

# L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH

*Unicuique suum Non praevalerunt*

Fifty-third year, number 21 (2.648)

Vatican City

Friday, 22 May 2020

## Karol Wojtyła

one hundred years  
18 May 2020

Dear brothers and sisters, as we remember the centenary of the birth of Saint John Paul II let us turn to him to ask for his intercession:

Intercede so that we may always remain faithful to the Gospel.

Intercede so that we may know how to open wide the doors to Christ.

Intercede so that in these difficult times we may be witnesses of joy and mercy.

Intercede so that we may know how to respond to the needs of our brothers and sisters who suffer, recognizing in their faces, the Face of the Lord.

Help us with your intercession not to allow ourselves to be robbed of hope, and to be men and women who journey in the certainty of faith.

Francis



# VATICAN BULLETIN



## AUDIENCES

*Saturday, 16 May*

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

Cardinal Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, SJ, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

Cardinal Luis Antonio G. Tagle, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples

## NEW DIOCESE

The Holy Father approved the merging of the Archdiocese of Anchorage and the Diocese of Juneau, USA, into a single circumscription named Anchorage-Juneau, USA. At the same time he appointed as its first Metropolitan Archbishop Bishop Andrew Eugene Bellisario, CM. Until now he has served as Bishop of Juneau and Apostolic Administrator of Anchorage (19 May).

Archbishop Bellisario, 63, was born in Alhambra, USA. He was ordained a priest on 16 June 1984. He was ordained a bishop on 10 October 2017, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Juneau. On 7 June 2019 he was appointed Apostolic Administrator of Anchorage.

## CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed Fr Peter Michael Muhich as Bishop of Rapid City, USA. Until now he has served as rector of the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Rosary (11 May).

Bishop-elect Muhich, 59, was born in Eveleth, USA. He holds a degree in history, and a licence in technology. He was ordained a priest on 29 September 1989.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Louis Chamerlain Santisukniran from his office as Metropolitan Archbishop of Thare and Nonseng, Thailand (13 May).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Anthony Weradet Chaiseri as Metropolitan Archbishop of Thare and Nonseng. Until now he has served as vicar general of Thare and Nonseng, Thailand (13 May).

Archbishop-elect Chaiseri, 56, was born in Thare, Thailand. He holds a degree in philosophy and theology. He was ordained a priest on 21 March 1992. He is a member of the Focolare Movement.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Emmanuel Dassi Youfang as Bishop of Bafia, Cameroon. Until now he has served as titular Bishop of Oescus and Auxiliary of Bafoussam, Cameroon (13 May).

Bishop Dassi Youfang, 52, was born in Baham, Cameroon. He was ordained a priest on 16 June 2001. He was ordained a bishop on 7 January 2017, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Oescus and Auxiliary of Bafoussam.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Eusebius Alfred Nzigilwa as Bishop of Mpanda, Tanzania. Until now he has served as titular Bishop of Mozotori and Auxiliary of the Archdiocese of Dar-es-Salaam (13 May).

Bishop Nzigilwa, 53, was born in Mwanza, Tanzania. He was ordained a priest on 23 June 1995. He was ordained a bishop on 19 March 2010, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Mozotori and Auxiliary of Dar-es-Salaam.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Luis Miranda Rivera, O. Carm, as Bishop of Fajardo-Humacao, Puerto Rico. Until now he has served as parish priest of the Archdiocese of San Juan de Puerto Rico and episcopal vicar of the pastoral zone of San Juan-Santurce (16 May).

Bishop-elect Miranda Rivera, 66, was born in Santurce, Puerto Rico. He holds a degree in philosophy and theology. He was ordained a priest on 14 September 1984.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Vicente Horacio Saeteros Sierra as Auxiliary Bishop of Portoviejo, Ecuador, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Rusuccuru. Until now he has served as vicar general and parish priest of the Cathedral (16 May).

Bishop-elect Saeteros Sierra, 52, was born in Santa Ana, Ecuador. He holds a degree in philosophy and theology and was awarded a licence in Church history by the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He was ordained a priest 25 March 2000.

## Congregation for the Causes of Saints

### Promulgation of Decrees

*On Tuesday, 5 May, the Holy Father received in audience Cardinal Angelo Becciu, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. During the audience, the Supreme Pontiff authorized the Congregation to promulgate the Decrees regarding:*

- the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Francesco Caruso, priest of the Archdiocese of Catanzaro-Squillace, Italy; born on 7 December 1879, in Gasperina, Italy, and died there on 18 October 1951;
- the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Carmelo De Palma, priest of the Archdiocese of Bari-Bitonto, Italy; born on 27 January 1876 in Bari, Italy, and died there on 24 August 1961;
- the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Francisco Barrecheguren Montagut, professed priest of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer; born in Lérida, Spain, on 21 August 1881 and died in Granada, Spain, on 7 October 1957;
- the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Maria de la Concepción Barrecheguren y García, layperson; born on 27 November 1905 in Granada, Spain, and died there on 13 May 1927;
- the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Matteo Farina, layperson; born in Avellino, Italy, on 19 September 1990 and died in Brindisi, Italy, on 24 April 2009.

## Congregation for Catholic Education communiqué

The Congregation for Catholic Education wishes to emphasize that it is close to our Catholic schools' and universities' educating communities, and expresses its great esteem for what they are doing in this time of medical emergency, to guarantee – with the great effort it requires, and notwithstanding the difficulties due to social and human distancing – the continuation of their activities, to ensure that the current academic year can proceed and draw to a close.

On 14 May, there should have been the world event of the *Global Compact on Education*, so desired by Pope Francis, to increase our awareness of the responsibility we all have vis-à-vis education, so as to foster a spirit of encounter among the different generations, religions and cultures, as well as between humanity and the environment. The shared tragedy of the pandemic,

which is uniting as never before the peoples of the Earth, makes this call even more meaningful. Therefore, we have no choice: we are all called "to unite our efforts in a broad educational alliance, to form mature individuals who can overcome division and antagonism, and instead re-create the interweave of relationships to form a more fraternal humanity" (Pope Francis, *Message for the Launch of the Global Compact on Education*, 12 September 2019).

The Higher Committee for Human Fraternity dedicated 14 May to prayer, fasting and works of charity to help humanity overcome the coronavirus pandemic; and Pope Francis endorsed this proposal. We hope that educational institutions fully welcomed this invitation, coming together to make this an occasion for entrusting ourselves to God, the Father of all, the Source

of life and hope. Our gaze fixed on the one and only Lord gives us the courage to develop – including via education – that dynamic of unity and solidarity among people, religions and cultures, which can give birth to a renewed humanity.

Let us walk together on the paths of dialogue and mutual understanding, firm in our commitment to place ourselves at the service of our communities. Through sharing, respect and reciprocal welcoming, a new humanity will care not only for its children but also for the surrounding nature, from whose marvels it draws nourishment.

While echoing this appeal, so rich in hope, it gives us joy to recall that we shall continue to keep in touch, by means of a teleconference, on 15 October 2020, with participants on-line from all over the world, to study in greater depth the *Global Compact on Education*.

