

# L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH*Unicuique suum Non praevalerunt*

Fifty-third year, number 38 (2.664)

Vatican City

Friday, 18 September 2020

At the Angelus the Pope's appeal in light of the various demonstrations taking place in recent weeks in different parts of the world

## May Government leaders listen to the voice of the people and protests be peaceful

"We cannot demand God's forgiveness for ourselves if we in turn do not grant forgiveness to our neighbour", Pope Francis said at the Angelus on Sunday, 13 September, speaking from the window overlooking Saint Peter's Square. "If we do not strive to forgive and to love, we will not be forgiven and loved either", he continued.

In his address, the Holy Father reflected on the day's passage from the Gospel of Matthew (18:21-35), in which the Apostle Peter asks Jesus how many times he was required to forgive his brother. Jesus replies, "I do not say to you, seven times but seventy times seven" (v. 22). In the symbolic language of the Bible this means that we are called to forgive always.

The Holy Father then followed his reflection with two appeals: in light of the various protests taking place in recent weeks in different parts of the world, the Pope asked government leaders to listen to "the voice of the people", and he asked demonstrators not to "give in to the temptations of aggression and violence".

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To contemplate the world we must look at it from within

ANDREA MONDA

In a recent tweet sent from the *Pontifex* account, Pope Francis wished to recall that "As believers, we do not look at the world from without but from within, conscious of the bonds with which the Father has linked us to all beings".

Even in its necessary brevity the text is so dense that it is very risky to claim to exhaust its entire treasure trove of hidden meanings in a newspaper article, however it is worth the effort to highlight a few aspects.

First and foremost the Pope invites us to contemplate the world. Doing so may catch off guard those who are accustomed to looking at the world with mixed feelings of fear and diffidence, which lead to defensive and judgmental attitudes.

No, not to look, the Pope says, but to contemplate. The chosen term is a particular, precise, exacting term. A few days ago in the daily edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*, theologian Giovanni Cesare Pagazzi recalled the first pastoral letter of Cardinal Martini, as the new Archbishop of Milan 40 years ago, on the "contemplative dimension of life", and he concentrated on the etymological meaning of the verb which is "to contemplate is an activity that aims at heaven, the beyond, the other side, the depths ... with respect to how much is usually available. That which is common and routine would be superficial, whereas contemplation aspires to depth or to height. To affirm instead that the whole of life can be contemplated means to admit the depth of what emerges on the surface of each day".

This is also the point of departure for the editorial staff of *L'Osservatore Romano*, which each day seeks not to look at but to 'contemplate' the world, going beyond what emerges on the surface and trying to be 'intelligent', to *intus-legere*. From

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A universal text addressed to each person's heart

### An encyclical for all brothers and sisters

ANDREA TORNIELLI

"*Fratelli tutti*" is the title that the Pope has decided upon for his new Encyclical dedicated, as we read in the subtitle, to 'fraternity' and to 'social friendship'. The original title in Italian will remain as such – and therefore without being translated – in all the languages in which the document will be disseminated. As noted, the first words of the new 'circular letter' (this is the meaning of the word 'encyclical') are inspired by the great Saint of Assisi whose name Pope Francis chose.

In anticipation of learning the contents of this message, which the Successor of Peter intends to address

to the whole of humanity and which he will sign on the Saint's tomb this coming 3 October, in recent days we have witnessed discussions regarding the only detail available, that is, the title and its meaning. As it is a quotation of Saint Francis (which is found in the *Admonitions*, 6, 1: ff 155), the Pope obviously did not modify it. But it would be absurd to think that the title, in its formulation, contains any intention of excluding from its addressees more than half of all human beings, meaning women.

On the contrary, Francis chose the words of the Saint of Assisi in

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Let us return to the Eucharist with joy

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# VATICAN BULLETIN

## AUDIENCES

*Monday, 7 September*

Cardinal Beniamino Stella, Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy

Mr Paolo Ruffini, Prefect of the Dicastery for Communication, with Mons. Lucio Adrián Ruiz, Mr Andrea Tornielli and Mr Andrea Monda

Cardinal Angelo De Donatis, Vicar General of His Holiness for the Diocese of Rome

*Thursday, 10 September*

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

Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, SJ, Archbishop of Luxembourg, President of the Commission of Episcopates of the European Union (COMECE)

Cardinal Antonio María Rouco Varela, Archbishop emeritus of Madrid, Spain

Bishop Bertam Johannes Meier of Augsburg, Federal Republic of Germany

A delegation from the European project "Snapshots from the borders"

*Friday, 11 September*

H.E. Mr Rahman Farhan Abdullah Al-Ameri, Ambassador of Iraq, for the presentation of his Letters of Credence

Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops

Archbishop Adriano Bernardini, Apostolic Nuncio

H.E. Mr Joseph Kojo Akudibillah, Ambassador of Ghana, on his farewell visit

Participants in the Congress of the International Gynaecologic Cancer Society.

*Saturday, 12 September*

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

Bishop Jean-Crispin Kimbeni Ki Kanda, titular Bishop-elect of Dragonara, Auxiliary of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, with his family members

Family members of the youths who tragically lost their lives in the discotheque in Corinaldo, Italy, on 8 December 2018



Participants in the meeting of the *Laudato Si'* Communities

*Monday, 14 September*

Archbishop Giorgio Demetrio Gal-laro, titular Archbishop of Tricala, Secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches

## CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop János Péntes from his office as Bishop of the Diocese of Subotica, Serbia (8 Sept.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Slavko Večerin as Bishop of Subotica. Until now he has served as Vicar General of Subotica and parish priest of Sombor, Serbia (8 Sept.).

Bishop-elect Večerin, 63, was born in Subotica-Palić, Serbia. He was ordained a priest on 14 August 1983. He studied at the Major Seminary of Zagreb.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Milan Stipić as Bishop of the Eparchy of Križevci for faithful of the Byzantine Rite, Croatia. Until now he has served as Apostolic Administrator *sede vacante* of the same circumscription (8 Sept.).

Bishop-elect Stipić, 41, was born in Bosanski Novi, Bosnia and

Herzegovina. He was ordained a priest on 18 October 2003. He studied at the Greek-Catholic Major Seminary of Zagreb.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Denis Wiehe, CSSR, from his office as Bishop of the Diocese of Port Victoria or Seychelles, Seychelles (10 Sept.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Alain Harel, as Bishop of Port Victoria or Seychelles, Seychelles. Until now he has served as Vicar Apostolic of Rodrigues, Mauritius (10 Sept.).

Bishop Harel, 70, was born in Quatre Bornes, Mauritius. He was ordained a priest on 3 September 1978. He was ordained a bishop on 8 December 2002, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Forconium and vicar apostolic of Rodrigues.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Rudolf Nyandoro as Bishop of the Diocese of Gweru, Zimbabwe. Until now he has served as Bishop of Gokwe, Zimbabwe (11 Sept.).

Bishop Nyandoro, 51, was born in Gweru, Zimbabwe. He was ordained a priest on 19 December 1998. He was ordained a bishop on 29 April 2017, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Gokwe.

The Holy Father, on 11 September, appointed as Auxiliary Bishops of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Chicago, USA, the following:

— Fr Jeffrey S. Grob, of the clergy of the same Archdiocese, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Abora. Until now he has served as judicial vicar.

Bishop-elect Grob, 59, was born in Madison, USA. He holds: a bachelor's degree in theology; a licentiate and doctorate in canon law. He was ordained a priest on 23 May 1992.

