB, of Georgetown, Cooperative Republic of Guyana

Substitute: Bishop Emmanuel Lafont of Cayenne, French Guyana

Bolivia

Members: Bishop Braulio Sáez García, OCD, titular Bishop of Rhasus, Auxiliary of Santa Cruz de la Sierra

Bishop Krzysztof Janusz Białasik Wawrowska, SVD, of Oruro

Substitute: Bishop Aurelio Pesoa Ribera, OFM, titular Bishop of Leges, Auxiliary of La Paz

Guatemala

Members: Bishop Rodolfo Valenzuela Núñez of Vera Paz, Cobán,

President of the Episcopal Conference

Substitute: Bishop Gonzalo de Villa y Vásquez, SJ, of Sololá-Chim-altenangó

Haiti

Member: Bishop Yves-Marie Péan, CSC, of Les Gonaïves

Substitute: Archbishop Max Leroy Mésidor of Cap-Haitien

Nicaragua

Member: Bishop César Bosco Vivas Robelo of León en Nicaragua

Substitute: Bishop Juan Abelardo Mata Guevara, SDB, of Estelí

Panama

Member: Bishop Aníbal Saldaña Santamaría, OAR, Bishop Prelate of Bocas del Toro

Substitute: Cardinal José Luis Lacunza Maestrojuán, OAR, Bishop of David, President of the Episcopal Conference

Peru

Members: Archbishop Salvador Piñeiro García-Calderón, of Ayacucho, President of the Episcopal Conference

Archbishop Héctor Miguel Cabrejos Vidarte, OFM, of Trujillo

Substitute: Archbishop José Antonio Eguren Anselmi, SCV, of Piura

Venezuela

Members: Cardinal Jorge Liberato Urosa Savino, Archbishop of Caracas

Archbishop Diego Rafael Padrón Sánchez of Cumaná, President of the Episcopal Conference

Substitute: Bishop Fernando José Castro Aguayo, titular Bishop of Ampora, Auxiliary of Caracas, Santiago de Venezuela

Bishop Rafael Ramón Conde Alfonso of Maracay

ASIA

China

Member: Bishop John Baptist Lee Keh-mien of Hsinchu

Substitute: Bishop Thomas Chung An-zu of Kiayi

Philippines

Members: Archbishop Romulo G. Valles of Davao

Archbishop Jose S. Palma of Cebu

Bishop Gilbert A. Garcera of Daet

Substitutes: Bishop Pablo Virgilio S. David, titular Bishop of Guardia-lfiera, Auxiliary of San Fernando

Archbishop Antonio J. Ledesma, SJ, of Cagayan de Oro

Indonesia

Members: Archbishop Ignatius Suharyo Hardjoatmodjo of Jakarta, President of the Episcopal Conference, Military Ordinary for Indonesia

Bishop Fransiskus Kopong Kung of Larantuka

Substitute: Bishop Leo Laba Ladjar, OFM, of Jayapura

Kazakhstan

Member: Archbishop Tomash Bernard Peta of Maria Santissima in Astana, President of the Episcopal Conference

Substitute: Bishop Athanasius Schneider, ORC, titular Bishop of Celerina, Auxiliary of Maria Santissima in Astana

Laos - Cambodia

Member: Bishop Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhanekhoun, titular Bishop of Aquae novae in Proconsulari, Vicar Apostolic of Paksé, Laos

Substitute: Bishop Olivier Michel Marie Schmitthaesler, MEP, titular Bishop of Catubum Castra, Vicar Apostolic of Phnom-Penh, Cambodia, President of the Episcopal Conference

Malaysia - Singapore - Brunei

Member: Archbishop John Wong Soo Kau of Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia

Substitute: Bishop Sebastian Francis of Penang, Malaysia

Myanmar

Member: Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, SDB, of Yangon

Substitute: Bishop Felix Lian Khen Thang of Kalay

Arab countries (CELRA)

Member: H.B. Fouad Twal, Patriarch of Jerusalem for Latins, President of the Episcopal Conference

Substitute: Archbishop Maroun Elias Lahham, titular Archbishop of Medaba, Auxiliary Bishop and Patriarchal Vicar of Jerusalem for Latins in Jordan

EUROPE

Belarus

Member: Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz of Minsk-Mohilev

Substitute: Bishop Antoni Dziemi-anko of Pinsk

Croatia

Member: Bishop Valter Župan, Bishop emeritus of Krk, President of the Council of the Croatian Episcopal Conference on the Family and Life

Substitute: Bishop Antun Škvorčević of Požega

Russian Federation

Member: Archbishop Paolo Pezzi, FSCB, of Mother of God at Moscow, President of the Episcopal Conference

Substitute: Bishop Joseph Werth, SJ, of Transfiguration in Novosibirsk

At the Angelus the Pope speaks of the desire to encounter Jesus

Those who wish to see

And asks that all mankind have access to water

The desire to "see Jesus" passes through the ages and cultures, the Pope said at the Angelus on Sunday, 22 March. Speaking to the faithful in St Peter's Square, he also emphasized that today too, many people "are searching for the face of God" and awaiting a coherent witness of faith from Christians. The following is a translation of his address, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On this Fifth Sunday of Lent, John the Evangelist draws our attention with a curious detail: some "Greeks", of the Jewish religion, who have come to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, turn to Philip and say to him: "We wish to see Jesus" (Jn 12:21). There are many people in the holy city, where Jesus has come for the last time, there are many people. There are the little ones and the simple ones, who have warmly welcomed the Prophet of Nazareth, recognizing Him as the Messenger of the Lord. There are the High Priests and the leaders of the people, who want to eliminate Him because they consider him a heretic and dangerous. There are also people, like those "Greeks", who are curious to see Him and to know more about his person and about the works He has performed, the last of which – the resurrection of Lazarus – has caused quite a stir.

"We wish to see Jesus": these words, like so many others in the

Gospels, go beyond this particular episode and express something universal; they reveal a desire that passes through the ages and cultures, a desire present in the heart of so many people who have heard of Christ, but have not yet encountered him. "I wish to see Jesus", thus He feels the heart of these people.

Responding indirectly, in a prophetic way, to that request to be able to see Him, Jesus pronounces a prophecy that reveals his identity and shows the path to know Him truly: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified" (Jn 12:23). It is the hour of the Cross! It is the time for the defeat of Satan, prince of evil, and of the definitive triumph of the merciful love of God. Christ declares that He will be "lifted up from the earth" (v. 32), an expression with a twofold meaning: "lifted" because He is crucified, and "lifted" because He is exalted by the Father in the Resurrection, to draw everyone to Him and to reconcile mankind with God and among themselves. The hour of the Cross, the darkest in history, is also the source of salvation for those who believe in Him.

Continuing in his prophecy of the imminent Passover, Jesus uses a

simple and suggestive image, that of the "grain of wheat" that, once fallen into the earth, dies in order to bear fruit (cf. v. 24). In this image we find another aspect of the Cross of Christ: that of

fruitfulness. The death of Jesus, in fact, is an inexhaustible source of new life, because it carries within itself the regenerative strength of God's love. Immersed in this love through Baptism, Christians can become "grains of wheat" and bear much fruit if they, like Jesus, "lose their life" out of love for God and brothers and sisters (cf. v. 25).

For this reason, to those who, today too, "wish to see Jesus", to those who are searching for the face of God; to those who received catechesis when they were little and then developed it no further and perhaps have lost their faith; to so many who have not yet encountered Jesus personally...; to all these people we can offer three things: the Gospel, the Crucifix and the witness of our faith, poor but sincere. The



Gospel: there we can encounter Jesus, listen to Him, know Him. The Crucifix: the sign of the love of Jesus who gave Himself for us. And then a faith that is expressed in simple gestures of fraternal charity. But mainly in the coherence of life, between what we say and what we do. Coherence between our faith and our life, between our words and our actions: Gospel, Crucifix, Witness.

May Our Lady help us to bring these three things forth.

After the Angelus prayer, Pope Francis recalled his visit to Naples:

Dear brothers and sisters, despite the bad weather so many of you have come. Well done! You were very brave. The marathon runners are also very brave. I greet them with affection! Yesterday, I was in Naples on a pastoral visit. I want to thank all Neapolitans for the very warm welcome, they are so good. Thank you so much!

Today marks the World Water Day promoted by the United Nations. Water is the most essential element for life, and the future of humanity depends on our capacity to guard it and share it. I therefore encourage the International Community to be vigilant so as to ensure that the planet's waters be adequately protected and that no one be excluded or discriminated against in the use of this resource, which is a resource par excellence. With St Francis of Assisi, we say: "Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, / she is very useful and humble and precious and pure" (*Canticle of the Sun*).

And now we will repeat a gesture previously performed last year: according to the ancient tradition of the Church, the Gospel is delivered during Lent to those who are preparing for Baptism; thus today I offer to you who are in the Square a pocket-sized Gospel. It will be distributed gratis by several homeless people who live in Rome. In this too, we see a very beautiful gesture that pleased Jesus: the ones most in need are the ones who give us the Word of God. Take this Gospel and carry it with you, to read it often, every day. Carry it in your purse, in your pocket, read from it often, a passage every day. The Word of God is a light for our path! It will do you well. Do it.

I wish you all a nice Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch and *Arrivederci!*



The WCC and World Water Day An invitation to reflect on a most precious good

"Towards water justice: a pilgrimage of justice and peace" is the theme of the Lenten campaign of the World Council of Churches (WCC), launched for World Water Day which was celebrated on Sunday, 22 March with the motto: "Water and sustainable development". The campaign, organized by the Ecumenical Water Network of the WCC, invites all Christian communities to pray, dialogue and act in favour of water justice for seven weeks. Several weekly meditations which can aid and guide reflection can be found on the WCC website. These reflections offer responses, based on Scripture, to significant problems such as the economics of

water, the production and disposal of waste, agro-ecological production and adjustment to climate change.

"A correct biblical and theological stance towards water is required because it is the foundation of our home, the earth. And that home is not just a human habitat; it is a home that we share with all other creatures", states Rev. Kuzipa Nalwamba from the United Church of Zambia, one of the contributors of Seven Weeks for Water campaign materials. "For our good and the good of other creatures of the earth, we are called upon to care for its resources, especially water which is the life in all living things".

General Audience

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

from England, the Channel Islands, Denmark, Germany, Malta, Qatar, Indonesia, Australia and the United States of America. I greet in particular the representatives of the Hindu Community of Kerala. Upon all of you, and your families, I invoke an abundance of joy and peace in the Lord. God bless you all!

I greet with special affection workers from the Province of Vibo Valentia, who are living in a grave economic situation. I would like to join the interventions of their Bishop, Luigi Renso, in expressing my concern and closeness to those facing these problems. I address a heartfelt appeal that the logic of profit not prevail, but rather that of solidarity and justice. At the centre of every situation, especially work-related, should be the person and his or her dignity: that is why employment is a matter of justice, and it is an injustice not to have work! When people do not earn their bread, they lose their dignity! And this is the drama of our times, especially for young people, who, without work, have no prospects in their future and can so easily become prey to criminal organizations. Please, let us fight for this: the justice of work.