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WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH  
Unicuique suum  Non praevalentibus

Vatican City  
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TIPOGRAFIA VATICANA EDITRICE  
L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

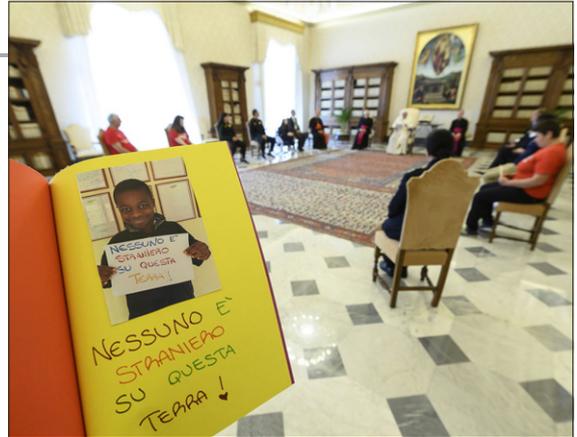
Photo Service  
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Advertising Agency  
Il Sole 24 Ore S.p.A.  
System Comunicazione Pubblicitaria  
Via Monte Rosa 91, 20149 Milano  
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Subscription rates: Italy - Vatican: € 28,00; Europe: € 100,00 - US\$ 148,00; Latin America, Africa, Asia: € 100,00 - US\$ 160,00 - £ 88,00; Oceania, North America: € 160,00 - £ 130,00.  
Management Office: phone +390669899480; fax +390669898564; e-mail subscriptions.or@spc.va.  
For India: The weekly English Edition of L'Osservatore Romano is published and distributed in India by Camel International Publishing House, Cotton Hill, Tivandrum- 695 014, Kerala-India; phone: +9147327233; fax: +9147328091; 299294; e-mail: cipl@ivdial.net.in; kavcentia@camelpublications.com.  
For North America: L'Osservatore Romano (USPS 026-510) is published fifty times per year (weekly, except third week in August and last week in December) by Our Sunday Visitor, L'Osservatore Romano, English Edition, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46732. Periodicals Postage Pending at Huntington, IN, and additional mailing offices, USA - phone: 800-348-2440 ext.7; fax: 866-891-7330 - e-mail: osssales@ossrom.com.  
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Our Sunday Visitor, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46732

## GENERAL AUDIENCE

*"If life's events, with all their bitterness, sometimes risk choking the gift of prayer that is within us, it is enough to contemplate a starry sky, a sunset, a flower..., in order to rekindle a spark of thanksgiving", the Holy Father said during the General Audience on Wednesday morning, 20 May. As he continued his series of catecheses on prayer, the Pope reflected on Psalm 8 and the mystery of creation. The following is a translation of his words which he delivered in Italian from the library of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace.*



Pope Francis calls for protection of Creation which bears the signature of God

## Prayer is the first strength of hope

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning,

Let us continue the catechesis on prayer, by meditating on the *mystery of Creation*. Life, the simple fact that we exist, opens mankind's heart to prayer.

The first page of the Bible resembles a great hymn of thanksgiving. The narrative of Creation has a rhythm with refrains, where the goodness and beauty of every living thing is continually emphasized. With his word, God calls to life, and every thing comes into existence. With his word, he separates life from darkness, alternates day and night, interchanges the seasons, opens a palette of colours with the variety of plants and animals. In this overflowing forest that quickly vanquishes the chaos, the last one to appear is man. And this appearance inspires an extreme exultation that amplifies his satisfaction and joy: "God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good (Gen 1:31). Very good, but also beautiful: the beauty of all creation can be seen!

The beauty and mystery of Creation create in the human heart the first impulse that evokes prayer (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2566). The eighth Psalm which we heard earlier states: "When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast established; what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou dost care for him?" (vv. 3-4). The one praying contemplates the mystery of the life around him; he sees the starry sky that lies above him – and that astrophysics shows us today in all its immensity – and asks himself what loving plan must there be behind such ponderous work!... And, in this boundless expanse, what is man? 'Almost nothing', another Psalm states (cf. 89:48): a being that is born, a being that dies, an extremely fragile creature. Yet, in all the universe, the human being is

the only creature aware of the great profusion of beauty. A small being who is born, who dies; he is here today and gone tomorrow. He is the only one who is aware of this beauty. We are aware of this beauty!

Mankind's prayer is closely linked to the sentiment of *wonder*. The greatness of man is infinitesimal when compared to the dimensions of the universe. His greatest conquests seem quite small... However man is not nothing. In prayer a sentiment of mercy is powerfully confirmed. Nothing exists by chance: the secret of the universe lies in a benevolent gaze that someone meets in our eyes. The Psalm states that we are made little less than God; we are crowned with glory and honour (cf. 8:6). The relationship with God is man's greatness, his enthronement. By nature we are almost nothing, small, but by vocation, by calling, we are the children of the great King!

It is an experience that many of us have had. If life's events, with all their bitterness, sometimes risk choking the gift of prayer that is within us, it is enough to contemplate a starry sky, a sunset, a flower..., in order to rekindle a spark of thanksgiving. This experience is perhaps the basis of the first page of the Bible.

The people of Israel were not experiencing happy days when the great biblical narrative of Creation was written. An enemy power had occupied their land; many had been deported, and they now found themselves slaves in Mesopotamia. There was no more homeland, nor temple, nor social and religious life, nothing.

Yet, precisely in starting from the great narrative of Creation,

someone began to find reasons for thanksgiving, to praise God for his or her existence. Prayer is the first strength of hope. You pray and hope grows, it moves forward. I would say that prayer opens the door to hope. There is hope but I open the door with my prayer. Because people of prayer safeguard basic truths; they are the ones who repeat, first and foremost to themselves and then to all the others, that this life, despite all its toils and trials, despite its difficult days, is full of a grace that is awe inspiring. And as such it must always be defended and protected.

Men and women who pray know that hope is stronger than discouragement. They believe that love is more powerful than death, and that surely one day it will triumph, even if in times and ways that we do not understand. Men and women of prayer bear gleaming reflections of light on their faces: because, the sun does not stop illuminating them, even in the darkest of days. Prayer illuminates the souls, it illuminates the heart and it illuminates the face. Even in

the darkest times, even in times of greatest suffering.

We are all bearers of joy. Have you considered this? That you are bearers of joy? Or do you prefer to bring bad news, things that sadden? We are capable of bearing joy. This life is the gift that God gave us: and it is too short to consume it in sadness, in bitterness. Let us praise God, happy to simply exist. Let us look at the universe, let us look at beauty and let us also look at our crosses and say: 'You exist, you made us like this, for you'. It is necessary to feel that unrest of the heart that leads to thanking and praising God. We are children of the great King, of the Creator, capable of reading his signature in all of Creation. We are not safeguarding that creation today, but that creation holds the signature of God who made it out of love. May the Lord make us understand this ever more deeply and lead us to say "thank you"; and that "thank you" is a beautiful prayer.

### SPECIAL GREETINGS

I greet the English-speaking faithful joining us through the media. As we prepare to celebrate the Ascension of the Lord, I invoke upon you and your families the peace and joy that come from the Risen Christ. May God bless you!

I offer a special thought to the *elderly*, to *young people*, to the *sick* and to *newlyweds*. Ascending into heaven, Jesus Christ leaves a message and a plan for the whole Church: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Mt 28:19-20). May making Christ's word of salvation be known, and witnessing it in daily life, be your ideal and your commitment. My blessing to you all!



## KAROL WOJTYŁA: ONE HUNDRED YEARS

The celebration of Saint John Paul II

# Those hands opened to everyone

ANDREA TORNIELLI

On 27 October 1986 when recent history stood at a dramatic juncture and the prospect of a nuclear war was real, Saint John Paul II courageously called representatives of the world's religions to Assisi, overcoming a fair bit of resistance, even from within the Church. "The gathering together of so many heads of religions to pray", he said, "is of itself an invitation to today's world to become aware that there exists another dimension of peace and another way of promoting it, that is not the result of negotiating, of political compromises or economic haggling. Rather, it is the result of prayer, which, even despite the diversity of

religions, expresses a relationship with a supreme power that surpasses our human capacity alone".