— Fr Kevin M. Birmingham, of the clergy of the same Archdiocese, assigning him the titular episcopal see of Dolia. Until now he has served as administrative secretary to Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, Metropolitan Archbishop of Chicago.

Bishop-elect Birmingham, 48, was born in Oak Lawn, USA. He holds: a bachelor's degree in philosophy; a Master of Divinity. He was ordained a priest on 24 May 1997.

— Fr Robert J. Lombardo, CFR, member of the Congregation of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Munatiana. Until now he has served as vicar forane of Deanery III-A and director of the Our Lady of the Angels Mission Center in Chicago.

Bishop-elect Lombardo, 63, was born in Stamford, USA. He holds: a bachelor's degree in accounting; a Master of Divinity and a Master of Science in pastoral counselling. He entered the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin in 1980 giving his religious vows in 1986. In 1987 he co-founded the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (CFR) and was ordained a priest for the Institute on 12 May 1990.

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## New Ambassador of Belgium

*On Friday, morning, 4 September, the Holy Father received in audience H.E. Mr Patrick Renault, Ambassador of Belgium, for the presentation of the Letters by which he is accredited to the Holy See.*

H.E. Mr Patrick Renault, the new Ambassador of Belgium to the Holy See, 59, is married and has one son. He holds degrees in law and in European law from the Université Catholique de Louvain. He also studied languages and Chinese law in Beijing. He has held the following positions: teacher at the Institute of international relations in Beijing (1986); intern at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) (1987-1989); first secretary at the Embassy in Pakistan, in charge of Afghanistan (1989-1992); deputy spokes-



man of the MFA (1992-1994); counsellor at the Embassy in Italy on economic and financial issues (1994-1996); consul general in

Shanghai, China (1996-1997); deputy cabinet chief of the Deputy Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance and Foreign Trade (1997-1998); consul general in Australia (1998-2002); Ambassador to Pakistan and Afghanistan (2002-2006); director of press and communications of the MFA (2006-2008); diplomatic adviser of the Deputy Prime Minister, Ministry of Labour and Equal Opportunity (2008-2009); Ambassador to Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands (2009-2013); Ambassador to Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay (2013-2017); director of media and communications at the Royal Palace (2017-2018); director of worldwide economic service, cyber diplomacy, fight against organized crime, financial terrorism and corruption at the MFA (2018-2020).

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## GENERAL AUDIENCE

*At the General Audience in the San Damaso Courtyard on Wednesday morning, 16 September, Pope Francis continued his series of catecheses on the theme of healing the world. He reminded the faithful that emerging from the pandemic requires that we all look after each other and our common home. "All forms of life are interconnected", he said, "and our health depends on that of the ecosystems that God created and entrusted to us to care for". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's catechesis, which he shared in Italian.*



The Holy Father reiterates that abusing nature is a grave sin

## Let us become 'guardians' of our common home

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning!

To emerge from a pandemic, we need to look after and care for each other. And we must support those who care for the weakest, the sick and the elderly. There is the tendency to cast the elderly aside, to abandon them: this is bad. These people – well defined by the Spanish term *cuidadores* (caretakers), those who take care of the sick – play an essential role in today's society, even if they often do not receive the recognition and recompense they deserve. Caring is a golden rule of our nature as human beings, and brings with it health and hope (cf. Encyclical *Laudato Si'* [LS], 70). Taking care of those who are sick, of those who are in need, of those who are cast aside: this is a human and also Christian wealth.

We must also extend this care to our common home: to the earth and to every creature. All forms of life are interconnected (cf. *ibid.*, 137-138), and our health depends on that of the ecosystems that God created and entrusted to us to care for (cf. Gen

2:15). Abusing them, on the other hand, is a grave sin that damages, harms and sickens (cf. LS, 8; 66). The best antidote against this misuse of our common home is contemplation (cf. *ibid.*, 85; 214). But why? Isn't there a vaccine for this, for the care of our common home, so as not to set it aside? What is the antidote against the sickness of not taking care of our common home? It is contemplation. "If someone has not learned to stop and admire something beautiful, we should not be surprised if he or she treats everything as an object to be used and abused without scruple" (*ibid.*, 215). Also in terms of "disposable" objects. However, our common home, creation, is not a mere "resource". Creatures have a value in themselves and each one "reflects in its own way a ray of God's infinite wisdom and goodness" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 339). This value and this ray of divine light must be discovered and, in order to discover it, we need to be silent; we need to listen; we need to contemplate. Contemplation also heals the soul.

Without contemplation, it is easy to fall prey to an unbalanced

and arrogant anthropocentrism, the "I" at the centre of everything, which overinflates our role as human beings, positioning us as absolute rulers of all other creatures. A distorted interpretation of biblical texts on creation has contributed to this misinterpretation, which leads to the exploitation of the earth to the point of suffocating it. Exploiting creation: this is the sin. We believe we are at the centre, claiming to occupy God's place and so we ruin the harmony of creation, the harmony of God's plan. We become predators, forgetting our vocation as custodians of life. Of course, we can and must work the earth so as to live and to develop. But work is not synonymous with exploitation, and it is always accompanied by care: ploughing and protecting, working and caring.... This is our mission (cf. Gen 2:15). We cannot expect to continue to grow on a material level, without taking care of the common home that welcomes us. Our poorest brothers and sisters and our mother earth groan for the damage and injustice we have caused, and demand we take another course. They demand of us a conversion, a change of path; taking care of the earth too, of creation.

Therefore, it is important to recover the contemplative dimension, that is, to look at the earth, creation, as a gift, not as something to exploit for profit. When we contemplate, we discover in others and in nature something much greater than their usefulness. Here is the heart of the issue: contemplating is going beyond the usefulness of something. Contemplating the beautiful does not mean exploiting it: contemplating is free. We discover the intrinsic value of things given to them by God. As many spiritual masters have taught, the heavens, the earth, the sea, and every creature possess this iconic capacity, this mystical capacity to bring us back to the Creator and to communion with creation. For example, Saint Ignatius of Loyola, at the end of his Spiritual Exercises, invites us to carry out "Contemplation to at-

tain love", that is, to consider how God looks at his creatures and to rejoice with them; to discover God's presence in his creatures and, with freedom and grace, to love and care for them.

Contemplation, which leads us to an attitude of care, is not a question of looking at nature from the outside, as if we were not immersed in it. But we are inside nature, we are part of nature. Rather, it is done from within, recognizing ourselves as part of creation, making us protagonists and not mere spectators of an amorphous reality that is only to be exploited. Those who contemplate in this way experience wonder not only at what they see, but also because they feel they are an integral part of this beauty; and they also feel called to guard it and to protect it. And there is one thing we must not forget: those who cannot contemplate nature and creation cannot contemplate people in their true wealth. And those who live to exploit nature end up exploiting people and treating them like slaves. This is a universal law. If you cannot contemplate nature it will be very difficult for you to contemplate people, the beauty of people, your brother, your sister.

Those who know how to contemplate will more easily set to work to change what produces degradation and damage to health. They will strive to educate and promote new habits of production and consumption, to contribute to a new model of economic growth that guarantees respect for our common home and respect for people. The contemplative in action tends to become a guardian of the environment: this is good! Each one of us should be a guardian of the environment, of the purity of the environment, seeking to combine ancestral knowledge of millennia-long cultures with new technical knowledge, so that our lifestyle may always be sustainable.