The Pontiff to the International Commission against the Death Penalty

A failure of the constitutional state

On Friday morning, 20 March, Pope Francis received in audience a Delegation of the International Commission against the Death Penalty. The following is a translation of the letter written in Spanish that the Pontiff consigned to the President of the Commission, Mr Federico Mayor, during the meeting.

Distinguished
Mr Federico Mayor
President of the
International Commission
against the Death Penalty

Mr President,

With these words, I would like to convey my greeting to all the members of the International Commission against the Death Penalty, to the group of countries that support it and to those who cooperate with the organization over which you preside. Furthermore, I would like to express my personal gratitude, and also that of men of good will, for your commitment to bring about a world free from the death penalty and for your contribution toward the establishment of a universal moratorium on executions throughout the world, in order to abolish capital punishment.

I shared several ideas on this subject in my letter of 30 May 2014 to the International Association of Criminal Law and to the Latin American Association of Criminal Law and Criminology. In my address to the five large world associations dedicated to the study of criminal law, criminology, victimology and issues of imprisonment on 23 October 2014, I took the opportunity to go deeper into these issues. On this occasion, I would like to offer you some suggestions by which the Church may contribute to the Commission's humane effort.

The Magisterium of the Church, beginning from Sacred Scripture and from the experience of the People of God for millennia, defends life from conception to natural death, and supports full human dignity as in the image of God (cf. Gen 1:26). Human life is sacred because from its beginning, from the first moment of conception, it is the fruit of the creative action of God (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 2258), and from that moment, man, the only creature ... that God wanted for his own sake, is the recipient of God's personal love (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 24).



States can kill by their action when they apply the death penalty, when they lead their people to war or when they perform extrajudicial or summary executions. They can also kill by omission, when they do not guarantee their people access to the basic necessities of life. "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" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 53).

Life, human life above all, belongs to God alone. Not even a murderer loses his personal dignity, and God himself pledges to guarantee this. As St Ambrose taught, God did not want to punish Cain with homicide, for He wants the sinner to repent more than to die (cf. *Evangelium Vitae*, n. 9).

In certain circumstances, when hostilities are underway, a measured reaction is necessary in order to prevent the aggressor from causing harm, and the need to neutralize the aggressor may result in his elimination; it is a case of legitimate defence (cf. *Evangelium Vitae*, n. 55). Nevertheless, the prerequisites of legitimate personal defence are not applicable in the social sphere without the risk of distortion. In fact, when the death penalty is applied, people are killed not for current acts of aggression, but for offences committed in the past. Moreover, it is applied to people whose capacity to cause harm is not current, but has already been neutralized, and who are deprived of their freedom.

Today capital punishment is unacceptable, however serious the condemned's crime may have been. It is an offence to the inviolability of life and to the dignity of the human person which contradicts God's plan for man and for society and his merciful justice, and it fails to conform to any just purpose of punishment.

It does not render justice to the victims, but rather foments revenge.

For a constitutional state the death penalty represents a failure, because it obliges the State to kill in the name of justice. Dostoyevsky wrote: "To kill a murderer is a punishment incomparably worse than the crime itself. Murder by legal sentence is immeasurably more terrible than murder by a criminal". Justice is never reached by killing a human being.

The death penalty loses all legitimacy due to the defective selectivity of the criminal justice system and in the face of the possibility of judicial error. Human justice is imperfect, and the failure to recognize its fallibility can transform it into a source of injustice. With the application of capital punishment, the person sentenced is denied the possibility to make amends or to repent of the harm done; the possibility of confession, with which man expresses his inner conversion; and of contrition, the means of repentance and atonement, in order to reach the encounter with the merciful and healing love of God.

Furthermore, capital punishment is a frequent practice to which totalitarian regimes and fanatical groups resort, for the extermination of political dissidents, minorities, and every individual labelled as "dangerous" or who might be perceived as a threat to their power or to the attainment of their objectives. As in the first centuries and also in the current one, the Church suffers from the application of this penalty to her new martyrs.

The death penalty is contrary to the meaning of *humanitas* and to divine mercy, which must be models for human justice. It entails cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment, as is the anguish before the moment of execution and the terrible suspense between the issuing of the sentence and the execution of the penalty, a form of "torture" which, in the name of correct procedure,

tends to last many years, and which oftentimes leads to illness and insanity on death row.

In some spheres there is debate over the method of execution, as if it were about finding "the best" way. In the course of history, various lethal mechanisms have been defended because they reduced the suffering and agony of the condemned. But there is no humane form of killing another person.

Today, not only are there means of effectively addressing the crime without definitively depriving criminals of the chance to reform (cf. *Evangelium Vitae*, n. 27), but there is also a heightened moral sensitivity regarding the value of human life, arousing public opinion in support of the various provisions aimed at its abolition or at suspending its application and a growing aversion to the death penalty (cf. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, n. 405).

On the other hand, life imprisonment, as well as those sentences which, due to their duration, render it impossible for the condemned to plan a future in freedom, may be considered hidden death sentences, because with them the guilty party is not only deprived of his/her freedom, but insidiously deprived of hope. But, even though the criminal justice system may appropriate the guilty parties' time, it must never take away their hope.

As I said in my address last 23 October, the death penalty directly concerns the denial of the love for enemies preached by the Gospel. "All Christians and men of good will are thus called today to fight not only for the abolition of the death penalty, whether legal or illegal, and in all its forms, but also in order to improve prison conditions, with respect for the human dignity of the people deprived of their freedom".

Dear friends, I encourage you to continue with the work you are doing, because the world needs witnesses of the mercy and the tenderness of God.

I take my leave while entrusting you to the Lord Jesus who, in the days of his earthly life, did not want his persecutors to be harmed in his defence: "Put your sword back into its place" (Mt 26:52), was captured and unjustly condemned to death, and who identified with *all prisoners*, whether guilty or not: "I was in prison and you came to me" (Mt 25:36). May He, who before the adulterous woman did not question her guilt, but invited the accusers to examine their own consciences before throwing a stone at her (cf. Jn 8:1-11), grant you the gift of wisdom, in order that the action you undertake in favour of the abolition of this cruel punishment, may be appropriate and fruitful.

I ask you to pray for me.

Cordially,

From the Vatican, 20 March 2015

FRANCIS



The sign of Mary

"We prayed to Our Lady, that she bless us all: you, me, and the whole world. We need Our Lady", Pope Francis said. We need "her to protect us". Enclosed within these words, addressed to the faithful at the basilica, is the meaning of Pope Francis' visit to the Marian Shrine in Pompeii.

On Saturday morning, 21 March, before heading to Naples, the Pontiff entrusted his pastoral visit to the protection of the Virgin Mary. And to do so, he stopped at the Shrine founded by Bl. Bartolomeo Longo, which is visited by millions of pilgrims every year.

It has become custom that every time the Pope goes on a visit he entrusts his journey to the protection of the Mother of Jesus. He typically goes to the Basilica of St Mary Major in Rome, where he stops to pray in front of *Salus populi Romani*. However, one week after inviting the Church on an inner visit to encounter, understand and welcome the mercy of the Father, Francis stood at the feet of Mary, the best guide of all.

His visit to Pompeii was more than a visit, it was pilgrimage. A brief pilgrimage without an official address, and with greetings and protocol reduced to a minimum. In the span of 50 minutes, the Pope had enough time and space for a prayer and a warm embrace from the 10,000 faithful who awaited him. (*Maurizio Fontana*)



Meeting with the people of Scampia

Never let evil have the final word

The Holy Father's first official address during his visit to Naples was delivered in John Paul II Square in the neighbourhood of Scampia, which lies on the outskirts of the city. It was there that the Holy Father said that, despite the difficulties and disadvantages which exist in Naples, everyone must work to "ensure that evil never has the final word". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's address, which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

I wanted to begin my visit to Naples here, on the periphery. I greet you all and I thank you for your warm welcome! One truly sees that Neapolitans are not cold! I thank your Archbishop for inviting me – he threatened me into coming to Naples – and for his words of welcome; and thanks to those who have given a voice to the situation of immigrants, labourers and judicial officers.

You belong to a people with a long history, which has undergone complex and tragic events. Life in Naples has never been easy, however it has never been sad! This is the great resource of yours: joy, cheerfulness. Everyday life in this city, with its difficulties and disadvantages, and at times its difficult tests, produces a *culture of life* which always helps one to rise again after every fall, and to ensure that evil never

has the final word. This is a beautiful challenge: never let evil have the final word. As you well know, it is *hope*, this great legacy, this "lever of spirit", so precious but also exposed to assault and robbery.

We know that *those who willingly take the path of evil steal a piece of hope*, they earn something small but they rob themselves and others, society, of hope. The path of evil is a path which always steals hope. It also steals from honest and hard-working people, and also robs the city of its good reputation, of its economy.

I would like to respond to the sister who spoke on behalf of the immigrants and the homeless. She asked for a *word* of assurance that immigrants are *children of God* and that they are citizens. But has it come to come to this? Are immigrants second class human beings? We must make our immigrant brothers and sisters feel that they are citizens, that they are like us, children of God, that they are immigrants like us, because we are all immigrants moving toward another homeland, and perhaps we will all arrive there. And no one will get lost on the way! We are all immigrants, children of God who has placed us all on a journey. It cannot be said: "But immigrants are like this... We are...". No! We are all immigrants, we are all on a journey. And this word that we are all immigrants is not written in a book, it is written in

our flesh, in our journey of life, which assures us that in Jesus we are all children of God, beloved children, wanted children, saved children. Let us consider this: we are all immigrants on the journey of life, none of us has a fixed abode in this land, we all must go. And we all have to go to find God: one first, then another, or as that elderly man said, as that clever old man said: "Yes, yes, everyone! You go, I go last!". All of us have to go there.

Then there was the *labourer's* speech. I thank him too, because naturally I wanted to touch on this point, which is a negative sign of our time, distinguished by the *lack of employment for young people*. Think: over 40 per cent of young people aged 25 and under are unemployed! This is serious! What does a young person do without a job? What future does he/she have? What path of life does he/she choose? This is a responsibility not only of the city, not only of the country, but of the world! Why? Because the economic system discards people and now it is the young people's turn to be discarded, that is, unemployed. This is serious! "But there are works of charity, there are volunteers, there is *Caritas*, there is that centre, there is that club that feeds...". The problem is not eating, the problem is more serious, it is not being able to bring home bread, to earn it! And when you don't earn bread, you lose your dignity! This lack of work robs us of dignity. We have to fight for this, we must defend our dignity as citizens, as men, as women, as young people. This is the tragedy of our time. We must not remain silent.