"We are here", Pope Wojtyła added, "because we are certain that there is the need of intense and humble prayer, of confident prayer, if the world will finally become a place of true and permanent peace".

This 18 May, we celebrate the centenary of the birth of this great Pontiff who came from behind the Iron Curtain, and during his long Petrine Ministry, steered the church into the new millennium. He witnessed the fall of the Wall that divided Europe into two and had hoped to see the dawning of a new era of peace, but instead – sick and elderly – he had to face new wars and a destabilizing and ruthless terrorism that uses God's name to sow death and destruction. To counteract this, he invited the heads of the



world's religions again to Assisi in January 2002, without ever surrendering to the ideology of the clash of civilizations, but rather focusing everything always, even until the end, on the encounter among peoples, cultures, religions.

He bore witness to a rock-solid faith, the asceticism of a great mystic, an overflowing humanity. He spoke to everyone and never left anything unattempted in trying to prevent the outburst of a conflict, rather favouring peaceful transitions, and promoting peace and justice. He travelled far and wide across the

globe in order to embrace all the peoples of the world and proclaim the Gospel. He fought to defend the dignity of every human life. He paid an historical visit to Rome's Synagogue, and was the first Pope in history to cross the threshold of a mosque. He navigated along the way indicated by the Second Vatican Council. He knew how to open up new and unexplored paths, even to the point of stating that he was willing to engage in a discussion on the way of exercising the ministry of Peter, to promote unity of Christians. His witness is as current as ever.



Looking at copies of L'Osservatore Romano, 1988

## Special edition and new app to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Karol Wojtyła

On Sunday, 17 May, *L'Osservatore Romano* daily edition launched an app which will enable readers to access the Holy See's newspaper more easily, also from mobile devices.

Available for free download on Apple and Google stores, the app's launch was timed to coincide with the newspaper's special edition dedicated to the centenary of the birth of Saint John Paul II.

The special insert which begins with a greeting by Pope Francis, includes articles recalling the Saint from various authors, among them, His Holiness Bartholomew

of Constantinople, Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Mikhail Gorbachev, Lech Wałęsa and former collaborators of Karol Wojtyła.

Readers can request a hard copy of the special edition by writing to [info.or@spc.va](mailto:info.or@spc.va).

Copies of photographs of the complete Pontificate of Pope Wojtyła can be purchased from the Vatican photographic service on [www.photovat.com](http://www.photovat.com). A special collection of the most beautiful photographs will be available for purchase in July.



The QR code to download L'Osservatore Romano's free App

The Pope emeritus sends letter to Bishops of Poland

## Benedict XVI recalls the mercy of Saint John Paul II

"The whole of the Pope's life was centered on subjectively assimilating the objective center of the Christian faith – the teaching of salvation – and allowing others to accept it". Pope emeritus Benedict XVI wrote these words in a letter addressed to the Bishops of Poland, to mark the centenary of the birth of Saint John Paul II. "Thanks to the risen Christ, the mercy of God is for all", he recalls, and "everyone must know that the mercy of God will eventually prove stronger than our weakness".



"It is here", the Pope emeritus continued, "that we must find the inner unity of John Paul II's message and the fundamental intentions of Pope Francis: contrary to what is sometimes said, John Paul II is not a moral rigorist. By demonstrating the essential importance of divine mercy, he gives us the opportunity to accept the moral demands placed on man, even though we can never fully satisfy them. Our moral efforts are undertaken in the light of the mercy of God, which reveals itself as strength that heals our weakness".

## KAROL WOJTYŁA: ONE HUNDRED YEARS

Holy Father's Letter to the Rector of the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas

# Inaugurated at the Angelicum the Saint John Paul II Institute of Culture

On Monday afternoon, 18 May, centenary of the birth of Karol Wojtyła, the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) inaugurated the Saint John Paul II Institute of Culture. For the occasion, Pope Francis sent a Letter to the Rector of the Angelicum which had the young future Polish Pope among its students. The following is the English text of Pope Francis' Letter.

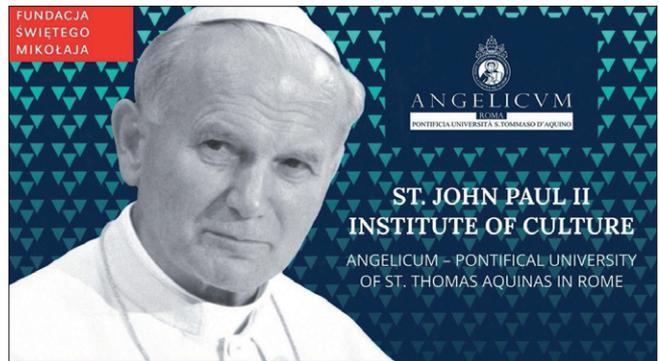
To the Reverend Michał Paluch, O.P.  
Rector of the Pontifical University  
of Saint Thomas Aquinas

On the centenary of the birth of Saint John Paul II, the most illustrious alumnus of your university, the Institute of Culture named after him is being inaugurated at the Angelicum, within the Faculty of Philosophy. In expressing my appreciation for this initiative, I cordially greet the entire academic community and all those present for the event, especially the representatives of the two Polish Foundations, *Futura Iuventa* and *Saint Nicholas*, which support the new Institute.

The principal aim of the Institute is to reflect on contemporary culture. To do so, the organizers intend to seek the collaboration of eminent philosophers, theologians and men and women of culture in its broadest sense. Saint John Paul II is at once both the inspiration behind this pro-

ject and its first and most important architect. This is thanks to the rich and multifaceted heritage that he left to us, and even more so by the example of his open and contemplative spirit, his passion for God and man, for creation, history and art.

The range of experiences that marked his life, especially the momentous historical events and the personal sufferings that he sought to interpret in the light of the Spirit, led Saint John Paul II to an even deeper reflection on man and his cultural roots as an essential reference point for every proclamation of the Gospel. Indeed, in his first Encyclical he wrote: "We approach all cultures, all ideological concepts, all people of good will. We approach them with the esteem, respect and discernment that since the time of the Apostles has marked the missionary attitude, the attitude of the



missionary. Suffice it to mention Saint Paul and, for instance, his address in the Areopagus at Athens. The missionary attitude always begins with a feeling of deep esteem for 'what is in man', for what man has himself worked out in the depths of his spirit concerning the most profound and important problems. It is a question of respecting everything that has been brought about in him by the Spirit, which 'blows where it wills'" (*Redemptor*

*Hominis*, 12; cf. *Address to UNESCO*, 2 June 1980).

We need to keep this approach alive if we wish to be an outward-looking Church, not satisfied with preserving and administering what already exists but seeking to be faithful to our mission.

I am pleased that this initiative has found a home in the University

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Pope sends video message to Polish youth

## Difficulties can only be overcome by relying on the power of Christ

On Monday evening, 18 May, 100 years since the birth of Karol Wojtyła, Pope Francis sent a video message to the young people of Poland – and youth around the world – urging them to let Christ enter every aspect of their lives. The following is a translation of the video message.

Dear young people,

This year we celebrate 100 years since the birth of Saint John Paul II. It is a beautiful occasion for me to address you, young people of Krakow, thinking about how much he loved young people, and remembering my presence among you for WYD in 2016.

Saint John Paul II was an extraordinary gift of God to the Church and to Poland, your motherland. His earthly pilgrimage, which began on 18 May 1920 in Wadowice and ended 15 years ago in Rome, was marked by his passion for life and by a fascination with the mystery of God, of the world and of humankind.