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Pope prays for Fr Roberto Malgesini

### The testimony of charity

*Before concluding the General Audience, the Holy Father led the faithful in silent prayer for Father Roberto Malgesini, a priest from the Diocese of Como, Italy, who was killed on 15 September.*

"I join in the sorrow and prayer of his family and the community of Como" the Holy Father assured and, echoing Bishop Cantoni's sentiments, he added, "I give praise to God for the testimony, that is, for the martyrdom of this testimony of charity towards the poorest". With these words Pope Francis recalled Fr Roberto Malgesini, a 51-year-old priest from Como, who was killed on Tuesday morning, 15 September, by one of the many needy people who received his support and help. The Pope then invited the faithful in the Courtyard of San Damaso and those connected through the media to "pray in silence for Fr Roberto Malgesini and for all the priests, nuns, lay people who work with the needy and those discarded by society".

The Holy Father to a delegation from 'Snapshots from the Borders'

## Borders should not be barriers of division

*"Borders, always considered barriers of division, can instead become 'windows', spaces for mutual knowledge, for reciprocal enrichment, for communion in diversity; they can become places in which to experience models to overcome the difficulties that new arrivals bring to local communities". The Pope expressed this hope in the Clementine Hall on Thursday morning, 10 September, as he received a delegation of people working on the European project "Snapshots from the Borders". After a greeting addressed by the mayor of Lampedusa, the Pontiff delivered an address in Italian. The following is a translation.*

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I offer my welcome to you who have joined the project "Snapshots from the Borders". I thank Mr Salvatore Martello, mayor of Lampedusa and Linosa, for the words he addressed to me on everyone's behalf. And I also thank you for this beautiful cross, so meaningful, that you have brought. Thank you. Yours is a forward-thinking project. It aims to promote a deeper understanding of migration, which would allow European societies to offer a more human and coordinated response to the challenges of contemporary migrations. The network of local authorities and organizations of civil society, from which this project arose, is determined to contribute positively to the development of migratory policies that respond to this end. The current migratory scenario is complex and often presents dramatic consequences. The global interdependencies that determine migratory flows are to be studied and understood better. The challenges are many and involve everyone. No one can remain indifferent to the human tragedies that continue to occur in different regions of the world. Among these we are often challenged by those having the Mediterranean as their theatre, a sea of borders, but also of cultural encounter.

Last February, during the very positive Meeting with Bishops of the

Mediterranean, in Bari, I recalled that: "In the Mediterranean region, these include all who are fleeing war or who have left their homelands in search of a humanly dignified life.... We are aware that, in different social contexts, there is a growing attitude of indifference.... The international community has been content with military interventions, whereas it should have built institutions that can guarantee equal opportunities and enable citizens to assume their responsibility for the common good.... In the meantime, we can never resign ourselves to the fact that someone who seeks hope by way of the sea can die without receiving help.... To be sure, acceptance and a dignified integration are stages in a process that is not easy. Yet it is unthinkable that we can address the problem by putting up walls" (Address, 23 February 2020).

In facing these challenges, it seems evident that concrete solidarity and shared responsibility, both at the national and international level, are indispensable. "The current pandemic has highlighted our interdependence: we are all connected to each other, for better or for worse" (General Audience, 2 September 2020). We must act together, not alone.

It is also fundamental to change the way of seeing and speaking about migration: it means putting the people, the faces, the stories at the centre. Thus the importance of



projects, like the one you promote, that seek to offer different approaches, inspired by the culture of encounter, which constitutes the journey toward a new humanism. And when I say "new humanism", I do not mean just as a philosophy of life, but also as a spirituality, as a style of conduct.

The inhabitants of border cities and territories – the societies, communities, Churches – are called to be the first actors in this turning point, thanks to the continuous opportunities for encounter that history offers them. Borders, always considered barriers of division, can instead become 'windows', spaces

for mutual knowledge, for reciprocal enrichment, for communion in diversity; they can become places in which to experience models to overcome the difficulties that new arrivals bring to local communities.

I encourage you to continue working together for the culture of encounter and solidarity. May the Lord bless your efforts in this sense, and may Our Lady protect you and the people you work for. I pray for you, and you, please, do not forget to pray for me. May the Lord bless all of you, your work and your efforts in order to go forward in this direction.

Thank you.

## VATICAN BULLETIN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Dariusz Piotr Kaluza, MSF, as Bishop of the diocese of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. Until now he has served as Bishop of Goroka, Papua New Guinea (12 Sept.).

Bishop Kaluza, 52, was born in Pszczyna, Poland. Member of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, he was ordained a priest on 8 May 1993. He was ordained a bishop on 20 August 2016, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Goroka.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Fidencio López Plaza as Bishop of Querétaro, Mexico. Until now he has served as Bishop of San Andrés Tuxtla, Mexico (12 Sept.).

Bishop Plaza, 70, was born in La Estancia San José Iturbide, Mexico. He was ordained a priest on 19 February 1982. He was ordained a bishop on 20 May 2015, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of San Andrés Tuxtla.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Archbishop Ioannis Spiteris, OFM Cap., from the

pastoral care of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Corfu, Zakynthos and Cefalonia and as the Apostolic Administrator *ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* of the Apostolic Vicariate of Thessaloniki, Greece, (14 Sept.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Georgios Altouvas as Metropolitan Archbishop of Corfu, Zakynthos and Cefalonia and Apostolic Administrator of the Apostolic Vicariate of Thessaloniki. Until now he has served as parish priest of the Cathedral of Saint Dionysius in Athens, Greece (14 Sept.).

Archbishop-elect Altouvas, 46, was born in Athens, Greece. He was ordained a priest on 3 October 1998. He holds a degree in philosophy and theology.

### ORIENTAL CHURCHES

The Synod of Bishops of the Patriarchal Church of Antioch for Syrians, with the assent of the Holy Father, has elected as Exarch of Basra and the Gulf Fr Firas Mundher DRDR, assigning him the titular see of Takrit for Syrians (10 Sept.).

Bishop-elect Mundher, 45, was born in Qaraqosh, Iraq. He was ordained a priest on 30

April 2009. He studied philosophy and theology and holds a degree in Fine Arts; he attended courses in social communication.

### START OF MISSION

On 27 August, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, titular Archbishop of Canosa, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio in France with the presentation of his Letters of Credence to H.E. Mr Emmanuel Macron, President of France.

### NECROLOGY

Bishop Mar Paul Chittilapilly, Bishop emeritus of Thamarasserry, India, at age 86 (6 Sept.)

Archbishop Benedict To Varpin, Archbishop emeritus of Madang, Papua New Guinea, at age 84 (8 Sept.)

Archbishop Joseph Chennoth, titular Archbishop of Milevum, Apostolic Nuncio to Japan, at age 76 (8 Sept.)

Bishop Petko Jordanov Christov, OFM Conv., of Nicopoli, Bulgaria, at age 69 (14 Sept.)



# Sick people are much more than their clinical data

Pope's concern that the human dimension of care of the sick be left to the kindness of individual physicians

*"Every patient is a person and, as such, is defined by much more than his or her clinical data", Pope Francis said, addressing participants in the annual meeting of the International Gynaecologic Cancer Society whom he received in audience on Friday, 11 September. The following is the English text of his discourse, which he delivered in the Paul VI Hall.*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning! I offer you a cordial welcome on the occasion of the annual Meeting of the *International Gynaecologic Cancer Society*. Your visit affords me an opportunity to acknowledge with esteem the work of your association in caring for women suffering from complex and distressing diseases. I thank your President, Professor Roberto Angioli, for his kind words of welcome and for arranging this encounter.