I also think of partial-pay employment. What is meant by this? Exploiting a person's work. A few weeks ago, a girl who needed a job, found one in a tour agency and these were the conditions: 11 hours of work [per day], 600 euros per month without retirement contributions. "It isn't much for 11 hours!". "If you don't like it, look at the line of people waiting for the job!". This is called slavery, this is called exploitation, this is not human, this is not Christian. If that man who does this calls himself Christian he is a liar, he doesn't speak the truth, he isn't Christian. Also the exploitation of under-the-table jobs – you work with no contract and I'll pay you whatever I want – this is exploiting people. "Without contributions for retirement or health care?". "That doesn't interest me".

I understand you well, brother, and I thank you for what you said. We must resume the fight for our dignity which is the struggle to look for, to find, to recover the ability to bring home bread! This is our fight!

And here I am thinking of the speech of the President of the Court of Appeals. He used a beautiful expression, "pathway of hope", and re-

The greeting of the Archbishop of Naples

Beautiful yet wounded

In the neighbourhood of Scampia, the Pope immediately immersed himself in the current situation of Naples. It is a city of joy, yet full of many serious problems, including issues of immigration, employment and organized crime. Cardinal Crescenzio Sepe, Archbishop of Naples, was the first to greet the Pope. "The dream has become a reality", he said, "when the children call, the father comes!". On this day, the Cardinal continued, "you will touch our reality which is so beautiful and marvellous, but it is also wounded and in pain due to the many evils which afflict it, such as organized crime, including the Camorra". It is therefore important that you are beginning here in Scampia", he said, which is "a neighbourhood in Naples full of problems but also rich in resources where, above all our parishes, parishioners, men and women religious are working closely to bear witness to Christ, proclaiming the Gospel of justice and charity".

After Scampia, the Pope went to Piazza del Plebiscito, where he celebrated Mass for tens of thousands of Neapolitans. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's homily, which was given in Italian.

The passage of the Gospel which we have heard presents to us a scene set in the Temple of Jerusalem, at the culmination of the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, after which Jesus proclaimed a great prophecy revealing himself as the source of "living water", that is, the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 7:37-39). Then the people, deeply impressed, begin to talk about him. Today people are still talking about him. Some are excited and say: "This is really the prophet" (v. 40). Someone even says: "This is the Christ" (v. 41). But others reject that by saying that the Messiah does not come from Galilee, but from the line of David, from Bethlehem; and thus, without knowing it, they confirm the very identity of Jesus.

The chief priests send guards to arrest him, as do dictators, but they return empty-handed, saying: "No man ever spoke like this man!" (v. 46). There, that is the voice of truth, which resounds in the simple people.

The Word of the Lord, yesterday as today, always provokes division; the word of God divides, always! It makes a distinction between those who accept it and those who refuse. Sometimes an interior contrast sparks in our heart; this happens when we experience the charm, the beauty and the truth of the words of Jesus, but at the same time we reject them because they call us into question, they put us in difficulty and they cost us too much to observe them.

Today I have come to Naples in order to proclaim together with you: *Jesus is Lord!* But I don't want to say it



Pope Francis calls criminals to convert and asks the people to fight organized crime

Season of redemption

alone: I want to hear it from you, from everyone, now, all together: "Jesus is Lord!", one more time: "Jesus is Lord!". *No one speaks like He does!* He alone has words of mercy that can heal the wounds of our heart. He alone has words of eternal life (cf. Jn 6:68).

Christ's word is powerful: it doesn't have the world's power, but God's, which is strong in humility, and in weakness. His power is that of love: this is the power of the word of God! A love that knows no boundaries, a love that lets us love others before ourselves. The word of Jesus, the holy Gospel, teaches that the truly blessed are poor in spirit, non-violent, meek, workers of peace and justice. This is the force that changes the world! This

is the word that gives strength and is capable of changing the world. There is no other way to change the world.

The word of Christ *wants to reach all people*, in particular those who live in the peripheries of existence, so that they may find in Him the centre of their life and the source of hope. And we, who have had the grace to receive this Word of Life — it is a grace to receive the word of God! — we are called to go, to come out from behind our fences and, with zealous hearts, to bring to all the mercy, the tenderness, the friendship of God: this is a job that pertains to everyone, but in a special way it pertains to you priests. To bring mercy, to bring pardon, to bring peace, to bring joy through the Sacraments

and through listening. That the people of God may find in you men who are merciful like Jesus. At the same time that every parish and every ecclesial reality may become a sanctuary for the one who seeks God and a welcoming home for the poor, the elderly and those who find themselves in need. *To go and to welcome*: so that the heart of Mother Church, and of all her children, will beat. Go, welcome! Go, seek! Go, bring love, mercy and tenderness.

When hearts are open to the Gospel, the world begins to change and humanity is *resurrected!* If we welcome and live the word of Jesus every day, we are *resurrected* with Him.

The Lent we are living makes this message echo in the Church, as we journey towards Easter: the hope of resurrecting with Christ, our Saviour, is rekindled in the people of God. May the grace of this Easter not be in vain for the people of God, of this city! *May the grace of Resurrection be accepted by each one of you, so that Naples may be filled with the hope of Christ the Lord!* Hope: "Make way for hope", this is the motto of my visit. I say it to you, all, in a special way to young people: open yourselves to the power of the Risen Jesus, and you will bear the fruits of new life in this city: the fruits of sharing, reconciliation, service and brotherhood. Allow yourselves to be enveloped and embraced by his mercy, by the mercy of Jesus, by that mercy which only Jesus gives us.

Dear Neapolitans, make room for hope and do not let yourselves be robbed of hope! Do not give in to the lure of easy money or a dishonest income: it's bread today but hunger tomorrow. It can bring you nothing! React with steadfastness to organizations that exploit and corrupt the young, the poor and the weak, through the cynical business of drugs and other crimes. Don't let yourselves be robbed of hope! Don't let your youth be exploited by these people! Corruption and crime must not disfigure the face of this beautiful city! And more: it must not disfigure the joy of your Neapolitan hearts! To criminals and to all their accomplices today I repeat humbly, as a brother: convert to love and to justice! Let yourselves be found by the mercy of God! Know that Jesus is trying to hug you, kiss you, love you even more. By the grace of God, who forgives everything and forgives always, it's possible to return to an honest life. This is

politics, but engage in it together: politics is done all together! Among everyone good politics is done!

Naples is always ready to rise again, building upon a *hope forged* by many trials, and therefore a genuine and practical resource to be relied on in any moment. Its roots lie in the very soul of Neapolitans, above all in their joy, in their religiosity, in their *piety!* I hope you may have the courage to go forth with this joy, with this root, the courage to carry hope onward, to never rob anyone of hope, to go forth on the path of good, not on the path of evil, to go forth in welcoming all those who come to Naples from whatever country: may they all be Neapolitans, may they learn Neapolitan which is so sweet and so beautiful! I hope you will go forth in the search for opportunities of employment, so that everyone may have the dignity of bringing home bread, and of going on in cleansing their spirit, in cleaning up the city, in cleaning up society so that there may be no stink of corruption!

I wish you the best. God forth and may St Januarius, your Patron, assist you and intercede for you.

From my heart I bless all of you, I bless your families in this neighbourhood of yours. I bless the children who are here around us. And please, do not forget to pray for me. *A Maronna v'accumpagne!*



asked of you also by the tears of the mothers of Naples, mixed with the tears of Mary, the Heavenly Mother invoked in Piedigrotta and in so many Churches of Naples. May these tears melt the hardness of hearts and lead all back to the way of good.

Today spring begins, and spring brings hope: a season of hope. And today is a season of redemption for Naples: this is my wish and my prayer for a city that has in itself the spiritual, cultural and human potential and indeed great capacity for love. Authorities, institutions, various social groups and citizens, all together and in harmony, can build a better future. And the future of Naples is not resigned to folding in on itself: this is not your future! Rather, the future of Naples is to open itself with trust to the world, to make way for hope. This city can find in the mercy of Jesus, who makes all things new, the strength to go forward with hope, strength for many lives, many families and communities. To hope is to resist evil. To hope is to see the world with the eyes and the heart of God. To hope is to bet on the mercy of God who is Father and forgives all ways and forgives all.

God, the font of our joy and the cause of our hope, lives in our cities. God lives in Naples. May his grace and his blessing sustain you on your journey in faith, charity and hope, your good intentions and your projects of moral and social redemption. We all together proclaimed Jesus as Lord: let us say it again in closing: "Jesus is Lord!", all of us, three times: "Jesus is Lord!". *E ca' u' Maronna v'accumpagne!*

Change the world

Among the lingering images of the Pope's visit to Naples will certainly be that of Francis speaking in Scampia, surrounded by children. On the first day of spring, he brought words of hope that went beyond the confines of a very beautiful but disfigured city. His words tapped into one single word, that of Jesus, who, Bergoglio later underlined, is the only force that can change the world, as he celebrated Mass with the Bishops of Campania in Piazza del Plebiscito, the central square in Naples.

The papal visit began early in the morning under the gaze of Mary, venerated at the Shrine of Pompeii. "We need Our Lady", Francis said with simplicity to the faithful who welcomed him. He wished to enter the metropolis by way of one of its neighbourhoods most fraught with difficulty, but one which has not been disheartened: "When you don't see happiness, look for it within", read an enormous sign in front of the stage.

The address of the Pontiff, who mostly improvised, called for the tenacious drive to begin again: "This is a beautiful challenge: never let evil have the final word", he said. Then responding to the greetings of an immigrant from the Philippines, of a labourer and of a judicial officer, Francis touched on issues which they have particularly at heart and which revolve around the central theme of the dignity of every human being.

Dismayed at the need to do so, he emphasized migrants' rights, exclaiming, "they are immigrants like us, because we are all immigrants moving toward another homeland", recalling a theme rooted in the oldest Christian source. The Pope also raised a strong appeal against unemployment, especially among young people, and against illegal work: "This lack of work robs us of dignity. We have to fight for this, we must defend our dignity as citizens".

He condemned corruption, with highly effective expressions, and praise for "good politics" which, he repeated, "is one of the loftiest expressions of charity, service and love". His meaningful and precious words were clearly intended not only for the reality in Naples and in Italy, but applicable to a historical climate that urgently needs to rediscover civil and religious reasons to truly fight corruption and to foster political commitment to move forward in "cleaning up society".

These themes returned again in his homily in Piazza del Plebiscito and at his meeting with the inmates of Poggioreale. The Pope's visit to the city of Naples, which so enthusiastically welcomed him, was indeed marked by hope, the motto of the journey. "Today spring begins, and spring brings hope", Pope Francis said, adding "in this season of hope — the future of Naples" is "a season of redemption", open to the future of God.

G.M.V.

The Pope's consigned speech to detainees in Poggioreale

From marginalized to included

The following is a translation of the Holy Father's discourse, which was consigned to the inmates of Giuseppe Salvia Detention Centre in Poggioreale, Naples. The Pope also shared lunch with some of the detainees on Saturday, 21 March.

I am glad to find myself among you on the occasion of my visit to Naples. I thank Claudio and Pasquale who spoke on behalf of all. This meeting gives me the opportunity to express my closeness to you, and I do so by bringing you the word and love of Jesus, who came to earth to fulfill our hope and who died on the cross to save each one of us.