I remember him as a great man of mercy: I am thinking of the Encyclical *Dives in Misericordia*, of the canonisation of Saint Faustina and of the institution of Divine Mercy Sunday. In the light of God's merciful love, he captured the specificity and beauty of the vocation of women and men, he understood the needs of children, of young people and of adults, also considering cultural and social conditioning. Everyone was able to experience him. You too, today can experience him, know about his life and his teachings, which are available to everyone also thanks to the internet.

Each and every one of you, dear boys and girls, bears the imprint of your own family, with its joys and sorrows. Love and care for the family is a characteristic feature of John Paul II. His teachings are a secure point of reference to find concrete solutions to difficulties and to the challenges that families must face in our times (cf. *Message to the Congress "John Paul II, the Pope of the family"*, Rome, 30 October 2019).

But personal and family problems are not an obstacle on the road to holiness and happiness. Nor were they for young Karol Wojtyła, who – as a lad – suffered the loss of his mother, brother



Francis at the WYD in Krakow, 2016

and father. As a student he experienced the atrocities of Nazism, that took so many of his friends from him. After the war, as a priest and bishop, he had to face Atheistic Communism.

Difficulties, even tough ones, are a test of maturity and of faith; a test that can only be overcome by relying on the power of Christ, who died and rose again. John Paul II reminded the whole Church of this in his first Encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*, where it says, "The man who wishes to understand himself thoroughly ... must with his unrest, uncertainty and even his weakness and sinfulness, with his life and death draw near to Christ. He must, so to speak, enter into him with all his own self" (n. 10).

Dear young people, this is what I hope for each and every one of you: to enter Christ with your whole life. And I hope that the celebrations of the centenary of the birth of Saint John Paul II will inspire within you the desire to walk courageously with Jesus, who is "the Lord of risk, he is the Lord of the eternal 'more'.... As he did on Pentecost, the Lord wants to work one of the greatest miracles we can experience; he wants to turn your hands, my hands, our hands into signs of reconciliation, of communion, of creation. He wants your hands – boys and girls he wants your hands – to continue building the world of today" (*Address at the Prayer Vigil on the occasion of World Youth Day*, Krakow, 30 July 2016).

I entrust you all to the intercession of Saint John Paul II and I bless you, wholeheartedly. And you, please, do not forget to pray for me.

Thank you!

KAROL WOJTYŁA: ONE HUNDRED YEARS

Do not be afraid! Open, rather, throw open wide the doors to Christ! To his saving power, open countries' borders, economic and political systems, the vast camps of culture, of civilization, of development. Do not be afraid! Christ knows "what is inside man". He alone knows it!

# An open window on the world

PIETRO PAROLIN

He had returned to the Vatican just a few days before his 70th birthday. I, on the other side of the ocean, was thinking about what had just taken place, a truly unique experience, humanly and spiritually "overwhelming" is how I would define it, for myself and for the millions of faithful met along the way who had practically led him to touch, in one week, the entire geography of the "land of volcanoes". Mexico City, 1990. It was May then too. There began my most personal memories of Saint John Paul II, whom I had quickly greeted several years before during his visit to the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy. He had concluded his 47th Apostolic Journey

abroad, in which I was directly involved in preparations and in which I was directly involved as Secretary of the then Apostolic Delegation to Mexico. The same country which, in January 1979, had constituted the first ring of that impossible chain of worldwide apostolic itineraries undertaken by the Pope "called from afar", who managed to broach every distance, not just those measured in kilometres. In those times Mexico, even while counting 95 per cent of the Catholic population, fervently Marian due to the presence of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the capital and of the countless other places of worship dedicated to the Most Blessed Virgin in the entire territory, preserved a secularist

Constitution, which did not recognize the Church's right to exist, and even went so far as to prohibit religious functions in public. But John Paul II did not come as a politician seeking accords, even if his charisma and his "impetus" favoured, in the years immediately thereafter, the transformation of the Government's policy on religious matters and the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Holy See, in favour of those for which the then Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Girolamo Prigione, had long and tenaciously worked. Instead, he introduced himself as a pilgrim seeking faith. At the welcome ceremony in the airport he said: "The Lord, the master of history and of our destinies, has wished that my pontificate be that of a pilgrim Pope of evangelization, walking down the roads of the world, bringing to all areas the message of salvation". Shortly afterwards he re-emphasized the concept, presenting himself as "pilgrim of love and hope", with the desire to enliven the energies of Church communities, so that they might bear abundant harvests of love for Christ and service to their brothers and sisters". I think one could condense these words into a single one:

mission. For him it was not a preferential option, but an evangelical need. To go outside of oneself in order to rediscover oneself, to lose oneself in order to find oneself: the Teacher taught this. The very name he had chosen as Pontiff bore the imprint of that of the first great missionary, Paul of

Tarsus. Like him, he had received the irrepressible call to enlarge the doors of the house in order to make anyone who reached it feel at home: the house of the living God is destined for the great human family. Not only that, but as the Apostle of the

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Saint Peter's Square, 16 October 1978

## Our beloved Pope is standing today at the window of the Father's house, he sees us and blesses us

"Follow me". The Risen Lord says these words to Peter. They are his last words to this disciple, chosen to shepherd his flock. "Follow me" - this lapidary saying of Christ can be taken as the key to understanding the message which comes to us from the life of our late beloved Pope John Paul II. Today we bury his remains in the earth as a seed of immortality - our hearts are full of sadness, yet at the same time of joyful hope and profound gratitude. He interpreted for us the paschal mystery as a mystery of divine mercy. In his last book, he wrote: The limit imposed upon evil "is ultimately Divine Mercy" (*Memory and Identity*, pp. 60-61). And reflecting on the assassination attempt, he said: "In sacrificing himself for us all, Christ gave a new meaning to suffering, opening up a new dimension, a new order: the order of love ... It is this suffering which burns and consumes evil with the flame of love and draws forth even from sin a great flowering of good" (pp. 189-190). Impelled by this vision, the Pope suffered and loved in communion with Christ,



and that is why the message of his suffering and his silence proved so eloquent and so fruitful. Divine Mercy: the Holy Father found the purest reflection of God's mercy in the Mother of God. He, who at an early age had lost his own mother, loved his divine mother all the more. He heard the words of the crucified Lord as addressed personally to him: "Behold your Mother." And so he did as the beloved disciple did: he took her into his own home" (*eis ta idia*; Jn 19:27) - *Totus tuus*. And from the mother he learned to conform himself to Christ. We can be sure that our beloved Pope is standing today at the window of the Father's house, that he sees us and blesses us. Yes, bless us, Holy Father. We entrust your dear soul to the Mother of God, your Mother, who guided you each day and who will guide you now to the eternal glory of her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. (Excerpt from Cardinal Josef Ratzinger's homily for the funeral Mass of Pope John Paul II, Saint Peter's Square, 8 April 2005).

# The Pope of Dialogue and Defender of Human Dignity

BARTHOLOMEW

It is fifteen years since the passing of Pope John Paul II, whose life and teaching left an indelible mark in the heart of the world and the life of the Church. Terms and principles so precious to

him - such as human dignity and freedom, social justice and solidarity, dialogue and Christian witness - became axioms and pillars of his ecclesiastical and pastoral mission. Pope John Paul II eloquently articulated his conviction that the mission of the Church was to liberate humankind from all forms of oppression. He played a vital role in bringing down the walls of separation that had long imprisoned Eastern Europe. From his long tenure as Bishop of Rome, one could spotlight his numerous pastoral travels or encyclical documents, underline his contribution to the reform of canon law, but also highlight his extensive inspiration and influence across religious and even political realms. Instead, let us call attention to three vital dates in his ecumenical encounters with the Orthodox Church and his fraternal relations with our predecessor Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios and us personally.