I am also pleased to welcome the representatives of the various *associations*, especially those of former patients, which offer a setting for mutual sharing and support. In providing this valuable service, you show how important it is to forge bonds of solidarity and support between patients suffering from serious pathologies, their family members and medical personnel. This becomes all the more important when it has to do with illnesses that can impair or eliminate fertility and the possibility of motherhood. In those situations, which so greatly impact



women's lives, profound sensitivity and respect for the well-being of each patient – psychological, relational, spiritual – must constantly be shown.

For this reason, I can only encourage your efforts to concentrate on these aspects of the integral care of patients, also in cases where treatment is essentially palliative. The involvement of other persons who can support the patient by offering trust, hope and love is likewise important. We all know – as has been shown – that good relationships help and encourage the sick at every stage of care, rekindling and deepening their hope. It is exactly that loving closeness that opens the door to hope and thus to healing.

Every patient is a person and, as such, is defined by much more than his or her clinical data. When a sick

person senses that he or she is being treated as a unique person – and you can surely confirm this from your experience – the result is greater confidence in the medical team and greater hope for a positive outcome.

I trust, as I am certain you do, that these values will not remain merely an ideal, but will be increasingly recognized within healthcare systems. It is often stated, and rightly so, that a *good relationship with healthcare personnel is itself part of the cure*. What a great benefit it is for the sick to have an opportunity to open their hearts freely and speak to others about their condition and needs! But also to be able to shed tears, knowing that they will be understood. This opens new horizons and assists healing, or in cases of terminal illness, provides encouragement and support.

Yet, important as this is, can it realistically happen in hospital environments that are strongly conditioned by functional needs? Here I must observe with regret that the human dimension of the care of the sick is all too often left to the kindness of the individual physician rather than being considered, as it should be, an integral part of the services offered by healthcare facilities.

Financial concerns should not be allowed to dominate the field of healthcare to the point where such essential aspects as building relationships with patients are overlooked. In this regard, praise is due to the various non-profit organizations that place patients at the centre, assisting with their needs, responding to their legitimate questions and enabling those who, due to the fragility of their personal, economic and social condition, cannot make their voices heard.

Research, of course, demands significant financial resources. Yet I am confident that a sound balance between these various factors can be achieved. Even so, priority must always be given to people, in this case, women suffering from serious illnesses, but also – let us not forget – to the personnel who deal with them daily to ensure that they can carry out their work in dignified conditions. But also that they have time to rest and regain their energy and strength.

I encourage you to make known the important results of your studies and research for the sake of the women for whom you care. Amid their difficulties, they help us to remember aspects of life that we sometimes forget, such as the precariousness of our existence, our need for one another, the vanity of self-centredness, and the reality of death as part of life itself. Sickness reminds us of the decisive attitude for every human being, namely, our need to *entrust ourselves*: to others who are our brothers and sisters, and to the *Other* who is our heavenly Father. It also reminds us of the importance of *doseness*, of our need to be neighbours to one another, as Jesus taught in the parable of the Good Samaritan (cf. *Lk* 10:25-37). At the right time, what healing can a caress bring! You know that better than I.

Dear friends, I offer you my prayerful good wishes for your work. Upon you and your families, your associates and all those for whom you care, I invoke God's blessing. I bless all of you whatever your faith or religious tradition. God is the same for all. I bless all of you and I invoke God's blessing, source of wisdom, strength and interior peace. I assure you of my prayers and – they say priests always do this! – I conclude by asking your prayers for me because I need them.

Thank you.

## 'Guardians' of our common home

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Lastly, *contemplating and caring*: these are two attitudes that show the way to correct and re-balance our relationship as human beings with creation. Oftentimes, our relationship with creation seems to be a relationship between enemies: destroying creation for our benefit. Exploiting creation for our profit. Let us not forget that this comes at a high price; let us not forget that Spanish saying: "God always forgives; we forgive sometimes; nature never forgives". Today I was reading in the newspaper about those two great glaciers in Antarctica, near the Amundsen Sea: they are about to fall. It will be terrible, because the sea level will rise and this will bring many, many difficulties and so much harm. And why? Because of global warming, not caring for the environment, not caring for our common home. On the other hand, when we have this relationship – let me say the word – 'fraternal' in the figurative sense with creation, we will become guardians of our common home, guardians of life and guardians of hope; we will safeguard the patrimony that God has entrusted to us

so that future generations may enjoy it. And some may say: "But, I can get by like this". But the problem is not how you are going to manage today – this was said by a German theologian, a Protestant, a good man: Bonhoeffer – the problem is not how you manage today; the problem is: what will be the legacy, life for future generations? Let us think of our children, our grandchildren: what will we leave them if we exploit creation? Let us protect this path so we may become 'guardians' of our common home, guardians of life and hope. Let us safeguard the heritage that God has entrusted to us so that future generations may enjoy it. I think especially of the indigenous peoples, to whom we all owe a debt of gratitude, also of penance, to repair the harm we have done to them. But I am also thinking of those movements, associations, popular groups, that are committed to protecting their territory with its natural and cultural values. These social realities are not always appreciated; and at times they are even obstructed, because they do not earn money. But in reality they contribute to a peaceful revolution: we might call it the "revolution of

care". Contemplating so as to care, contemplating to protect, to protect ourselves, creation, our children, our grandchildren, and to protect the future. Contemplating to care for and to protect, and to leave a legacy to the future generation.

However this must not be delegated to others: this is the task of every human being. Each one of us can and must be a "guardian of the common home", capable of praising God for his creatures, and of contemplating creatures, and protecting them. Thank you.

### SPECIAL GREETINGS

I cordially greet the English-speaking faithful. In these days, my thoughts turn especially to the elderly and infirm, and those who generously care for them. Upon all of you and your families I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

Lastly my thought goes as usual to the elderly, to young people, to the sick and to newlyweds. We recently celebrated in the liturgy the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. May the Cross, a sign of faith in Christ, be comfort for all and the image of an unwavering hope.

## CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS

Letter on the celebration of the liturgy during and after the Covid-19 pandemic to the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences of the Catholic Church

# Let us return to the Eucharist with joy

*The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has sent a letter to the presidents of Episcopal Conferences on celebrating the liturgy during and after the pandemic. The following is the English text of the letter which was made public on Saturday, 12 September.*

The pandemic caused by the Covid 19 virus has produced upheavals not only in social, family, economic, educational and work dynamics, but also in the life of the Christian community, including the liturgical dimension. To prevent the spread of the virus, rigid social distancing was necessary, which had repercussions on a fundamental trait of Christian life: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them" (Mt 18:20); "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And all who believed were together and had all things in common" (Acts 2:42, 44).