At times we may feel disappointed, discouraged and abandoned by everyone, however God does not forget His children, He never abandons them! He is always at our side, especially at the hour of trial. He is a Father "rich in mercy" (Eph 2:4), who always turns his serene and benevolent gaze to us; he always waits for us with open arms.



Outside the walls

Two inmates addressed Pope Francis, asking him several questions. Claudio Fabian Astorgo of Argentina, an inmate in Poggioreale, spoke first. "Everyone has forgotten about us," he said, "except for God, Jesus Christ and the Church". It's true, he continued, we erred, however now is a "good time to find a new life near to Him". He explained that in prison he "found God in the weekly catechesis, Sunday Mass", and in reading one of the Pope's books which his mother sent him. He asked the Pope how to nourish his faith outside of prison, with the temptations and without the spiritual guidance he receives there. Then Pasquale, who has been detained for two years in Secondigliano, asked the Pope for some words of encouragement. "We have been branded for life." "Will we be welcomed outside of these walls?", he asked.

This is a certainty which instills consolation and hope, especially in difficult and painful moments. Even if we have made mistakes in our life, the Lord never tires of showing us the path to return to and to encounter Him. Jesus' love for each of us is the source of consolation and hope. It is a fundamental certainty for us. Nothing can ever separate us from God's love, not even prison bars! The only thing that can keep us from Him is our sin; but if we recognize it and we confess it with sincere repentance it will become a place to meet Him, because He is mercy.

Dear brothers, I know of your painful situations; I receive many letters — some extremely moving — from prisons all over the world. Inmates are often held in conditions unworthy of the human condition, and then they are not able to reintegrate into society. But thanks be to God there are also directors, chaplains, educators, pastoral workers who know how to be close to you in the right way. There are several

good and meaningful experiences of reintegration. Work on this, develop these positive experiences which allow a different attitude to be cultivated in the civil community and in the Church community. The basis of this commitment is the conviction that love is always able to transform the human person. Thus a place of marginalization, such as prison, can be in the negative sense, can become a place of inclusion and a stimulus for the whole of society, so that it may be more just and attentive to the people.

I invite you to live each day, each moment in the presence of God, to whom the future of the world and humankind belongs. That is Christian hope: the future is in God's hands! History makes sense because it dwells in God's goodness.

Therefore, even in the midst of so many problems, even serious ones, we cannot lose our hope in God's infinite mercy and his providence. With this certain hope, let's prepare ourselves for Easter which is now approaching, decisively directing our lives to the Lord and keeping the flame of his love alive in us.

Never let evil have the final word

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

called a motto of St John Bosco: "good Christians and honest citizens", directed at the children and youth. The pathway of hope for children — these who are here today and for everyone — is first of all education, but a true education, the path of educating for the future: this prepares and helps one to go forward. The judge said a word that I want to repeat, a word that is used a lot today, the judge said "corruption".

Tell me, if we close the door to immigrants, if we remove employment and dignity from people, what is this called? It's called corruption and it is possible for all of us to become corrupt, none of us can say "I will never be corrupt!". No! It is a temptation, it is sliding toward the easy deals, toward delinquency, toward misdemeanors, toward exploiting people. How much corruption there is in the world! It is an ugly word, if we think about it a little. Because a corrupt thing is something dirty! If we find a dead animal that is deteriorating, that is "corrupt", it is repulsive and even smells bad. Corruption stinks! A corrupt society stinks! A Christian who lets corruption enter him is not Christian, he stinks!

Dear friends, I would like my presence to be an impetus to an already ongoing journey of hope, of rebirth and renewal. I am familiar with the gener-



ous and active commitment of the Church, present with her communities and her services in the living reality of Scampia; as well as the continuous mobilization of volunteer groups, whose help is never lacking.

I also encourage the presence and active commitment of *civic institutions*, because a community cannot progress without their support, even more so in moments of crisis and in the presence of difficult and sometimes extreme social situations. "Good politics" is a service to people that is exercised in the first place at the local level, where the weight of its failures, delays, outright omissions is more direct and causes more harm. *Good politics* is one of the loftiest expressions of charity, service and love. Engage in good

To priests and religious the Pontiff calls for a spirit of poverty and mercy

The Church on a journey

In the early afternoon of Saturday, 21 March, Pope Francis met in the cathedral with the clergy, religious and permanent deacons of the Archdiocese of Naples. Setting aside his prepared address, the Holy Father spoke off-the-cuff about how to be free and joyful witnesses of Christ, who is at the centre of our lives. After his address, the Pope venerated the relic of St Januarius' blood. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's extemporaneous discourse which was given in Italian.

I prepared a speech, but speeches are boring. I shall consign it to the Cardinal and then he will publish it in the bulletin. I prefer to respond to a few things. They are telling me to speak sitting down, this way I can rest a bit. A very elderly nun who is here, quickly came up to me to say: "Please give me the blessing in *articulo mortis*". – "But why, Sister?". – "Because I must go on mission, to open a convent...". This is the spirit of religious life. This nun made me think. She is elderly, but she says: "Yes, I'm in *articulo mortis*, but I must go to renew or to once again open a convent" and she departs. Thus I too obey now and I'm speaking sitting down.

This is one of the forms of testimony that you asked about: to be ever journeying. The journey in consecrated life is following the footsteps of Jesus; For priests and for consecrated life in general, it is following Jesus, and with the will to work for the Lord. Once – I refer to what the sister said – an elderly priest said to me: "There is no retirement for us and when we go home to rest we continue to work with prayers, with the small things we are able to do, but with the same enthusiasm of following Jesus".

The testimony of walking on the paths of Jesus! For this, Jesus must be at the centre of life. If at the centre of life – I'm exaggerating... it happens in other places, but certainly not in Naples – it may happen that I am against the bishop or against the parish priest or against that other priest, my whole life is taken up in that struggle. But this is wasting one's life. Not having a family, not having children, not having marital love, which is so good and so beautiful, to end up quarrelling with the bishop, with brother priests, with the faithful, with a "sour face", this is not a testimony. Testimony is Jesus, the centre is Jesus. And when the centre is Jesus these difficulties are still there, they are everywhere, but they are faced in a different way. In a convent perhaps I do not like the superior, but if my centre is the superior whom I don't like, my testimony is not good. Instead, if my centre is Jesus, I pray for this su-

perior whom I don't like, I tolerate her and do my best since other superiors know the situation. But no one can take away my joy: joy is following Jesus. I see seminarians here. I'll tell you something: if you do not have Jesus at the centre, delay your Ordination. If you are not certain that Jesus is the centre of your life, wait a while longer, so as to be sure. Because on the contrary, you will begin a journey without knowing where it will lead.

This is the first testimony: Seeing Jesus at the centre. The centre is not gossip nor the ambition to have this post or that one, nor money – I shall speak about money later – but the centre must be Jesus. How can I be sure I am always following Jesus? His Mother leads us to Him. A priest, a man or woman religious who does not love Our Lady, who does not pray to Our Lady, I would also say who does not recite the Rosary... if they do not want the Mother, the Mother will not give them the Son.

The Cardinal gave me a book by St Alphonsus Maria de' Liguori, perhaps "The Glories of Mary"... In this book, I enjoy reading the stories about Our Lady that are after each of the chapters: in them we see how Our Lady always leads us to Jesus. She is Mother, the centre of Our Lady's being is being Mother, bearing Jesus. Fr Rupnik who makes such beautiful and artistic paintings and mosaics, gave me an icon of Our Lady with Jesus in front. Jesus and Our Lady's hands are placed in such a way that Jesus is descending and holding onto the Madonna's cape with his hand so as not to fall. It is she who allowed Jesus come down to us; it is she who gives us

Jesus. Bear witness to Jesus. And the Mother is a beautiful aid in following Jesus: it is she who gives us Jesus. This is one of the forms of testimony.

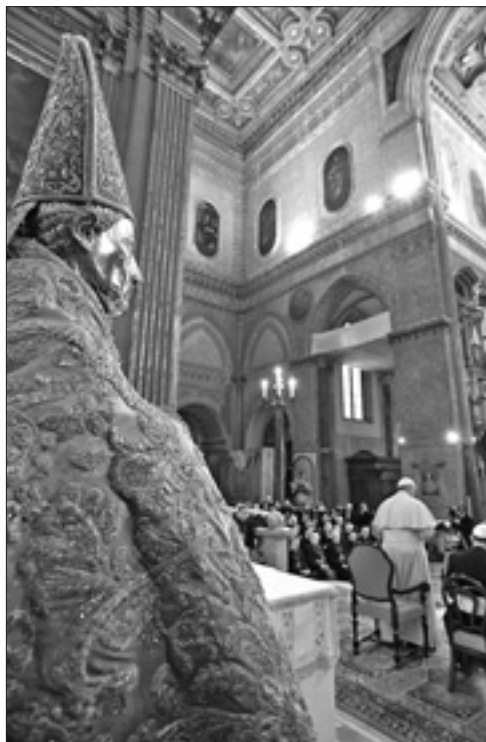
Another form of testimony is the spirit of poverty; even for priests who do not take the vow of poverty, but should have the spirit of poverty. When profiteering enters the Church, whether in priests or men and women religious, it is awful. I recall a great woman religious, a good woman, a great treasurer who was good at her work. She was observant but her heart was attached to money and she unconsciously chose people according to the money they had. "I like this one more, he has lots of money". She was the treasurer of an important college and constructed many great buildings, a great woman, but you could see this limitation of hers and this woman's ultimate humiliation was public. She was 70 years old, more or less, she was in a teachers' lounge, during a school break, having a coffee, when she had a fainting spell and fell. They slapped her to bring her round, but she didn't recover. And a teacher said this: "Put some 'pesos' in front of her and let's see if she responds". The poor woman was already dead, but this was the last word that was said about her when it wasn't yet known whether or not she would die. It was an awful testimony.

Consecrated people – be they priests, nuns or religious – must never be businesspeople. The spirit of poverty, however, is not the spirit of misery. A priest, who has not taken the vow of poverty, can have his savings, but in an honest and reasonable manner. But when he has avarice and goes into business.... So many scandals in the Church and such a lack of freedom because of money: "I should take this person to task, but I cannot because he is a great benefactor". Since great benefactors live the life they want to I am not at liberty to do so, because I am attached to the money they give me. You see how important poverty is, the spirit of poverty, as the first of the Beatitudes says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit". As I said, a priest may keep his savings, but his heart must not be there, and the savings must be modest. When it is a question of money, people are appraised differently; this is why I ask everyone to examine their conscience: how is my life of poverty going, also what I receive from small things? This is the second form of testimony.