A Dialogue Begins: November 30, 1979  
Pope John Paul II initiated a new tradition by officially visiting the Ecumenical Patriarchate shortly after his

election. At the Phanar, on the occasion of the Thronal Feast of the Church of Constantinople, we first met the new Pope in our capacity as Director of the Private Office of the late Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios. On November 30, 1979, the Patriarch and the Pope issued a common declaration announcing the commencement of the Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between our two Sister Churches. After the pioneering exchanges between their predecessors - Popes John XXIII and Paul VI, as well as Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras - who initiated the "dialogue of love," it was time to launch the "dialogue of truth," in order to dispel the misunderstandings and heal the wounds of the past on our way to unity.

A Declaration for Creation: June 10, 2002  
The ecological initiatives of the Orthodox Church,



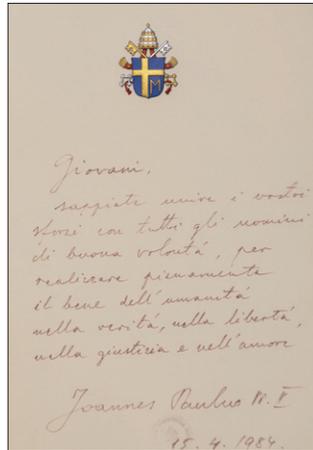
Torre San Giovanni (Saint John's Tower), Vatican Gardens, 1995

instituted by Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios in 1989, were continued and advanced throughout our tenure, especially through a number of international symposia, seminars, and summits that continue to this day. The

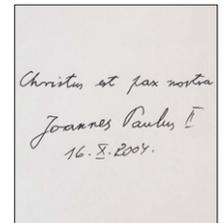
Adriatic Symposium - an interfaith and interdisciplinary assembly held in the summer of 2002 - addressed the ethical dimensions of the ecological crisis and

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## With young people on Palm Sunday, 15 April 1984



An unpublished original copy of Saint John Paul II's encouragement to young people on the occasion of an international encounter for the Jubilee of the Year 2000 (Palm Sunday, 15 April 1984). The photograph on the front page also refers to the Mass celebrated with young people in Saint Peter's Square on that same day.



Unpublished signature of Saint John Paul II on the occasion of the last anniversary of his election (16 October 2004).

At the "Door of no Return" in Goree Island, Senegal, 1992

## KAROL WOJTYŁA: ONE HUNDRED YEARS



### Bartholomew: The Pope of Dialogue

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

concluded with a historical Divine Liturgy in the Church of Sant'Apollinare in Classe in Ravenna on June 9, 2002. On the next day, on June 10, 2002, delegates attended the closing ceremony in Venice, at the magnificent Palazzo Ducale, where another historical moment of ecumenical and environmental proportions unfolded. There, we were able to communicate via satellite link-up with Pope John Paul II in order to cosign the "Venice Declaration" – the first-ever joint text of the two leaders of Western and Eastern Christianity exclusively on ecological issues, emphasizing creation care as the moral and spiritual duty of all people. As we declared on that day: "Humankind is entitled to something better than what we see around us. We and, much more, our children and future generations are entitled to a better world, a world free from degradation, violence and bloodshed, a world of generosity and love."

A Legacy for the Ages:  
November 27, 2004

A third critical stage in our relationship with the late Pope was the return of sacred relics to the Church of Constantinople – a significant, albeit sensitive, matter for the relations between our Churches. In November 2004, the remains of St. Gregory the Theologian (†390) and St. John Chrysostom (†407) were restored to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Both saints had served as renowned

archbishops of the prestigious capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. Formerly treasured in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, the relics were subsequently relocated to Rome by way of Venice, leaving a dour and deep wound in the story of inter-Christian relations. St. John Chrysostom's remains were placed inside St. Peter's Basilica; St. Gregory the Theologian's were originally preserved in the convent of St. Maria in Campo Santo, but later were transferred to the Cappella Gregoriana in St. Peter's. The relics remained there until we visited the Vatican in June 2004 on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the historic meeting between Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras of blessed memory, as well as of the 800th anniversary since the Fourth Crusade in 1204. In his address, Pope John Paul II officially apologized for the tragic events of the Fourth Crusade, to which we responded with a humble request for the return of the sacred relics "as a moral restoration of the spiritual legacy of the East, and a significant step in the process of reconciliation." On November 27, 2004, following a solemn ceremony and procession led by Pope John Paul II in Rome, we escorted the relics of St. Gregory the Theologian and St. John Chrysostom back to their home in New Rome. It was arguably one of the final and finest charitable acts, as well as one of the most momentous and memorable ecumenical gestures – by the elderly and frail pontiff, our beloved brother in Christ.



### Parolin: An open window on the world

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Gentiles, he did not spare himself, becoming everything to everyone in order to become involved with them (cf. 1 Cor 9:23).

I was left with an indelible and inspiring impression by the effort that he made to be faithful to the two events scheduled for each day, one in the morning and one in the evening, in different parts of the Republic, with the celebrations respectively of Holy Mass and of a liturgy of the Word. And with that sense of humour that characterized him, for which one morning, in greeting as usual the tens of thousands of people who "lay siege", day and night, to the offices of the Apostolic Nunciature during his visit, praying and singing, he said (with reference to the fact that that evening he would not return to Mexico City as he had in other days): "Today I am giving you a vacation: rest a little!"

In this way that "Open the doors to Christ" made its way ever deeper within me. It was not merely a courageous exhortation, so much as the awareness that it was impossible to be Church if not truly opening the doors of the house to the Lord and, with him, to all brothers and sisters created in his image. A message given to the world immediately, from the inauguration of his Pontificate and from his first Encyclical, dedicated to the Redeemer of man and to man, through the Church.

Thus, the diplomatic service, in which I was taking my first steps, was opening up broader horizons: it required not only calling its own legitimate reasons to the attention of others, but opening – we first and then everyone – the doors of the house, in Jesus' name. It meant living the diplomatic mission by recalling that the noun precedes and motivates the adjective. It meant welcoming the splendid truth: that of not being foreigners in any country, and thus at home everywhere. Not only because Catholics are everywhere in the world, but above all because in mankind, in every man and woman, Christ is knocking, asking that a door be opened.

Thus new gestures again flourish in memory, from the ancient evangelical zest, signs, indelible images: crossed borders, ecumenical, interreligious, social and historical encounters. A Gospel of life expressed in the singular and plural: a Gospel of many, many lives (who has encountered more in recent

decades?), all precious, unique, embraced by a smile that always loved beauty, as he stood out gleaming on the cliffs of the Valle d'Aosta and as he lay, curled up and suffering, in a hospital bed. It is no coincidence that the most suffering Pope whom the media has shown us was also the Pope of young people, to whom on 15 April 1984, on the occasion of the first Day dedicated to them, he addressed a memorable phrase: "It is worthwhile being man, because you, Jesus, were man!"

Rome, 2005. Twenty-five years had passed since those eight unforgettable days in Mexico. I too had crossed the ocean, joining the Curia in the meantime. In the Spring of that year from the open windows we saw rivers of people walking, between prayers and songs, toward the one who, introducing the Church in the third millennium, had spoken of the new springtime of the Spirit. People from everywhere came to exchange visits with the pilgrim Pope. The Christian and human family clung to its father, brother, friend. Many languages expressed the same affection for the missionary Pope who had travelled the planet to remind everyone of the dignity of each one.