This community dimension has a theological meaning: God is a relationship of Persons in the Most Holy Trinity. He creates humanity in the relational complementarity between male and female because "it is not good that man should be alone" (Gen 2:18). He puts himself in relationship with man and woman and calls them in turn to relationship with him. As Saint Augustine intuited, our heart is restless until it finds God and rests in him (cf. Confessions, I, 1). The Lord Jesus began his public ministry by calling to himself a group of disciples to share with him the life and proclamation of the Kingdom; from this small flock the Church is born. Scripture uses the image of a city to describe eternal life: the heavenly Jerusalem (cf. Rev 21). A city is a community of people who share values, fundamental human and spiritual realities, places, times and organized activities and who contribute to building the common good. While the pagans built temples dedicated only to the divinity, to which people had no access, Christians, as soon as they enjoyed freedom of worship, immediately built places that were the *domus Dei et domus ecclesiae*, where the faithful could recognize themselves as the community of God, a people summoned for worship and sanctified as a holy assembly. God can

therefore proclaim: "I am your God, you will be my people" (cf. Ex 6:7; Dt 14:2). The Lord remains faithful to his Covenant (cf. Dt 7:9) and Israel becomes for this very reason the *Abode of God*, the holy place of his presence in the world (cf. Ex 29:45; Lv 26:11-12). For this reason, the house of the Lord presupposes the presence of the family of the children of God. Today too, in the prayer of the dedication of a new church, the Bishop asks that it be what it should be by its very nature:

"[...] make this for ever a holy place [...]"

Here may the flood of divine grace overwhelm human offenses, so that your children, Father, being dead to sin, may be reborn to heavenly life.

Here may your faithful, gathered around the table of the altar, celebrate the memorial of the Paschal Mystery and be refreshed by the banquet of Christ's Word and his Body. Here may the joyful offering of praise resound, with human voices joined to the song of Angels, and unceasing prayer rise up to you for the salvation of the world.

Here may the poor find freedom, the oppressed attain true freedom, and all people be clothed with the dignity of your children, until they come exultant to the Jerusalem which is above.

The Christian community has never sought isolation and has never made the Church a city with closed doors. Formed in the value of community life and in the search of the common good, Christians have always sought insertion into society, while being aware of an otherness – to be in the world without belonging to it and without being reduced to it (cf. *Letter to Diogenes*, 5-6). And even in the pandemic emergency, a great

sense of responsibility has emerged. In listening to and collaborating with civil authorities and experts, the Bishops and their territorial conferences were prompt to make difficult and painful decisions, even to the point of suspending the participation of the faithful in the celebration of the Eucharist for a long period. This Congregation is deeply grateful to the Bishops for their commitment and effort in trying to respond in the best possible way to an unforeseen and complex situation.

As soon as circumstances permit, however, it is necessary and urgent to return to the normality of Christian life, which has the church building as its home and the celebration of the liturgy, especially the Eucharist, as "the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 10).

Aware that God never abandons the humanity He has created, and that even the hardest trials can bear fruits of grace, we have accepted our distance from the Lord's altar as a time of Eucharistic fasting, useful for us to rediscover its vital importance, beauty and immeasurable preciousness. As soon

as is possible, however, we must return to the Eucharist with a purified heart, with a renewed amazement, with an increased desire to meet the Lord, to be with him, to receive him and to bring him to our brothers and sisters with the witness of a life full of faith, love and hope.

This time of deprivation gives us the grace to understand the heart of our brothers and sisters, the martyrs of Abitinae (beginning of the 4th century), who answered their judges with serene determination, despite a sure death sentence: "Sine Dominico non possumus" (we cannot) and the significance of the neuter noun *Dominicum* (that which is the Lord's) cannot be translated with a single word. A very brief expression sums up a great wealth of nuances and meanings that are offered to our meditation today:

– *We cannot live*, be Christians, fully realizing our humanity and the desires for good and happiness that dwell in our hearts without the Word of the Lord, which in the celebration of the liturgy takes shape and becomes a living word, spoken by God for those who today open their hearts to listen;

– *We cannot live as Christians without participating in the Sacrifice of the Cross* in which the Lord Jesus gives himself unreservedly to save, by his death, humanity which had died because of sin; the Redeemer associates humanity with himself and leads it back to the Father; in the embrace of the Crucified One all human suffering finds light and comfort;

– *We cannot be without the banquet of the Eucharist*, the table of the Lord to which we are invited as sons and daughters, brothers and sisters to receive the Risen Christ himself, present in body, blood, soul and divinity in that Bread of heaven which sustains us in the joys and labours of this earthly pilgrimage;

– *We cannot be without the Christian community*, the family of the Lord, we need to meet our brothers and sisters who share the sonship of God, the fraternity of Christ, the vocation and the search for holiness and the salvation of their souls in the rich diversity of ages, personal histories, charisms and vocations;

– *We cannot be without the house of the Lord*, which is our home, without the holy places where we were born to faith, where we dis-



covered the provident presence of the Lord and discovered the merciful embrace that lifts up those who have fallen, where we consecrated our vocation to marriage or religious life, where we prayed and gave thanks, rejoiced and wept, where we entrusted to the Father our loved ones who had completed their earthly pilgrimage;

– *We cannot be without the Lord's Day*, without Sunday which gives light and meaning to the succession of days of work and to family and social responsibilities.

As much as the means of communication perform a valued service to the sick and those who are unable to go to church, and have performed a great service in the broadcast of Holy Mass at a time when there was no possibility of community celebrations, no broadcast is comparable to personal participation or can replace it. On the contrary, these broadcasts alone risk distancing us from a personal and intimate encounter with the incarnate God who gave himself to us not in a virtual way, but really, saying: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him" (Jn 6:56). This physical contact with the Lord is vital, indispensable, irreplaceable. Once the concrete measures that can be taken to reduce the spread of the virus to a minimum have been identified and adopted, it is necessary that all resume their place in the assembly of brothers and sisters, rediscover the irreplaceable preciousness and beauty of the celebration of the liturgy, and invite and encourage again those brothers and sisters who have been discouraged, frightened, absent or uninvolved for too long.

This Dicastery intends to reaffirm some principles and suggest some courses of action to promote a rapid and safe return to the celebration of the Eucharist. Due attention to hygiene and safety regulations cannot lead to the sterilisation of gestures and rites, to the instilling, even uncon-

ssciously, of fear and insecurity in the faithful.

It is up to the prudent but firm action of the Bishops to ensure that the participation of the faithful in the celebration of the Eucharist is not reduced by public authorities to a "gathering", and is not considered comparable or even subordinate to forms of recreational activities.

Liturgical norms are not matters on which civil authorities can legislate, but only the competent ecclesiastical authorities (cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 22).

The participation of the faithful in liturgical celebrations should be facilitated, but without improvised ritual experiments and in full respect of the norms contained in the liturgical books which govern their conduct. In the liturgy, an experience of sacredness, holiness and beauty that transfigures gives a foretaste of the harmony of eternal blessedness. Care should therefore be taken to ensure the dignity of the places, the sacred furnishings, the manner of celebration, according to the authoritative instruction of the Second Vatican Council: "The rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 34).

The faithful should be recognised as having the right to receive the Body of Christ and to worship the Lord present in the Eucharist in the manner provided for, without limitations that go even beyond what is provided for by the norms of hygiene issued by public authorities or Bishops.

In the Eucharistic celebration the faithful adore the Risen Jesus present; and we see with what ease the sense of adoration, the prayer of adoration, is lost. In their catechesis we ask Pastors to insist on the necessity of adoration.

A sure principle in order not to err is obedience. Obedience to the norms of the Church, obedience to the Bishops. In times of difficulty (e.g., wars, pandemics), Bishops and Episcopal Conferences can

give provisional norms which must be obeyed. Obedience safeguards the treasure entrusted to the Church. These measures given by the Bishops and Episcopal Conferences expire when the situation returns to normal.