The third form of testimony – and I am speaking generally here, for religious and consecrated people and also for diocesan priests – is mercy. We have forgotten the works

of mercy. I would like to – I shall not, but I would like to – ask you to recite the corporal works of mercy, and the spiritual ones. How many of us have forgotten them! When you return home take up the Catechism and look up these works of mercy which are the works performed by elderly women and simple people in the neighbourhoods, parishes, because following Jesus, walking after Jesus is simple. I shall cite an example that I always use. In the large cities, still Christian cities – I am thinking of my former diocese, but I believe that the same happens in Rome, I don't know about Naples, but definitely in Rome – there are baptized children who don't know how to make the sign of the Cross. Where is the work of mercy of teaching in this case? "I shall teach you to make the sign of faith". It is only an example. We need to resume the works of mercy, both corporal and spiritual. If a neighbour is ill and I would like to go to visit him/her, but the time I have available coincides with the time for my soap opera, and between the soap opera and doing a work of mercy I choose the soap opera, this is not good.

Speaking of soap operas, I shall return to the spirit of poverty. In my previous diocese there was a college run by nuns, a good college, they worked hard, but in the building where they lived within the college there was a part that was the sisters' flat. The house where they lived was somewhat old and needed to be renovated, and they fixed it up well, too well, it was luxurious: they even put a television in every room. At soap opera time, you could not find one sister available in the college.... These are the things that lead to a worldly spirit, and this is where the other thing I would like to say comes in: the danger of worldliness. Living in a worldly manner. Living with the worldly spirit that Jesus didn't want! Think about the priestly prayer of Jesus when He prayed to the Father: "I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one" (Jn 17:15). Worldliness goes against testimony, while the spirit of prayer is a testimony that is seen: we see who are the consecrated men and women who pray, as well as those who pray formally but not with the heart. They are testimonies that people see. You spoke of the lack of vocations, but testimony is one of the things that attracts vocations. "I want to be like that priest, I want to be like that nun". The witness of life. A comfortable life, a worldly life does not help us. The Vicar for the Clergy has highlighted the problem, the fact – I call it a problem – of priestly fraternity. This also applies to consecrated life. Life, whether in the community of consecrated life or in the presbyterate, in the diocese, which is the real charisma of diocesan priests, in the presbyterate around the bishop. Carrying on this "fraternity" is not easy in the convent, in consecrated life, or in the presbyterate. The devil always tempts us with jeal-





ousy, envy, infighting, antipathy, sympathy, so many things that don't help us to live true fraternity, and thus we bear a testimony of division among ourselves.

To me, the sign that there is no fraternity, whether in the presbyterate or in religious communities is when there is gossip. And allow me to use this expression: the terrorism of gossip, because one who gossips is a terrorist dropping a bomb, destroying from the outside – not even like a Kamikaze, but destroying others instead. Gossip destroys and is the sign that there is no fraternity.

When someone meets a priest who has different views... because there are always differences, it's normal, it's Christian – these differences should be clarified with the courage to say it face to face. If I have something to say to the Bishop, I go to the Bishop and I can even say to him: "But, you are unpleasant", and the Bishop must have the courage not to seek revenge. This is brotherhood! Or when you have something against someone else and instead of going to him you go to another person. There are problems both in religious life and in presbyterial life, which must be addressed, but only

between two people. If this cannot be done – because sometimes it can't be – tell it to someone who can act as an intermediary. But you must not speak against the other, because gossip is a form of terrorism that disrupts diocesan fraternity, priestly fraternity, religious communities.

Now, on to witness, to joy. The joy in my life is full, the joy of having chosen well, the joy that I see every day that the Lord is faithful to me. Joy is seeing that the Lord is always faithful to everyone. When I am not faithful to the Lord, I approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Consecrated men and women or priests who are bored, bitter of heart, who are sad, feel that something isn't right, need to go to a good spiritual advisor, a friend and say: "I don't know what's happening in my life". When there is no joy, something is wrong. The sense that the Archbishop spoke about today tells us that something is lacking. Without joy you do not attract the Lord and the Gospel.

These are the forms of testimony. I would like to conclude with three things. First: adoration. "Do you pray?" – "I pray, yes". I ask, I thank, I praise the Lord. But, do you adore the Lord? We have lost the meaning of the adoration of God: we must bring back the adora-

tion of God. Second: you cannot love Jesus without loving his Bride. Love for the Church. We have met many priests who loved the Church and we saw that they loved her. Third, and this is important: apostolic zeal, that is, being a missionary. Love for the Church leads one to make her known, to go beyond oneself in order to go out and preach the Revelation of Jesus, but it also impels one to go beyond oneself to approach that other transcendence, namely adoration. In the context of being a missionary I think that the Church has to journey a little more, convert more, for the Church is not an NGO, but is the Bride of Christ who has the greatest treasure: Jesus. Her mission, her *raison d'être* is precisely this: to evangelize, in other words, to bring Jesus. Adoration, love for the Church and being a missionary. These are the three things that came to mind spontaneously.

After venerating the relic of St Januarius' blood:

The Archbishop said that the blood has liquefied partially: so the Saint loves us partially. Everyone needs a little more conversion so that he loves us more. Thank you very much, and please, do not forget to pray for me.

Good labourers or just employees?

The following is the address which the Holy Father had prepared for the meeting with the religious but did not deliver.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good afternoon!

I thank you for your welcome in this symbolic place of faith and of the history of Naples: the Cathedral. Thank you, Your Eminence, for introducing our meeting; and thanks to the two brothers who asked questions on behalf of everyone.

I would like to begin from that expression that the Vicar for the Clergy said: "Being priests is beautiful". Yes, it is beautiful being priests, and being consecrated people too. I will first address the priests, and then the consecrated men and women.

I share with you *the ever new surprise of being called* by the Lord to follow Him, to be with Him, and to go toward the people bringing his word, his forgiveness.... It is truly a great thing that has happened to us, a grace of the Lord which is renewed every day. I imagine that in a busy reality such as Naples, with old and new challenges, you are thrown headlong to meet the needs of so many brothers and sisters, running the risk of becoming completely absorbed. We must always find time to remain in front of the Tabernacle, to pause there in silence, to feel Jesus' gaze upon us, which renews us and revives us. And should being in front of Jesus unsettle us somewhat, it is a good sign, it will do us good! It is precisely up to prayer to show us whether we are walking on the way of life or on that of falsehood, as the Psalm says (cf. 139[138]:24), if

we work as good labourers or have become "employees", if we are open "channels", through which love and the grace of the Lord flow, or if we instead place ourselves at the centre, eventually becoming "shields" that do not foster the encounter with the Lord.

Then there is *the beauty of fraternity*, of being priests together, of following the Lord not alone, not individually, but together, in the great variety of gifts and personalities, and all that is lived in community and fraternity. This too is not easy, nor immediate and expected, for even we priests live immersed in this subjectivistic culture of today, which exalts the "I" until idolatry. Then there is also a certain pastoral individualism, which carries the temptation of going forward alone, or with the small group of those who "think like I do".... Instead we know that everyone is called to experience communion with Christ in the presbyterate, around the Bishop. Concrete forms which are appropriate for the times and the reality of the territory can – indeed must – always be sought, but this pastoral and missionary search should be done in an attitude of communion, with humility and fraternity.

Let us not forget the beauty of *walking with the people*. I know that for several years your diocesan community has undertaken an ongoing effort of rediscovering the faith, in contact with a city reality that wants to rise back up and needs everyone's



cooperation. Therefore, I encourage you to go out to meet others, to open doors and reach out to families, the sick, young people, the elderly, there where they live, looking for them, being at their side, supporting them, in order to celebrate the liturgy of life with them. In particular, it will be beautiful to *accompany families in the challenge to generate and educate their children*. Children are a "diagnostic sign", to see the society's health. Children should not be spoiled, but should be loved! And we priests are called to accompany families in order that children may be *educated in Christian life*.

The second speech made reference to *consecrated life*, and mentioned lights and shadows. There is always a temptation to give more emphasis to the shadows, at the expense of light. This leads us, however, to fold in on ourselves, to continuously complain, to always blame others. And instead, especially during this Year of Consecrated Life, let us allow the beauty of our vocation to

appear in us and in our communities, so it may be true that "Where there are religious, there is joy". With this spirit I wrote the Letter to consecrated men and women, and I hope that it is helping you in your personal and communal journey. I would like to ask you: how is the "atmosphere" in your communities? Is there this gratitude, is there this joy of God who fills our heart? If this is there, then my hope has been realized that none of

us be *dour, discontented and dissatisfied*, for "a gloomy disciple is a disciple of gloom" (*ibid.*, II, 1).

Dear consecrated brothers and sisters, I hope you may bear witness, with humility and simplicity, that consecrated life is a precious gift for the Church and for the world. A gift not to be withheld for oneself, but to share, bringing Christ to every corner of this city. May your daily gratitude to God find expression in the desire to draw hearts to Him, and to accompany them on the journey. Both in contemplative and apostolic life, may you feel strongly within you a love for the Church and contribute, through your specific charism, to her mission of proclaiming the Gospel and edifying the People of God in unity, in holiness and in love.

Dear brothers and sisters, I thank you. Let us go forth, animated by a common love for the Lord and for the holy Mother Church. I wholeheartedly bless you. And please, do not forget to pray for me.

The Pope invites the sick to look at Christ Crucified

The only explanation

The "only explanation" for sickness is in Christ Crucified. Pope Francis reminded many sick people of this, meeting with them on Saturday afternoon, 21 March, in the Church of 'Gesù nuovo' in Naples. The following is a translation of the Pope's extemporaneous remarks, which he gave in Italian.

It isn't easy to reach out to a sick person. Life's most beautiful things and most miserable things are modest, are hidden. Out of modesty, one tries to hide the greatest love; and out of modesty, we also seek to hide the things that show our human misery. This is why, when visiting a sick person, it is necessary to go to him or her, because the modesty of life hides them. Visit the sick. And when there are lifelong illnesses, when we have diseases that mark an entire life, we prefer to hide them, because to visit a sick person means visiting our own illness, that which we have inside. It is having the courage to say to oneself: I too have some disease in my heart, in my soul, in my spirit, I too am spiritually ill.

God created us to change the world, to be efficient, to rule over

Creation: it is our task. But when we are confronted with disease, we see that this illness prevents this: that man, that woman who was born that way, or whose body has become that way, it is like saying "no" – seemingly – to the mission of transforming the world. This is the mystery of sickness. One can approach illness only in the spirit of faith. We can draw near to a sick man, woman, boy or girl, only if we look to Him who took all of our sickness upon Himself, if we become accustomed to looking at Christ Crucified. The only explanation for this "failure", this human failure, a lifetime of sickness, is there. The only explanation is in Christ Crucified.

I say to you, sick people, that if you cannot understand the Lord, I ask the Lord to enable you to understand in your heart that you are the flesh of Christ, that you are Christ Crucified.

among us, that you are the brothers and sisters closest to Christ. It is one thing to look at a Crucifix and it's another thing to look at a man, woman, child who is sick, in other words crucified there in their illness: they are the living flesh of Christ.