In the Christian language, mission rhymes precisely with communion. The Second Vatican Council taught this, recalling that the Church, essentially, is communion itself and mission for others. The itinerant John Paul II was first a young father and then elderly son of the Council, the road map for the Church of our time. And there we were, all close in communion around the Pope of mission, in those first days of April, in its Easter days. We were looking at the Crucifix and at his cross, gathered like Mary and John at the foot of the wood, to form a family. We understood that those names suited him: Mary, whose initial stood out under the cross on his coat of arms, but was firmly impressed in the *Totus tuus del cuore*, John, the evangelist icon of communion, first name of a Pope faithful to it, as father of the entire human family. The last image is his appearance above the Square, on Easter Sunday, at the window, gesticulating and silent for the final, wordless blessing, made with his life. Someone wrote that life is an open window on the world. I think that this applies in a special way to the Pope born 100 years ago. I thank him with all my heart for having opened so many windows in my inner world as well. And for letting Light of the world enter.

## KAROL WOJTYŁA: ONE HUNDRED YEARS

## He continues to be our contemporary

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

In the years of “Perestroika”, and also afterwards, I met exceptional people, among whom were truly historical figures. But, among them, few left in my memory a sign as luminous as Pope John Paul II. It was a crucial moment in world history when we began to communicate. After many years of alienation and hostility between East and West, the leaders of the principal countries finally understood that we had a common enemy, that is, the threat of a nuclear catastrophe. Since then, with combined efforts we began the movement of discussion toward cooperation and also toward a partnership in the future.

John Paul II fully supported this process. Today it seems symbolic to me that our first meeting took place in December 1989, on the eve of my meeting with the President of the United States. Then in Malta, George Bush and I declared that our countries no longer considered each other enemies. I must say that even before this I observed with great attention the activities and the statements of the leader of the Catholic Church. And he, in turn, as I was told, followed with interest the changes in our country. We established contacts that later contributed to a meeting. When our meeting



1° December 1989

took place, I told the Pope that in his and my statements the same words were often found, which were similar in any case. “It means that there must be something in common, beginning with our thoughts”, I suggested. Today, more than 30 years later, I note that that communion not only continued, but deepened even in the years after our communication.

I think I can say with good reason: during those years we became friends. I believe that many other people can say the same because he

was characterized by a genuine and warm interest for every person.

John Paul II was able to combine the lofty mission of spiritual leader with a subtle compression of social and political processes throughout the world. He considered “Perestroika” as a phenomenon of great importance not only for our country but also for the entire world, as “the search for a new dimension of the life of persons, which corresponds more to the needs of a person and to the interests of different peoples”. I remember these words of his.

He had a particularly profound understanding of European history and Europe’s role in the world today. In the same conversation, the Pope said: “One cannot insist that the changes in Europe and in the entire world go according to the Western model. All that contradicts my deepest convictions. Europe, as a participant in world history, must breathe with two lungs”.

It is a very precise image. I sustained that thought and later I quoted it more than once in speaking of the present and future of Europe. Today these words are extremely relevant. And there is still a thought of John Paul II’s that today sounds not only current, but as an appeal and as a reminder to all world leaders and to all of us. His words are that we today truly need a new, more stable, equitable and more human world order.

I am certain that if after the “cold war” this idea had been used as a basis for the development of world politics, and if the same politics approached morality and were inspired by it, it would have been possible to avoid many mistakes and failures, for which the world has paid too high a price in recent decades.

The spiritual and intellectual legacy of John Paul II must be present in our reflections on the destiny of

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## God’s bow before the history of mankind

LECH WAŁĘSA

*Someone bowed over me for a long time.  
The shadow did not weigh upon  
the rim of my brow.  
As the light brimmed with green,  
like a hueless green,  
an indescribable green resting upon drops  
of blood.*

*This sweet bow, filled with both freshness  
and scorching heat  
which falls within me, yet remains above,  
even as it passes nearby – in that very*

*moment becomes faith and fullness.*

*This sweet bow, filled with both freshness  
and scorching heat is silent reciprocity.*

*Closed within that embrace – as a  
caress upon the face after which there is  
wonder and silence, wordless silence with  
nothing to understand or consider.*

*In that silence I sense, above me, God’s  
bow*

(Karol Wojtyła – Hymn of  
the Hidden God)



15 January 1981

A common path, a common history, common dreams, common actions, one single objective: the good of mankind. And then our destiny, the destiny of Poland that is so close to our heart and – in light of this closeness – the destiny of the world that changes by the action of mankind, though not always for their good. To change the face of this earth, restore it, respect it, love it with faith, hope and charity. He gave us the verb and we translated it into victory.

Faith and solidarity together make miracles. Communism worked according to a simple philosophy: do not allow the people to unite, to organize around a common idea, in peaceful struggle. The whole world used to tell us: stop fooling

around; each of your steps is controlled in your country by 200,000 Soviet soldiers; around Poland there are more than a million; there are silos filled with nuclear weapons.

The freedom movements had no chance of defeating communism, but John Paul II arrived precisely in that moment. The election of the Polish Pope and his first pilgrimage to Poland in 1979 changed the course of events. Suddenly we realized how many of us there were and that everything was possible.

This reawakening spurred Poles to be led by small opposition groups that then merged into a very strong movement like Solidarność. Without

the Polish Pope we would have never been able to organize ourselves. We would not have won.

Thanks to the Holy Father we rose up with faith and moral integrity, ever loyal to the idea of a peaceful struggle. We owe a great deal to the Pope. How would things have gone, if Cardinal Karol Wojtyła had not become Pope? One day communism would have fallen anyway, but probably with bloodshed.

John Paul II contributed to the fall of the Berlin Wall and to the overturning of the entire system. He encouraged society to protest, but also to do so in an intelligent, peaceful and honest way.

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## KAROL WOJTYŁA: ONE HUNDRED YEARS

Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments

# Inscription of the celebration of Saint Faustina Kowalska in the General Roman Calendar

CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP  
AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE  
SACRAMENTS

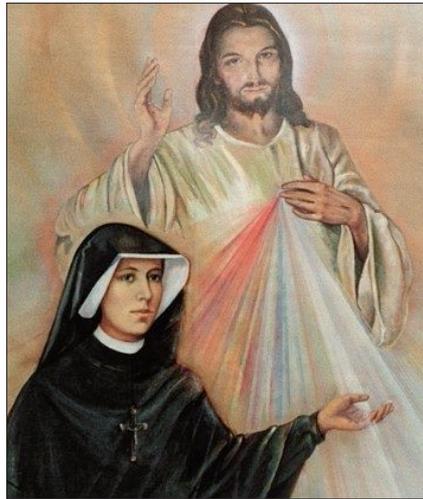
Prot. N. 229/20

### DECREE

on the inscription of the celebration of  
Saint Faustina Kowalska, virgin,  
in the General Roman Calendar

“His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation” (Lk 1:50). What the Virgin Mary sang in the *Magnificat*, contemplating the salvific work of God in favour of every human generation, found an echo in the spiritual encounters of Saint Faustina Kowalska who, through a heavenly gift, saw in the Lord Jesus Christ the merciful face of the Father and became its herald.

Born in the village of Głogowiec, near Łódź, in Poland in 1905, and dying in Krakow in 1938, Saint Faustina spent her short life amongst the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, generously conforming herself to the vocation she received from God and developing an intense spiritual life, rich in spiritual gifts and in faithful harmony with them. In the *Diary* of her soul, the sanctuary of her encounter with the Lord Jesus, she herself recounts what the Lord worked in her for the benefit of all: listening to Him who is Love and



Mercy she understood that no human wretchedness could measure itself against the mercy which ceaselessly pours from the heart of Christ. Thus she became the inspiration for a movement dedicated to proclaiming and imploring Divine Mercy throughout the whole world. Canonized in the

year 2000 by Saint John Paul II, the name of Faustina quickly became known around the world, thereby promoting in all the parts of the People of God, Pastors and lay faithful alike, the invocation of Divine Mercy and its credible witness in the conduct of the lives of believers.