The Church will continue to cherish the human person as a whole. She bears witness to hope, invites us to trust in God, recalls that earthly existence is important, but much more important is eternal life: sharing the same life with God for eternity is our goal, our vocation. This is the faith of the Church, witnessed over the centuries by hosts of martyrs and saints, a positive proclamation that frees us from one-dimensional reductionisms and from ideologies. The Church unites proclamation and accompaniment towards the eternal salvation of souls with the necessary concern for public health. Let us therefore continue to entrust ourselves confidently to God's mercy, to invoke the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *salus infirmorum et auxilium christianorum*, for all those who are sorely tried by the pandemic and every other affliction, let us persevere in prayer for those who have left this life, and at the same time let us renew our intention to be witnesses of the Risen One and heralds of a sure hope, which transcends the limits of this world.

From the Vatican, 15 August 2020  
Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Supreme Pontiff Francis, in the Audience granted on 3 September 2020 to the undersigned Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, approved this Letter and ordered its publication.

Cardinal ROBERT SARAH  
Prefect  
Prot. n. 432/20





Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development: Message for World Tourism Day

# Responsible tourism to re-launch rural economies

*The following is a translation of the message of the Cardinal Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, for World Tourism Day, which will be celebrated on 27 September. This year's theme is "Tourism and Rural Development".*

PETER KODWO APPIAH TURKSON

The 41st World Tourism Day this year takes place in the uncertain context marked by the developments of the Covid-19 pandemic, for which no end is yet in sight. From it derives a drastic reduction of human mobility and tourism, both international and national, set at historical lows. The suspension of international flights, the closing of airports and borders, the adoption of severe travel restrictions, even internal, is causing an unprecedented crisis in many sectors connected to the tourism industry. It is feared that in the worst of hypotheses, at the end of 2020 there will be a drop of about a billion international tourists, with a global economic loss of some 1,200 billion dollars. This would result in an enormous loss of jobs in the entire tourism sector. According to the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization, Zurab Pololikashvili, "Tourism has been hit hard, with millions of jobs at risk in one of the most labour-intensive sectors of the economy".<sup>1</sup>

A scenario so unsettling, unthinkable even a few months ago, must not paralyze us and deprive us of a positive vision of the future. In this sense, Pope Francis has stated: "Even worse than this crisis is the

*Tourists are the visitors who can become supporters of an ecosystem, if they travel in an informed and simple way. A tourism achieved by people and through people.*

tragedy of squandering it.... At this moment, in the great effort of beginning anew, how damaging is pessimism, the tendency to see everything in the worst light and to keep saying that nothing will return as before!"<sup>2</sup>

Tourism and rural development, the theme selected by the WTO prior to the Covid-19 emergency for the current World Day, providentially indicates one of the paths towards a possible recovery of the tourism sector. It begins with the call to take seriously and put into practice sustainable development which, in the realm of tourism, signifies a greater interest directed at extra-urban tourist destinations, small villages, towns, little known streets and places: those more secluded places to be discovered or rediscovered precisely because they are more enchanting and pristine. Rural nature is experienced in those places, far removed from the routes of mass tourism. Thus, it is a matter of promoting sustainable and responsible tourism which, implemented according



to principles of social and economic justice and in full respect for the environment and for cultures, recognizes the centrality of the local host community and its right to be a protagonist in the sustainable and socially responsible development of its own territory; thus a tourism that favours the positive interaction between the tourism industry, the local community and travellers.<sup>3</sup>

Such a typology of tourism can become a driving force to sustain the rural economy, which is made of agriculture and, often, of family businesses, small sizes, marginal areas and low incomes derived from the food chain. Tourism and rural agriculture can thus become two essential components in a new world that one hopes to build. A tourism achieved by people and through people. Small farmers, after all, are the first custodians of creation through their patient and tiring working of the land. Tourists are the visitors who can become supporters of

an ecosystem, if they travel in an informed and simple way. Travelling to rural destinations, therefore, can mean concretely supporting the local products of small agricultural businesses, achieved in a manner compatible with the laws of nature. In this way, a journey can have the flavour of history and open the heart toward the vast horizon of brotherhood and solidarity.

Tourism that is able to look at and share the gifts of the land in a rural environment also becomes the way to learn new ways of life in a tangible way. The wisdom of those who cultivate the land, made of observation and waiting, can surely help the frenetic modern world to harmonize the times of daily life with those of nature. Bringing tourism and rural development closer together is a good way to learn about new cultures, allowing oneself to be contaminated by the values of care for creation and protection of creation that today represent not only a

moral obligation but an urgency for collective action.

"Rural tourism" thus becomes the place in which to learn a new way of entering into relationship with the other and with nature. And each personal change must begin with truly transformative conduct; in order to do this one must set out on a journey; and setting out on a journey requires a destination: the rural world can be all of this. Tourism meets development if it takes place in an attentive and peaceful, sustainable manner; this means respecting farming practices, the pace of life of the rural populations, appreciating the authenticity of entire internal areas still preserved; being surprised by the thousands of little things that one can see, choosing local farm products. In this way one can appreciate the differences, whether small or large, among the traditions, places and communities encountered. So why do we not turn to a tourism that values the rural and marginal areas by encountering them as we walk? This will allow us to slow down and avoid the risks of frenzy.<sup>4</sup>

Tourism may become, precisely in this period, an instrument of proximity. Yes, our postmodern world needs proximity, that is, closeness in relationships and, hence, of hearts. And tourism, which in any case foresees the movement of people and goods, must now reveal its transformative face, as a recreational activity that helps grow the spirit of fraternity among peoples.

In a period of uncertainty of the movements of people, the greatest consequences of which tourism suffers in an immediate and direct way, we believe that one must act for the support of the incomes of workers in this sector, as well as for the care and protection of the most fragile rural communities in each territory. In so doing, the tourism economy will be able to recover its path, albeit at reduced levels of traffic; the circulation of people, of goods and currency will be the tangible sign of a proximity that begins in the heart. Responsible and sustainable tourism, by appreciating local resources and activities, is a beneficial factor of a turning point in the fight

against poverty, which the Covid-19 pandemic has caused to increase exponentially.

In conclusion, we wish to assure our closeness and our support to all those who are committed to curb the impact of the pandemic on the lives of individuals and of societies that live on tourism.

We appeal to rulers and to leaders of national economic policies to promote and incentivize responsible tourism, implemented according to principles of social and economic justice and in full respect for the environment and for cultures. May leaders direct their gaze to marginal areas, giving these territories concrete opportunities to develop and appreciating their particular vocations, the participation of local communities in decision-making processes, and the improvement of incomes of those who work the land.

We address in a particular way the ecological movements and all those who are committed in the protection of the environment, that they may contribute with their own work to the conversion of hearts toward a healthy and correct integral ecology, in which the value of the human person is combined with the protection of the conditions of life of the rural communities residing in marginal areas. May economic planning have as a reference the defense of the poor and of the weakest subjects of the economic cycle; may agricultural workers in rural zones be considered direct recipients of significant economic-financial aid and of projects of recovery and of promotion of rural family agriculture.

We ask the bishops and those responsible for pastoral care of tourism for a unanimous commitment so that each one, in his own territory, may take on concrete initiatives to help tourism activities. May the faithful and parishes respond with solicitude and generosity to the exigencies and needs of tourism workers, now in difficulty, and together develop networks of closeness in relationships and in aid to support lost income. May new routes be constructed for the touristic use of rural areas, in which respect for the environment is combined with opportunities for support of local tourism workers. Lastly, we express our most heartfelt gratitude to all those who, in this time of trial, have shown solidarity and support to those who live off of tourism, in particular in rural zones. With God's help, let us all set out on the same path toward a better future.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unwto.org/news/covid-19-world-tourism-remains-at-a-standstill-as-100-of-countries-impose-restrictions-on-travel>

<sup>2</sup> FRANCIS, *Homily during Holy Mass on the Solemnity of Pentecost*, 31 May 2020

<sup>3</sup> Definition adopted by the assembly of the Italian Association of Responsible Tourism, 9 October 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. FRANCIS, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 18.