Thanks so much to you volunteers! Thank you so much for spending your time caressing the flesh of

Christ, serving the living Christ Crucified. Thank you! And I also say thank you to you doctors and nurses. Thank you for doing this work, thank you for not making your profession a business. Thanks to so many of you who follow the example of the Saint who is here, who worked here in Naples: serving without accumulating wealth in the service. When medicine is transformed into commerce, a business, it is like when a priest acts in the same way: he loses the core of his vocation. I ask all of you Christians of the diocese of Naples not to forget what Jesus asked of us and what is also written in the "protocol" on which we will be judged: I was sick and you visited me (cf. Mt 25:36). We will be judged on this. The world of illness is a world of pain. Sick people suffer, they reflect the suffering Christ: there is no need to fear drawing near to Christ who is suffering. Thank you so much for all that you do. Let us pray that all Christians of the diocese may have more awareness of this, and let us pray that the Lord give perseverance to you and to so many volunteers in this service of caressing the suffering flesh of Christ. Thank you.



Meeting with youth at the conclusion of the Holy Father's visit

The future of a people

A people who does not take care of the youth and the elderly does not have a future. The Pope recalled this at his meeting with young people on the Caracciolo Seafront on Saturday, 21 March. One hundred thousand people gathered to greet the Pope and listen to his question-and-answer session and his closing remarks. The following is a translation.

A young girl named Bianca: On behalf of young people I welcome you to Naples! Your Holiness, you teach us that apostles must push themselves to be courteous, calm, enthusiastic and happy people, individuals who spread joy wherever they go. This is very true for us! And yet, our hearts really yearn to hope and dream. It then often becomes difficult to reconcile our Christian values with the horrors, difficulties and corruption which surround us every day. Holy Father, amid the "silence of God" how can we sow seeds of joy and hope so that the land bears the fruit of authenticity, truth, justice and the true love that goes beyond every human limitation?

Francis: Excuse me for sitting down but I am very tired, because you Neapolitans have really made me move.... God, our God, is a God of words; He is a God of gestures; He is a God of silences. We know He is a God of words because God's words are in the Bible: God speaks to us, He looks for us. The God of gestures is a God who goes out. Let us think of the parable of

the Good Shepherd who goes out to look for us, who calls us by name, who knows us better than we know ourselves, who is always waiting for us, who always forgives us, who always communicates his understanding to us through gestures of tenderness. And then there is the God of silence. Think of the great moments of silence in the Bible: for example, Abraham's silent heart when he went with his son to offer him in sacrifice. He went up the mountain for two days and didn't dare say anything to his son, though the son was not foolish, he understood. God was silent. But the greatest silence of God was on the Cross: Jesus felt the Father's silence, calling it "abandonment". "Father, why have you abandoned me?". And then there was the miracle of God, that word, that magnificent gesture which was the Resurrection. Our God is also a God of silences and there are silences of God which cannot be explained until you look at the Crucifixion. For example, why do children suffer? Can you explain that to me? Where can you find the words of God to explain the suffering of children? This is one of those great silences of God. I am not saying that we can "understand" the silences of God, but we can come close to them by looking at Christ Crucified, Christ who died, Christ abandoned, from the Mount of Olives to the Cross. These are the moments of silence. "But God created us to be happy" – "Yes, it's true". But He is often silent. And

this is also true. I cannot deceive you by saying: "No, have faith and everything will be ok, you will be happy, you will have good luck, you will have money...". No, our God is silent. Remember: He is the God of words, the God of gestures and the God of silences. You must bring these three things together in your life. This is what comes to my mind to tell you. I am sorry, I don't have any other "recipe".

An elderly woman: Holy Father, my name is Erminia and I am 95 years old. I thank God for the gift of longevity. I also thank you because you never miss an opportunity to defend life. This is so important! For in our society, life is a gift that seems to incite fear and it is often pushed away or discarded. Over the years since my husband's death, I have found myself alone, increasingly fragile and in need of help. I was afraid of losing my home, of ending up in an institution, in one of those "elderly storage facilities", of which you have spoken. The elderly are thus forced to ask themselves if their life is still meaningful. I have had the grace of encountering a Christian community which has not lost its spirit and where affection and gratuity are lived out. In my old age, "angels", as I call them, have come to me. Young and not-so-young people help me, visit me, support me in my daily struggles. Their friendship has brought me so much strength and courage. Praying with them has also helped me a



great deal: I am weak but in praying for the poor, the sick and the needy of the world, for peace, for the good of the Church and for the Pope, I find the strength to help and protect others. Those who give aid and those who are aided make up one family: young and old together. How can we grow as a Church which is the family of all generations, not discarding the elderly but making them feel part of the community?

Francis: Please have a seat, when I hear that you are 95 years old, I want to say: if you're 95 then I'm Napoleon! Congratulations, you

VATICAN BULLETIN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Rožňava, Slovakia. Until now he has been titular Bishop of Barica and Auxiliary of Košice (21 Mar.).

Bishop Stolárik, 60, was born in Rožňava, Slovakia. He was ordained a priest on 11 June 1978. He was ordained a bishop on 20 March 2004, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Barica and Auxiliary of Košice.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Neshan Karakéhyan, Ist. of the Patriarchal Clergy of Bzommar, from his office as Apostolic Administrator Ordinary for Armenian Catholics resident in Greece. It was presented in accord with can. 210 § 1 of the Code of the Eastern Churches (21 Mar.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Charles Phillip Richard Moth as Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, England. Until now he has been Military Ordinary for Great Britain (21 Mar.).

Bishop Moth, 56, was born in Chingola, Zambia. He was ordained a priest on 3 July 1982. He was ordained a bishop on 29 September 2009, subsequent to his appointment as Military Ordinary for Great Britain.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Román Arias, from the clergy of San José de Costa Rica, as Bishop of Limón, Costa Rica. Until now he has been parish priest of Nuestra Señora

de Guadalupe, treasurer of the Archdiocese and adjunct secretary of the Costa Rican Episcopal Conference (21 Mar.).

Bishop-elect Arias, 52, was born in Alajuela, Costa Rica. He was ordained a priest on 8 December 1987. He has served in parish ministry and as: adjunct secretary of the Episcopal Conference of Costa Rica and treasurer of the archdiocese.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Bertram Víctor Wick Enzler as Bishop of Santo Domingo en Ecuador, Ecuador. Until now he has been titular Bishop of Carpi and Auxiliary of Guayaquil, Ecuador (24 Mar.).

Bishop Wick Enzler, 60, was born in Waldkirch, Switzerland. He was ordained a priest on 8 December 1991. He was ordained a bishop on 30 November 2013, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Carpi and Auxiliary of Guayaquil, Ecuador.

EASTERN CHURCHES

On 19 March, the Holy Father reorganized the Hungarian Greek-Catholic Church raising it to a Metropolitan Church *sui iuris*, with the following measures:

– by elevating the Eparchy of Hajdúdorog for Byzantine rite Catholics to the rank of Metropolitan Church, with its episcopal see at Debrecen. He appointed Bishop Fülöp Kocsis as the first Metropolitan

Bishop. Until now he has been Bishop of Hajdúdorog.

– by elevating to an Eparchy the Apostolic Exarchate of Miskolc for Byzantine rite Catholics, making it a suffragan of the Metropolitan see of Hajdúdorog. He appointed Bishop Atanáz Orosz as its first Bishop, transferring him from the titular episcopal See of Panium. Until now he has been Apostolic Exarch of Miskolc.

– by establishing the Eparchy of Nyíregyháza for Byzantine rite Catholics, with territory taken from the Eparchy of Hajdúdorog, making it a suffragan of the Metropolitan see of Hajdúdorog. He appointed Bishop Atanáz Orosz as apostolic administrator *sede vacante* of the said Eparchy.

Bishop Kocsis, 52, was born in Szeged, Hajdúdorog, Hungary. He was ordained a priest on 2 August 1989. He was ordained a bishop on 2 May 2008, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Hajdúdorog.

Bishop Orosz, 54, was born in Nyíregyháza, Hungary. He was ordained a priest on 4 August 1985. He was ordained a bishop on 21 May 2011, subsequent to his appointment as Apostolic Exarch of Miskolc.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Hovsep Bezazian (Bezouzou) as Apostolic Administrator Ordinary for Armenian Catholics resident in Greece, without conferring episcopal ordination (21 Mar.).

The Patriarch of Cilicia for Armenians, with the consent of the Synod of Bishops of the Patriarchal Church, and after having informed the Apostolic See, accepted the resignation of Archbishop Hovhannes Tcholakian of Istanbul. It was presented in accord with can. 210 § 1 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches (21 Mar.).

The Holy Father terminated Archbishop Lévon Boghos Zékiyan's tenure as Apostolic Administrator *sede plena* of the Archieparchy of Istanbul for Armenians, Turkey, thus making him eligible for the office of Archbishop of Istanbul. The Synod of Bishops of the Patriarchal Armenian Church subsequently appointed him to this office. Until now he has been titular Archbishop of Amida for Armenians (21 Mar.).

RELATIONS WITH STATES

The Holy Father appointed Archbishop Aldo Cavalli, titular Archbishop of Vibo Valentia, as Apostolic Nuncio in The Netherlands. Until now he has been Apostolic Nuncio in Malta and in Lebanon (21 Mar.).

LENTEN SERMON

On 20 March, Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap., Preacher of the Papal Household, delivered the Third Lenten sermon in the Redemptoris Mater Chapel in the presence of the Holy Father.

Approaching the Synod

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Germany

Members: Cardinal Reinhard Marx, Archbishop of Munich and Freising

Bishop Heiner Koch of Dresden-Meissen

Bishop Franz-Josef Hermann Bode of Osnabrück

Substitutes: Bishop Karl-Heinz Wiesemann of Speyer

Bishop Wilfried Theising, titular Bishop of Mina, Auxiliary of Münster

Great Britain (Scotland)

Member: Archbishop Philip Tartaglia of Glasgow, President of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland

Substitute: Bishop John Keenan of Paisley

Portugal

Members: Cardinal Manuel José Macário do Nascimento Clemente, Patriarch of Lisbon, President of the Episcopal Conference

Bishop Antonino Eugénio Fernandes Dias of Portalegre-Castelo Branco, President of the Commission for the Laity and the Family

Substitute: Bishop António Augusto dos Santos Marto of Leiria-

Fátima, Vice-President of the Episcopal Conference

Czech Republic

Member: Bishop Jan Vokál of Hradec Králové

Substitute: Bishop Ladislav Hučko, titular Bishop of Horeava, Apostolic Exarch for Catholics of Byzantine rite resident in the Czech Republic

Switzerland

Member: Bishop Jean-Marie Lovey, CRB, of Sion, Sitten

Substitute: Bishop Valerio Lazzeri of Lugano

B) Eastern Catholic Churches 'sui iuris'

Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church

Members: Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt of Palai for Syro-Malabars, India

Archbishop Andrews Thazhath of Trichur for Syro-Malabars, India

Substitute: Archbishop Kuriaikose Bharanikulangara of Faridabad for Syro-Malabars, India

Bishop Thomas Elavanal, MCBS, of Kalyan for Syro-Malabars, India

In 'Vida Nueva'

'Women Church World' now speaks Spanish

The magazine *Vida Nueva* of Spain has begun publishing *L'Osservatore Romano*'s monthly "Women Church World" insert in Spanish. The first edition, published on 21 March, was dedicated to St Teresa d'Ávila, the 500th anniversary of whose birth will be celebrated on 28 March. For this occasion *Vida Nueva* printed this special edition entitled "Terasas de hoy" dedicated to women who embody the dynamic spirit of the Carmelites, following in the saint's footsteps.