Therefore the Supreme Pontiff Francis, accepting the petitions and wishes of Pastors, religious women and men, as well as associations of the faithful and having considered the influence exercised by the spirituality of Saint Faustina in different parts of the world, has decreed that the name of Saint Maria Faustina (Helena) Kowalska, virgin, be inscribed in the General Roman Calendar and that her optional memorial be celebrated by all on 5 October.

This new memorial shall be inserted into all the Calendars and liturgical books for the celebration of the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours, adopting the liturgical texts attached to this decree which must be translated, approved and, after confirmation by this Dicastery, published by the Episcopal Conferences.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

From the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 18 May 2020.

Cardinal ROBERT SARAH  
*Prefect*  
Archbishop ARTHUR ROCHE  
*Secretary*

## God's bow before mankind's history

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

He always defended the poor and the oppressed; with strength and conviction he opposed armed conflicts, wars and injustices, the suppression of peoples and of individuals. For him each person was unique and important.

I met the Holy Father many times. These encounters were always emotional and moving, but they never lacked a substantial exchange of opinions. I must honestly say that we understood each other without words, and on issues that others would debate for weeks without reaching an agreement, we managed to understand each other in a very short time, with complete comprehension, mutual acceptance and satisfaction for both parties.

I am convinced that the Holy Spirit has always guided and to this day continues to guide the actions of the Church and of people thanks to whom one can do things that seem impossible, change borders, change people, change the face of the earth, this earth. John Paul II is an absolutely exceptional figure who will remain for ever in my heart.

## Inauguration of Saint John Paul II Institute of Culture

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of Saint Thomas Aquinas. The Angelicum in fact houses an academic community comprising professors and students from throughout the world and is a fitting place for interpreting the important challenges of today's cultures. The tradition of the Dominican Order, with the important role given to rational reflection on faith and its content, articulated

in a magisterial way by the Angelic Doctor, will certainly favour this project, so that it will be characterized by the courage of the truth, freedom of spirit and intellectual honesty (cf. SAINT PAUL VI, Apostolic Letter *Lumen Ecclesiae*, 20 November 1974, 8; SAINT JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, 43).

With these sentiments, I renew my encouragement and gratitude to

you, dear brother, and to all those who have established the new Institute. To the professors, students and staff I send my best wishes for their work, and to all I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing.

Rome, Saint John Lateran,  
18 May 2020

*Franciscus*

## He continues to be our contemporary

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

mankind and on the new challenges placed before the world to be confronted in the current millennium. The Pope reflected deeply on the global world, on our shared responsibility to preserve life on the planet and to save the planet earth itself.

Today, like never before, it must be clear that all the problems recently observed by humanity cannot be resolved by means and methods that used to seem adequate and have been used before. I previously spoke of it in 1988 in my address to the UN General Assembly.

I took the liberty of quoting these words as I am convinced that new challenges and new threats call for a new mentality, based upon values that are shared by all worldwide confessions, by all the prevalent principles of modern thought. Currently the world is experiencing an acute and overwhelming crisis caused by the pandemic

of the new coronavirus. Under these conditions we are truly forced to re-examine many things. I am certain that John Paul II would have supported the call to demilitarize international relations and the political mentality, and to reduce military spending.

In the politics of all countries the issue of the safety of mankind, of the protection of our health and of the environment, of the creation of just conditions for the dignified life of every single individual who lives on our planet must be addressed as the top priority.

The world is passing through a difficult period and is posing particular questions to us all, but above all to politicians. Today the role of spiritual leaders is becoming even more important and full of responsibility. I would hope that they are able to manage this responsibility by following and taking inspiration from the example of Pope John Paul II. He continues to be our contemporary even today.

## KAROL WOJTYŁA: ONE HUNDRED YEARS

Pope Francis celebrates Holy Mass at the tomb

## The Lord has visited his people, he sent John Paul II

*On the centenary of the birth of Saint John Paul II, on Monday morning, 18 May, Pope Francis celebrated Mass at the tomb of the Pontiff-Saint in the Vatican Basilica. The following is a translation of Francis' homily, which was delivered in Italian.*

"The Lord loves his people" (cf. Ps 149:4), we sang, was the refrain of the Responsorial Psalm. And also a truth that the people of Israel would repeat; they liked to repeat: "The Lord loves his people". And in difficult moments, always "the Lord loves"; one must wait for how this love will manifest itself. When the Lord sent, out of this love, a prophet, a man of God, the people's reaction was: "The Lord has visited his people" (cf. Ex 4:31); because he loves them, he has visited them. And the multitude who followed Jesus, seeing the things that Jesus did, said the same: "The Lord has visited his people" (cf. Lk 7:16).

And today we here can say: 100 years ago the Lord visited his people. He sent a man; he prepared him to be bishop and lead the Church. Remembering Saint John Paul II, let us come back to this: "The Lord loves his people"; "the Lord has visited his people"; he sent a pastor.

And what are, let us say, the 'traits' of a good pastor that we can find in Saint John Paul II? So many! But we shall only speak of three. Given that persons say Jesuits always say things in threes, we shall say three: prayer, closeness to the

people, and love of justice. Saint John Paul II was a man of God because he *prayed*, and he prayed a lot. But how did a man who had so much to do, so much work to lead the Church..., have so much time to pray? He was well aware that a bishop's first task is to pray. And Vatican II did not say this; Saint Peter said it. When they made deacons they would say: "And to us bishops, prayer and the liturgy of the Word" (cf. Acts 6:4). A bishop's first task is to pray, and he knew this; he did this. The model of a bishop who prays, the first task. An he taught us that when a bishop examines his conscience in the evening he must ask himself: how many hours did I pray today? A man of prayer.

The second trait: a man of *closeness*. He was not a man detached from people, but instead he went to find people; and he travelled the entire world, finding his people, seeking his people, becoming close. And closeness is one of the features of God with his people. Let us recall that the Lord said to the people of Israel: "See, what people has its gods so near as I am to you?" (cf. Deut 4:7). A closeness of God with his people which is then made firm in Jesus, is made strong in Jesus. A pastor is close to the people. On the contrary, if he is not so, he is not a pastor; he is a hierarch; he is an administrator, perhaps a good one, but he is not a pastor. Closeness to the people. And Saint John Paul II gave us the example of this closeness.

Close to those big and small, close to those near and far, always close. He made himself close.

The third trait, love of *justice*. But full justice! A man who wanted justice, social justice, the justice of peoples, the justice that drives away wars. But full justice! For this reason Saint John Paul II was a man of mercy, because justice and mercy come together; they cannot be distinguished [in the sense of being separate], they are together: justice is justice, mercy is mercy, but one is not found without the other. And speaking of the man of justice and mercy, let us consider how much

Saint John Paul II did so that people could understand God's mercy. Let us think about how he promoted devotion to Saint Faustina [Kowalska], whose liturgical memory *beginning today* will be for the entire Church. He had heard that God's justice had this face of mercy, this attitude of mercy. And this is a gift that he left us: *merciful justice and just mercy*.

Let us pray to him today, that he give to all of us, especially to the pastors of the Church, but to everyone, the grace of prayer, the grace of closeness and the grace of just mercy, merciful justice.