To Laudato Si' Communities Pope Francis expresses his hope that ecology and equity may proceed at the same pace

## Health of humanity cannot be separated from that of the environment

*On Saturday morning, 12 September, the Holy Father received in audience a delegation of the Laudato Si' communities, which work to put into practice the values of his encyclical Laudato Si'. The Pope was greeted by Carlo Petrini, one of the promoters of the initiative, along with Bishop Domenico Pompili of Rieti, who outlined the movement's current guidelines: education, good daily practices, and reporting abuses against nature. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's discourse, which he delivered in Italian.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning,

I welcome you, and in greeting you I wish to reach all the members of the *Laudato Si' Communities* in Italy and throughout the world. I thank Mr Carlo Petrini in my paternal, not maternal language: "Carlin". You have placed *integral ecology* proposed by the Encyclical *Laudato Si'* as the driving force behind all your initiatives. Integral, because we are all creatures and everything in creation is related; all is related. I would dare say, everything is in harmony. Even the pandemic has demonstrated this: the health of humanity cannot be separated from that of the environment in which we live. It is also clear that climate change not only upsets the balance of nature, but also causes poverty and hunger, afflicting the most vulnerable and sometimes forcing them to leave their land. The neglect of creation and social injustices influence each other: we can say that there is no ecology without equality and there is no equality without ecology.

You are motivated to take care of the least among us and of creation together, and you choose to do so following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, with meekness and industriousness. I thank you for this and I renew my appeal for a commitment to safeguarding our common home. This task concerns everyone, especially those responsible for nations and productive activities. We need the genuine will to tackle the root causes of the climate upheavals that are happening. Generic commitments – words, words ... – are not enough, and one cannot look only as far as the immediate consent of one's voters or investors. We must look far ahead, or history will not forgive us. We need to work today for everyone's future. Young people and the poor will hold us to account. It is our challenge. I will borrow a phrase from martyred theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Our challenge today is not how to get out of this, how to emerge from this reality; our true challenge is what life will be like for future generations. We have to think about this!

Dear friends, now I would like to share with you two key words of integral ecology: *contemplation* and *compassion*.

*Contemplation*. Today, the nature that surrounds us is no longer admired, contemplated, but "devoured". We have become voracious, dependent on immediate profit and results, and at any cost. Our outlook on reality is increasingly rapid, distracted, superficial, while news and

forests are burnt in a short time. Sick with consumerism. This is our illness! Sick with consumerism. We are eager to have the latest "app", but no longer know the names of our neighbours, much less how to distinguish one tree from another. And what is more serious, we lose our roots with this lifestyle, we lose our gratitude for what there is and for who gave it to us. So as not to



forget, we must return to contemplation; so as not to be distracted by a thousand useless things, we must find silence again; for the heart not to become sick, we must be still. It is not easy. It is necessary, for example, to free ourselves from the imprisonment of the mobile phone, to look into the eyes of those who are next to us and the creation that has been given to us.

To contemplate is to grant oneself the time to be silent, to pray, to restore harmony to the soul, the healthy balance between head, heart and hands, between thought, feeling and action. Contemplation is the antidote to hasty, superficial and inconclusive choices. Those who contemplate learn to feel the ground that sustains them, to understand that they are not alone and without meaning in the world. They discover the tenderness of God's gaze and understand that they are precious. Everyone is important in God's eyes, everyone can transform a part of the world polluted by human voracity into the good reality willed by the Creator. Those who know how to contemplate in fact, do not remain with their hands in their pockets, but instead do something tangible. Contemplation leads one to perform an action, to do.

Here, then, is the second word: *compassion*. It is the fruit of contemplation. How can we tell whether someone is contemplative, if someone has assimilated God's outlook? If someone has compassion

for others, – compassion is not saying "I feel bad for this one...", compassion is to "suffer with" – if someone goes beyond excuses and theories in order to see others as brothers and sisters to be protected. What Carlo Petrini said earlier about brotherhood. This is the proof, because this is what God's gaze does. Despite all the evil we think and do, he always sees us as his beloved children. He does not see individuals, but sons and daughters. He sees us as brothers and sisters of a single family living in the same house. We are never strangers to his eyes. His compassion is the opposite of our indifference. Indifference – allow me to say something a bit vulgar – is that lack of care

And taking responsibility for them, like the Good Samaritan who, *moved by compassion*, takes care of the unfortunate man he does not even know (cf. Lk 10:33-34). The world needs this creative and active charity, people who do not remain in front of a screen making comments, but who are willing to get their hands dirty to remove degradation and restore dignity. Having compassion is a choice: it is choosing to have no enemies, so as to see everyone as *my neighbour*. And this is a choice.

This does not mean becoming weak and giving up the fight. Rather, those who have compassion enter into a daily struggle against *rejection and waste*, discarding others and discarding things. It hurts to think of how many people are discarded without compassion: the elderly, children, workers, persons with



*Nature is filled with words of love, but how can we listen to them amid constant noise, and interminable and nerve-wracking distractions?*  
#SeasonOfCreation

(@Pontifex)

that enters the heart, the mentality that ends up in "they can deal with it". Compassion is the opposite of indifference.

This applies to us too: our compassion is the best vaccine against the epidemic of indifference. "It has nothing to do with me", "it is not up to me", "it does not concern me", "it's their thing": these are the symptoms of indifference. There is a beautiful photograph – I have mentioned it in the past – taken by a Roman photographer. It is in the Office of Papal Charities. It shows an older woman coming out of a fancy restaurant on a winter night, with her fur coat, hat and gloves, well protected from the cold, after having eaten well – it is not a sin to eat well! [laughter] – and there is another woman at the door on crutches, poorly dressed, one can tell that she is cold ... a *homeless* person, with her hand extended.... And the woman who comes out of the restaurant looks the other way. The photograph is called "Indifference". When I saw it, I called the photographer to tell him: "You were good in taking this [photograph] so spontaneously", and I asked that it be put in the Office of Papal Charities. So as not to fall into the spirit of indifference. Those who have compassion instead pass from "you do not matter to me" to "you are important to me", or at least "you touch my heart". However, compassion is not a nice sentiment, it is not pietism; it is creating new bonds with others.

disabilities.... Wasting things is also scandalous. The FAO has documented that in one year more than a billion tonnes of edible food is thrown away in industrialized countries – more than one billion! This is the reality. Together let us help each other to fight against rejection and waste; let us demand political decisions that combine progress and equality, development and sustainability for everyone, so that no one will be deprived of the land we inhabit, the good air we breathe, the water we have the right to drink and the food we have the right to eat.

I am sure that the members of each of your Communities will not settle to live as spectators, but will always be meek and determined protagonists in building the future for all. And all this makes fraternity. Working like and as brothers. Building a universal fraternity. And this is the moment, this is the challenge today. My wish for you is that you may nurture contemplation and compassion, indispensable ingredients of integral ecology. Thank you again for your presence and for your commitment. Thank you for your prayers. Those of you who pray, I ask you to pray, and to those of you who do not pray, at least send me some good vibes. I need them! [Laughter]

And now I would ask God to bless each of you, bless the heart of each of you, whether a believer or a non believer, of any religious tradition. May God bless you all. Amen.