"Giving a voice to women, making known what they are thinking and doing, and what they thought and did during the 2,000 years of Church history is the goal of the monthly insert", Lucetta Scaraffia wrote in *Vida Nueva*, introducing "Women Church World" in the Spanish magazine. The insert dedicated to women all over the world began being printed in *L'Osservatore Romano* on 31 May 2012, the Feast of the Visitation; it examines women's relationship to the Church. "In these three years", Scaraffia wrote, the insert "has been a helpful tool for information, reflection and connections regarding the life of women and the female condition, paying special attention to 'hot topics', including those linked to procreation, access to culture and emancipation".



Isabella Ducrot, "The Visitation" (above); cover of the 21-27 March edition of "Vida Nueva"



Morning Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae

Monday, 23 March
Three women
and three judges

"Where there is no mercy, there is no justice". Paying the price for this lack of mercy, when faced with "profiteering, depraved and rigid judges" are the People of God and the Church that is "holy, sinful, needy". These were the words of Pope Francis on Monday during Mass at Santa Marta.

Francis immediately pointed out that the day's Readings – taken from the Book of Daniel (13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62) and from the Gospel according to John (8:1-11) – "show us two judges of two women". He also mentioned another judgement concerning a woman: "which Jesus recounts in Chapter 18 of St Luke". Thus, "there are three women, and there are three judges: one innocent woman: Susanna; another, a sinner, the adulteress; and a third, the one from the Gospel of Luke, a poor widow". And "all three, according to some fathers of the Church, are allegorical figures of the Church: the holy Church, the sinful Church, and the needy Church, for the widow, the orphans were the most needy in that time".

This is precisely the reason, the Pope explained, that "the fathers thought they were allegorical figures of the Church".

However, "the three judges are bad, all three". And, he continued, "I am compelled to emphasize this: in that time a judge was not only a civil judge: he was civil and religious, he was both things together, judging religious and also civil matters". Thus, "all three were corrupt: those who brought the adulteress to Jesus, the scribes, the Pharisees, those who made the law and also passed judgements, they had the corruption of rigidity in their heart". To them, "everything was the letter of the law, what the law said, they felt was pure: the law says this and you must do this...". But, Francis remarked, "these were not saints; they were corrupt, corrupt because rigidity of this sort can only go on in a double life". Perhaps they "who condemned these women later went to find them from behind, hidden, to have a good time". And the Pope also emphasized that "the rigid ones were – to use the adjective that Jesus gave them – hypocrites: they lived a double life". Such that "those who judge, we think in the Church – all three women are allegorical figures of the Church – those who judge the Church with rigidity have a double life. With rigidity you can't even breathe".

Referring in particular to the passage from the Book of Daniel, the Pope re-emphasized that certainly the two men who unjustly accused Susanna "were not saints either". And Daniel himself, "whom the Holy Spirit moved to prophesy, called them 'old relics of wicked days'". To one of them he even says: "beauty has deceived you and lust has perverted your heart. This is

how you both have been dealing with the daughters of Israel, and they were intimate with you through fear". In other words, those two "were depraved judges, they had the corruption of vice, in this case luxury". And "it is said that when there is this vice of luxury, with years it becomes more savage, more cruel". Thus those two judges "were corrupted by vices".

And "regarding the third judge – the one from the Gospel of St Luke who I recalled moments ago – Jesus says that he did not fear God and did not take care of anyone: he didn't care, he only cared about himself", Francis said. He was, in short, "a businessman, a judge who in his task of judging did business". And he was thus "corrupt, corrupted by money, by prestige".

The underlying problem, the Pope explained, is that these three people – the businessman, the depraved and rigid men – "did not know one word: they did not know

In conclusion, Francis recalled "one of the most beautiful words of the Gospel, taken right from the day's passage from John, which really moves me: Has no one condemned you? – No one, Lord – Neither do I condemn you". And this expression of Jesus – "Neither do I condemn you" – is "one of the most beautiful words because it is filled with mercy".

Tuesday, 24 March

Christians? Yes, but....

How many people say they are Christians but don't accept "the way" that God wants to save us? They are the ones Pope Francis defined as "Christians, yes, but...", incapable of understanding that salvation passes through the Cross. And Jesus on the Cross – the Pontiff explained in his homily during Mass at Santa Marta on Tuesday

to "criticize: to speak against God, against Moses", saying: "Here there is no bread and no water, and we loathe this worthless food, this manna". In other words, the Israelites "loathed God's help, a gift of God. And thus that initial joy of liberation became sorrow, lamenting".

They would have probably preferred to be freed by "a magician performing magic with a wand" rather than a God who made them walk and made them "earn salvation" or "at least deserve it in part" by acting "in a certain way".

In the Scripture we meet a "discontented people" and, Francis pointed out, "criticizing is a way out of this discontentment". In their discontent, "they vented, but they didn't realize that the soul becomes poisoned with this attitude". Thus, the serpents arrive, because "like this, like the venom of serpents, at this moment these people had a poisoned spirit".

Jesus, too, speaks of the same attitude, of "this way of not being content, not satisfied". The Pontiff then referred to a passage from the Gospels of both Matthew (11:17)

and Luke (7:32): "When Jesus speaks of this attitude He says: 'How are you to be understood? Are you like those youths in the square: we played for you and you

did not dance; we weiled and you did not mourn. Does nothing satisfy you?'. The problem "wasn't salvation" but rather "liberation", because "everyone wanted this"; the problem was "God's way: they didn't like dancing to God's song; they didn't like mourning to God's lamentations". So "what did they want"? They wanted, the Pope explained, to act "according to their own thoughts, to choose their own path to salvation". But that path "didn't lead anywhere".

This is an attitude that we still encounter today. "Among Christians", Francis asked, how many are "somewhat poisoned" by this discontentment? We hear: "Yes, truly, God is good. Christians, yes, but...". They are the ones, he continued, "who end up not opening their heart to God's salvation" and who "always ask for conditions"; the ones who say: "Yes, yes, yes, I want to be saved," but on the path of their own choosing. This is how "the heart becomes poisoned". This is the heart of "lukewarm Christians" who always have something to complain about: "Why has the Lord done this to me?" – "But He saved you, He opened the door for you, He forgave you of so many sins" – "Yes, yes, it's true, but...". Thus the Israelites in the desert said: "I would like water, bread, but the kind I like, not not this worthless food. I loathe it". And we too "so often say that we loathe the divine way".

Francis emphasized: "Not accepting the gift of God in his way, that is the sin; that is the venom; that poisons the soul, it takes away your joy, it doesn't let you go".

So "how does the Lord resolve this? With the poison itself, with sin



Michelangelo "The Bronze Serpent" (1511)

– is the very "core of the message of the day's Liturgy".

In the passage from the Gospel according to John (8:21-30), Jesus says: "When you have lifted up the Son of man..." and, foretelling of his death on the cross, evokes the bronze serpent that Moses raised "to heal the Israelites in the desert" and which was recounted in the First Reading from the Book of Numbers (21:4-9). The People of God enslaved in Egypt, the Pope explained, had been freed: "They had truly seen miracles. And when they were afraid, at the time of the Pharaoh's persecution, when they were faced with the Red Sea, they saw the miracle" that God performed for them. The "journey of liberation" thus began in joy. The Israelites "were happy" because they had been "liberated from slavery", happy because "they carried with them the promise of a very good land, a land for them alone", and because "none of them had died" on the first part of the journey. The women were also happy because they had "the jewels of the Egyptian women" with them.

At a certain point though, the Pontiff continued, at the moment in which "the journey was getting long", the people could no longer bear it and "they grew tired". Therefore they began to speak "against God and against Moses: why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?". They began

what mercy was". Because "corruption took them far from understanding mercy", from "being merciful". However, "the Bible tells us that righteous judgement lies precisely in mercy". And thus "the three women – the saint, the sinner and the woman in need – suffer from this lack of mercy".

This holds true "even today". And it touches "the People of God" who, "when before these judges, suffer merciless judgement, whether in civil or ecclesiastical" circumstances. After all, the Pope clarified, "where there is no mercy, there is no justice". And thus, "when the People of God willingly approach to ask forgiveness, to be judged, how often, how often, they find one of these" judges. They find the "depraved" judges, for example, "who are there, capable of even trying to exploit them", and this "is one of the most serious sins". But unfortunately they also find "the profiteers", to whom "nothing matters and who do not give oxygen to that soul, who do not give hope: it doesn't matter to them". And the people find "the rigid ones, who punish the penitent for what they hide in their own souls". Thus, here are "the holy, sinful and needy Church, and the corrupt judges: be they profiteers, depraved, rigid". "This is called a lack of mercy".

To the Bishops of Bosnia and Herzegovina on their visit 'ad Limina Apostolorum'

United in brotherhood

To Bishops of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Catholic Bishops in communion with the Successor of Peter, on the frontier", the Pope recommended pursuing this communion "vigorously at all levels, beyond particular individualism". He expressed this in an address which he consigned to them during an audience on Monday, 16 March, on the occasion of their visit 'ad Limina Apostolorum'. The following is a translation of the text which was written in Serbo-Croat and Italian.

Your Eminence,
Dear Brother Bishops,

The spiritual experience of a visit to the Tombs of the Apostles and a meeting with the Bishop of Rome is always an intense moment of faith and communion. I offer you my warm welcome and I thank you for bringing me the warmth of your Churches and of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. For my part, I am eager to come to your homeland on 6 June and savour with your people how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! (Ps 133:1).

I was able to attentively and carefully read your reports, with your hopes, your plans; and, together with you, I have prayed for all the inhabitants of the country and for those who, due to recent war, unemployment and the lack of prospects, have been forced to take refuge abroad.

1. Emigration is a social reality that you take very much to heart and rightly so. It alludes to the difficulty of so many of your fellow countrymen to return, the scarcity of job opportunities, the instability of families, the emotional and social laceration of entire communities, the functional insecurity of different parishes, the still vivid memory of conflict, on both the personal and communal levels, with spiritual wounds still aching. I know this stirs bitterness and worry in your hearts as Pastors. The Pope and the Church are with you in prayer and in practical support for your programmes supporting those living in your territories, without distinction. I encourage you, therefore, not to spare your energy in supporting the weak, helping – in whatever way you can – those who have legitimate and honest desires to remain in the land of their birth, alleviating the spiritual hunger of those who believe in the indelible values of the Gospel which, over the centuries, have nourished the life of your communities. Animated by the balm of faith, by your example and by your preaching, they will be able to strengthen their determination for the good. The aid of your priests, who you tell me are generous, hardworking and committed pastors of the flocks entrusted to them, is indispensable to you in this work.

2. The society in which you live has a multicultural and multiethnic dimension. And the task consigned to you is to be fathers to everyone, despite the material hardships and the crisis in which you are to act.