In the Vatican Basilica

## The poor as guests of honour

Evangelically, the "place of honour" belonged to them – the poorest – and it could not have been otherwise at the Mass Pope Francis celebrated on Monday morning, 18 May, in remembrance of Saint John Paul II, 100 years after his birth. Yes, it was precisely them, the poor, the "special diplomatic corps" accredited to Popes, who bore witness by their very presence, to the spiritual and social power of a commemorative celebration, in order to live today and build the future.

Before Mass, they asked to make Confession, "otherwise I do not feel like participating and taking Communion", softly confided a young man who receives aid from "Dono di Maria", a shelter for the homeless, in the Vatican that Pope Wojtyła wished to entrust to Mother Teresa of Calcutta. And perhaps it is in this very gesture and in the words of this man – offhandedly labelled as "poor" – that we can understand the meaning of the celebration and even the *icon* of the meditation suggested by Francis in his homily.

The meditation offered and shared by Pope Francis was profoundly moving even before the start of Mass. With the slow pace of prayer, slightly before 7:00 am, Francis walked alone towards the altar that is the tomb of Karol Wojtyła. His gaze caressed the Holy Door and Michelangelo's *Pietà* as his steps were marked by the voices of a choir "coloured" by the habits of the different congregations of women religious.

Waiting for him beside the altar to concelebrate were Cardinal Angelo Comastri, Archpriest of the Vatican Basilica, Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, Papal Master of Ceremonies under John Paul II, Archbishop Jan Romeo Pawłowski, Delegate for Pontifical Representations, and Archbishop Piero Marini who for 18 years was beside Karol Wojtyła as Master of Pontifical Liturgical Celebrations. With them were also 12 priests.

At the end of Mass, Francis prayed that God spark in everyone "the flame of charity that ceaselessly fuelled the life of Saint John Paul II". Lastly, after the blessing, the Marian antiphon *Regina Caeli* was recited.

Precisely the sobriety and the spiritual simplicity of the celebration provided the opportunity to experience it to the fullest. No distraction could dispel its essential nature. Indeed reciting a list of participants – highly limited by measures to contain the spread of the coronavirus – would almost subvert the value of this "Eucharistic" day of remembrance. And it was certainly not the time to request or share a memory, nor even an interview before or after Mass. Prayer prevailed. Silence.

This very style suggested by Pope Francis enabled the voice and witness of Saint John Paul II to be "heard" interiorly once again.

And in this sense, the Missionary Sisters of Charity, the congregation

founded by Saint Teresa of Calcutta, were touching when, following Communion, they delicately began to sing *Jesus Christ you are my life*, the hymn which marked World Youth Day during the Jubilee of the Year 2000.

Thus, as the women religious, in their blue-trimmed white saris, sang "Jesus Christ you are my life", between one refrain and the next it was like once again hearing the tired yet youthful voice of John Paul II greeting that "sea" of young people on the night in Tor Vergata: "There is a Polish proverb that says: 'Kto z kim przestaje, takim się staje' which means, 'if you live with the youth, you too will become young.' Thus, I come back rejuvenated". Yes saints are forever young.

And Pope Wojtyła's comment as he bid farewell to the youth in Tor Vergata revealed itself to be right on target: "This 'noise' has struck Rome and Rome will never forget it!" And it is true, Rome and the world have not forgotten.

## REGINA CAELI

*On Sunday, 17 May, on the eve of the centenary of the birth of Saint John Paul II, the Holy Father prayed for the Saint's continued intercession from heaven, "for the People of God and for peace in the world". Earlier, Pope Francis had reflected on the day's reading from the Gospel of John (14:15-21) on observing the commandments and the promise of the Holy Spirit. The following is a translation of his reflection, which was given in Italian from the library of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace.*



## May he continue to intercede for peace in the world

Pope Francis recalls his predecessor John Paul II

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good Morning!

This Sunday's Gospel passage (cf. Jn 14:15-21) presents two messages: observance of the commandments and the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus links love for him to *observance of the commandments*, and he insists on this in his farewell discourse: "If you love me, then you will keep my commandments" (v. 15); "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me" (v. 21). Jesus asks us to love him, but explains: this love does not end in a desire for him, or in a feeling, no; it demands the willingness to follow his way, that is, the will of the Father. And this is summarized in the commandment of mutual love – the first love [in its fulfillment] – given by Jesus himself: "even as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (Jn 13:34). He did not say, 'Love me as I have loved you', but 'love one another as I have loved you'. He loves us without asking us to do the same in return. Jesus' love is a gratuitous love; he never asks for the same in return. And he wants this gratuitous love of his to become the concrete form of life among us: this is his will.

To help the disciples walk this path, Jesus promises to pray for the Father to send "another Counselor" (v. 16), that is, a Comforter, a Defender, who will take his place and give them the intelligence to listen and the courage to observe his words. This is *the Holy Spirit*, who is the Gift of God's love that descends into the heart of the Christian. After Jesus has died and risen, his love is given to those who believe in him and are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit him-

self guides them, enlightens them, strengthens them, so that everyone may walk in life, even through adversity and difficulty, in joys and sorrows, remaining on Jesus' path. This is possible precisely by remaining docile to the Holy Spirit, so that, through his presence at work in us, he may not only console but transform hearts, opening them up to truth and love.

Faced with the experience of error and sin – which we all do – the Holy Spirit helps us not to succumb and enables us to grasp and fully live the meaning of Jesus' words: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (v. 15). The commandments are not given to us as a kind of mirror in which to see the reflection of our miseries, our inconsistencies. No, they are not like that. The Word of God is given to us as the Word of life, which transforms the heart, life; which renews, which does not judge in order to condemn, but heals and has forgiveness as its aim. God's mercy is thus. A Word that is light for our steps. All this is the work of the Holy Spirit! He is the Gift of God; he is God himself, who helps us to be free people, people who want and know how to love, people who understand that life is a mission to proclaim the Lord accomplishes in those who trust in him.

May the Virgin Mary, model of the Church, who knows

how to listen to the Word of God and to welcome the gift of the Holy Spirit, help us to live the Gospel with joy, knowing that we are sustained by the Spirit, the divine fire that warms our hearts and illuminates our steps.

*After the Regina Caeli, the Holy Father continued:*

Dear Brothers and Sisters, tomorrow is the centenary of the birth of Saint John Paul II, in Wadowice, Poland. Let us remember him with great affection and gratitude. Tomorrow morning, at 7 o'clock, I will celebrate Holy Mass, which will be broadcast throughout the world, at the altar where his mortal remains rest. From Heaven may he continue to intercede for the People of God and for peace in the world.

In some countries liturgical celebrations with the faithful have resumed; in others the possibility is being considered. In Italy, beginning tomorrow it will be possible to celebrate Holy Mass with the people; but please, let us proceed with the rules, the recommendations they give us, so as to protect the health of each person and of the people.

In the month of May, in many parishes it is traditional to celebrate Masses for First Communion. Clearly, due to the pandemic, this beautiful moment of faith and celebration has been postponed. Therefore I wish to send an affectionate thought to the boys and girls who should have received the Eucharist for the first time. Dear boys and girls, I invite you to experience this time of waiting as an opportunity to prepare yourselves better: by praying, reading your catechism book to deepen your knowledge of Jesus, and growing in goodness and in service to others. I wish you a good journey.

Today is the beginning of *Laudato Si'* Week, which will end next Sunday, in which we remember the fifth anniversary of the publication of the Encyclical. In these times of the pandemic, in which we are more aware of the importance of care for our common home, I hope that all the common reflection and commitment may help to create and strengthen constructive attitudes for the care of creation.

And I wish you all a happy Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci*