May your heart be ever big enough to accept each person, as Christ's heart knows how to take in every human being, with divine love.

Every Christian community knows it is called to be open, to reflect the light of the Gospel in the world; it cannot remain closed only within the atmosphere of its own noble traditions. The Christian community comes out from behind its "fence", firm in the faith, sustained by prayer and encouraged by its shepherds, to live and proclaim the new life of which it is the depository, that of Christ, the Saviour of every man



and woman. In this perspective, I encourage initiatives that can expand the presence of the Church beyond the liturgical perimeter, by taking every other action imaginable that can affect society, bringing you the fresh spirit of the Gospel. Every person needs to meet the Lord Jesus, even without knowing it.

In your guidelines, you seek to promote a strong social ministry for the faithful, especially for young people, to ensure that they form

consciences willing to remain in their homelands as leaders and those protagonists in the rebuilding and the growth of your Country, from which they must not hope to receive only. In this educational and pastoral work, the social teaching of the Church is a great help. It is also a way to overcome the old scales of materialism that persist in the mindset and behaviour of certain sectors of the society in which you live.

3. Your ministry, dear Brothers, takes on different dimensions: pastoral, ecumenical and interreligious. Thanks to your reports, I have been

sound advice concerning your actions and your words, from their wisdom and experience in mixed communities. I believe that such a sapiential approach can bear seeds and fruit of peace-building, understanding and collaboration as well.

4. Another aspect you presented which I mean to invoke, praising your pastoral sensitivities, is the relationship between diocesan clergy and religious. I know firsthand the complex nature of these relations, as well as the difficulty of harmonizing their respective charisms. But the most important thing is that both are dimensions of the one priesthood and they pursue the same mission: to serve the Kingdom of Christ. And this is to the praise and honour of these apostolic forces, who dedicate all their energy to this service. I remember what St John Paul II, with inspired words, said in Sarajevo during his visit in April 1997; those seem to me to be prophetic today too: the Bishop is father, he knows that every perfect gift comes from God (cf. *Address to Bishops*, 13 April 1997, n. 4; *ORE* n. 17, 23 Apr. 1997, p. 4).

In this Year dedicated to Consecrated Life we need to stress that all charisms and ministries are intended for the glory of God and the salvation of all human beings, by ensuring that they be effectively directed to the building of the Kingdom of God and not tainted by partisan ends, that they be exercised in a context of human and brotherly communion, supporting one another's burdens (cf. Gal 6:2) with a spirit of service.

5. Lastly, allow me one personal word among Bishops, in keeping with the fullness of charity. I am aware of the historical events that distinguish Bosnia and Herzegovina in many areas. And yet you are one body: you are Catholic Bishops in communion with the Successor of Peter, on the frontier. One word alone spontaneously springs from my heart: you are in communion. Although at times imperfect, this communion is to be followed vigorously at all levels, beyond particular individuality.

You must act on the basis of belonging to same Apostolic College; other considerations are secondary to this and should be analyzed under the light of the catholicity of your faith and of your ministry.

Dear Brothers, in anticipation of meeting your people in Sarajevo, I would like to assure you of the Church of Rome's love for, attention and closeness to you, the heirs of so many martyrs and confessors, who through the long-troubled and secular history of your country have kept the faith alive.

These are the sentiments which I so warmly express to you and which I ask you to convey to your communities, asking them to pray for my ministry and passing on to them the Apostolic Blessing which I impart to you with brotherly love.

Morning Mass

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

itself": in other words "He takes the poison, the sin, upon Himself and is lifted up". Thus "this warmth of soul, this being halfway Christians" this being "Christians, yes, but..." becomes healed. The healing, the Pope explained, comes only by "looking to the Cross", by looking to God who takes on our sins: "my sin is there". However "how many Christians in the desert die of their sorrow, of their lamenting, of their not wanting God's way". This is for every Christian to reflect upon: while God "saves us and shows us what salvation is like", I "am not really able to tolerate a path that I don't like much". This is the "selfishness that Jesus rebukes in his generation", which said of John the

able to better understand the intense work that you are carrying out in these fields, work that always expresses your fatherhood to the people entrusted to you. I encourage you by reminding you that, while respecting all, this does not absolve you from giving an open and frank testimony of belonging to Christ.

Priests, men and women religious and lay faithful, who live in close contact with the citizens of different religious traditions, can offer you

Baptist: "He has a demon". And when the Son of Man came, He was defined as a "glutton" and a "drunkard". And so, the Pope asked, "who understands you?". He added, "I too, with my spiritual caprice regarding the salvation that God gives me, who understands me?".

Therefore, there is an invitation to the faithful: "Look at the serpent, the venom there in the Body of Christ, the poison of all the sins of the world, and let ask for the grace to accept the divine way of salvation; to also accept this food, so wretched that the Hebrews complained about it": the grace, that is, "to accept the ways by which the Lord leads me forth". Francis concluded by praying that Holy Week may "help us to leave behind this temptation to become "Christians, yes, but..."".

Meeting with young people in Naples

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

don't look it! You used a key word for our culture: "discard". The elderly are discarded, because this society throws away what is not useful: they use and throw away. Children are not useful: why have children? It's better not to have them. But I have love [to give], a dog or cat will do. This is how our society is. How many people prefer to discard children and comfort themselves with a dog or cat! Children are discarded, the elderly are discarded because we leave them on their own. We elderly have ailments and problems, we make problems for others, perhaps people discard us because of our ailments, because we are no longer needed. There is also another habit – pardon the phrase – of letting them die. Because we love euphemisms, we use the technical term: euthanasia. Not just the euthanasia with a needle, but hidden kind of euthanasia, that is, withholding medicine, withholding care, making your life sad so you die, so it ends.

This path, which you said you have found, is the best medicine for a long life: intimacy, friendship, tenderness. Sometimes I ask children who have elderly parents: are you close to your elderly parents? If you have placed them in a nursing home – because sometimes it happens due to how much both fathers and mothers work – do you go see them? When I visited nursing homes in another diocese, I asked the elderly men and women I met with: "Your children?" "They are well, well, well". "Do they come to see you?". When they were silent, I immediately understood.... "When was the last time they came?". "Christmas": it was August. They leave them there without love; love is the most important medicine for an elderly person. We all need love and even more so with age. To you, children who have elderly parents, I ask you to examine your conscience: how are you doing with the Fourth Commandment? Do you visit them? Do you show them tenderness? Do you spend time with your elderly mom or dad? I like telling a story which they told me at home. There was a grandfather who lived with his son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren. The grandfather got older and towards the end, the poor man, whenever he ate, he would sip the soup, always spilling a bit on himself. One day the dad decided that the grandfather should no longer eat at the table with the family; it was unseemly and they couldn't invite friends over. He bought a small table and the grandfather ate in the kitchen by himself. Loneliness is the most effective poison for the elderly. One day, the dad came home from work to find his four-year-old son playing with wood, nails and a hammer. He said to him: "What are you making?". "A little table for you to

eat at when you are old!". What you sow you reap! You, children, remember the Fourth Commandment. Are you affectionate with your parents? Do you hug them? Do you tell them you love them? If they spend a lot of money on medicine, do you reprimand them? Examine your consciences seriously. Love is the best medicine for us old people. This testimony, which you have given, about your friends – they are very good! – you must tell it often, so that others are driven to do the same. Never discard the elderly. Never.

The Russo family: Your Holiness, you recently said that the beauty of families must be communicated, as they are a privileged place for the encounter of gratuity and of love. The challenge requires commitment, understanding and resistance to the counter-currents, reevaluating the



ability to make courageous decisions which defend the true meaning of family as a resource for society and as a privileged means for passing on the faith. You urge us "not to let ourselves be robbed of hope" but in a city like Naples, the homeland of so many saints but also a place of so much suffering and contradiction, where the family is under attack, how can we build an apostolate of the family that goes forth, that charges ahead, is not closed in defense, that speaks to everyone about beauty? How can we rectify our excessively secular nature with spirituality and, as our Archbishop said, "make way for hope"?

Francis: The family is in crisis: this is true and it's not news. Young people don't want to get married, they would rather relax, live together with no commitment; then, if they have a child, they will be forced to get married. Nowadays getting married isn't in fashion! How many times I have asked at a wedding in a church: "You, who are here to get married, are you doing so because you want to enter the Sacrament with your fiancée or because this is just what people do in society?". A short time ago a couple, after living

together for a long time, decided to get married. "When?". "We still don't know, we are looking for a church that goes with the dress, and then we are looking for a restaurant that is near the church, and then we need to pick the party favours and then...". "But tell me: with what faith are you getting married?". The crisis of the family is a societal fact. There are also ideological colonializations of the family, different paths and proposals in Europe and also coming from overseas. Then, there is the mistake of the human mind – gender theory – creating so much confusion. So, the family really is under attack. What can we do in this active secularization? What can we do with ideological colonialization? How can we go on in a culture that doesn't care about the family, where marriage is not preferred? I do not have the recipe, the Church

practical advice: fight as much as you want, but don't end the day without making peace. In order to do this, you don't have to get on your knees, a caress would suffice. Because whenever you fight, you build up resentment inside, and if you make peace immediately, it's ok. However, the cold resentment of the day before is much harder to move past. Therefore make peace that same day. It is a piece of advice. Then, it is always important to ask the other if he or she likes something: you are together, in a marriage "I" is not good, "we" is much more effective. What they say about marriage is also true: joy for two: three times more joy; pain and suffering: half the pain and half the suffering. Married life should be lived like this and this is done through prayer, a great deal of prayer and witness, so that the love doesn't burn out. Because there will always be difficult trials in life and we cannot cherish the illusion of finding another person and saying: "Oh, had I only met this person before, I would have married him or her". Well, you didn't meet him before, he came too late. Close the door now! Be attentive to these things and move forward with your testimony and thus I am back where I started: the family is in crisis and it is not easy to answer, however, testimony and prayer are necessary.

At the end of the meeting, the Pope said:

I thank you for your welcome and all your testimonies. I ask you to pray for me. I ask you to pray for the youth. Today is the first day of spring, the day of hope, the day of the young. Perhaps every spring the path of youth starts again, it blooms yet again. I repeat to the young people: do not lose the hope of always moving forward. To the elderly: carry forward the wisdom of life, the elderly are like a good wine when it ages. Good wine is a good thing, it is helpful for the young and the elderly. Young and old together: young people have strength, the elderly have memory and wisdom. A people that does not take care of the youth – that leaves them without work, unemployed, and that does not care for the elderly – does not have a future. If we want our people to have a future, we must take care of young people by seeking employment for them, looking for ways for them to exit this crisis, giving them the value of education; and we must care for the elderly who carry with them the wisdom of life. Now let us pray to Our Lady and to St Joseph that they may protect young people, the elderly and families: [*Hail Mary...*] Now, I bid farewell to Naples and return to Rome! I wish you the best and 'ca Maronna v'accompagne!

In marriage there is also fighting and... and plates fly. I try to give