## To contemplate the world we must look at it from within



Vranja jama, near Jakovica, Slovenia (Photo by Primož Jakopin)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

this point of view the project that will lead, in the coming weeks, to a re-launch even in the print edition of the daily, we move precisely along this line, favouring the dimension of in-depth analysis over that of simply reporting the news.

Reading from within, therefore, exactly as the Pope asks in his tweet. What does it mean that “we do not look at the world from without but from within”? The image often used relative to the mystery of the Church is that of stained glass windows: by remaining outside of a church one does not grasp the beauty of the stained glass, but by going into the church (and the Church) the windows shine in all their splendour thanks to the light that passes through them. Only by entering into the life of the Church does one manage to understand all her depth and richness, otherwise one risks to judge her by applying categories to her that do not account for that complexity and reduce her to a merely human, socio-political reality, a ‘compassionate GMO’ as Francis has often reiterated since the beginning of his Pontificate.

But in this tweet, the Pope does not speak of the Church but of the world and invites the believer to cross through it and enter inside, in order to contemplate it from within. And the believer cannot exempt himself, not only because it is the Pope who is asking, but because this is what God did in Jesus. It is the mystery of the incarnation, the heart of Christian faith. God did not remain outside of the world he created; he did not stop to admire it as if it were a ‘show’. He went inside, immersing himself to the deepest abyss – death, and death on the cross – to make that design of love that was already inscribed in the act of creation shine. A design of love that is made up of “bonds” which the Pope speaks about: vertical bonds, between we humans and the Father Creator, and horizontal bonds that unite us to all beings, firstly the bond of fraternity. This is the theme of the Pope’s new encyclical letter, of which the world only knows the first two words from a citation of Saint Francis: “*Fratelli tutti*” – (All Brothers). Bonds is a central point, for the Pope who has often addressed it, and even in his Message for World Day of Social Communications he invited people

to rediscover the pleasure of telling stories, of that “fabric” that keeps together the threads that link every life to one another in space, like every generation throughout time.

This above all is the course of the kenosis of Jesus who became man and lived the human condition in all its dimensions. The believer, the Church, is called to do the same. We cannot do otherwise. It is a very significant detail that in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus uses the term ‘brothers’ to indicate to his friends, on the last page, at the end, after his passion and death, when he has risen and says: “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me” (Mt 28:10). It means that being ‘brothers/sisters’ is not only a condition to start from, an ‘inherited’ detail from the fact of everyone having a common origin in God’s creation; but it is also a process, an aim that must and can be accomplished, but provided that we fully share, ‘from within’, the life of other beings to whom we are already united. It means to take up the cross (and thus even to die) out of love for other beings. Thus, only afterwards can we say ‘brothers/sisters’, only if the world is contemplated from within and not looked at from the outside as a show to be judged and even condemned.

A. MONDA

## An encyclical for all brothers and sisters

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

order to inaugurate a reflection that is very dear to him on fraternity and social friendship, and therefore he intends to address all the sisters and brothers, all the men and women of good will who populate the earth. To all, in an inclusive and never excluding manner. We live in a time marked by war, poverty, migration, climate change, economic crises, pandemic: to recognize each other as brothers and sisters, to recognize brothers and sisters in those we meet; and for Christians, to recognize the face of Jesus in another who is suffering, is a way to reaffirm the irreducible dignity of every human being created in God’s image. And it is also a way to remember that we can never emerge from the current difficulties alone, one against the other. The world’s North against its South, rich against poor. Or separated by any other excluding difference.

Last 27 March, at the height of the pandemic [in Italy], the Bishop of Rome prayed for everyone’s salvation, in an empty Saint Peter’s Square, in the pouring rain, accompanied only by the suffering gaze of the Crucifix of San Marcello and

by the loving gaze of Mary *Salus Populi Romani*. “In this storm”, Francis said, “the façade of those stereotypes with which we camouflaged our egos, always worrying about our image, has fallen away, uncovering once more that (blessed) common belonging, of which we cannot be deprived: our belonging as brothers and sisters”. The central theme of the Papal Letter is this “blessed common belonging” that makes us brothers and sisters.

Fraternity and social friendship, the themes indicated in the subtitle, point out what unites men and women, an affection that is established among people who are not blood relatives and is expressed through benevolent acts, with forms of help and with generous actions in the moment of need. A disinterested affection toward other human beings, regardless of any difference or membership. For this reason it is impossible to have misunderstandings or partial readings of the universal and inclusive message of the words “*Fratelli tutti*”.

A. TORNIELLI

## Entry into force of the Agreement between the Holy See and Burkina Faso

On Monday, 7 September, by means of official communication from the Embassy of Burkina Faso to the Holy See, the procedure for the exchange of the Instruments of Ratification of the Agreement between the Holy See and the State of Burkina Faso on the legal status of the Catholic Church in Burkina Faso, signed in the Vatican on 12 July 2019, was finalized.

This Agreement, which entered into force today in accordance with Article 18 therein, guarantees the Church the possibility to carry out her mission in Burkina Faso. In particular, the public legal personality of the Church and her institutions is recognized. The two Parties, while safeguarding their own independence and autonomy, undertake to work together for the moral, spiritual and material wellbeing of the human person and for the promotion of the common good.

## Audience with the Captains Regent of the Most Serene Republic of San Marino

On Saturday, 5 September, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father received in audience, the Captains Regent of the Most Serene Republic of San Marino, Mr Alessandro Mancini and Ms Grazia Zafferani, who subsequently met with Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States.

During the cordial discussions, the historical relations between the Holy See and the Republic of San Marino and their fruitful cooperation were mentioned. The positive contribution of the local Church to the good of the country and its population was also discussed, and particular attention was given to the current health emergency and its effects on the ancient Republic.

Finally, some issues of common interest regarding the international scenario were addressed, in the European context and from the perspective of multilateral diplomacy.



# The right to count

Betraying the mission degrades the personal charisms of women religious

CATERINA CIRIELLO

**H**idden Figures, a book by Margot Lee Shetterly, tells the true story of African American mathematician, scientist and physicist Katherine Johnson, who died this year in February and who, in the 1960s, defied racism and sexism to successfully collaborate with NASA by hand tracking the trajectories for the Mercury Program and the Apollo 11 Mission. A woman who left a profound mark in human history and a great example and inspiration for the feminine world. From the book then came the film by the same name. But we do not want to talk about her and the fact that NASA named one of its facilities after her; and not even about the racism that continues to run its course and that we are witnessing tragically in recent days. Nothing about all that, even if speaking about women and their rights takes us far – very far – back in time.

Touching then upon the realm of consecrated women, of women religious in particular, is truly embarrassing. Much has been and is still said; other things have been and are still being written, at times almost with a superficiality as if to say that all is well, especially in the religious life of women. The article by Jesuit Giovanni Cucci in *“La Civiltà Cattolica”* has finally and powerfully arrived to stigmatize a way of doing and thinking that has nothing to do with religious consecration, but which leads perilously toward the worldliness that Pope Francis speaks about, of the people “who go to Mass every Sunday, who say they are Christian, but who have lost awareness of their sin”.

Cucci has brought to the reader's attention the daily dramas of many women religious who have chosen that life by following a very precise call and nothing else, and would have never thought they would find themselves in situations of unacceptable suffering. Vatican II gave a significant jolt to consecrated life too. In the years that followed, up till today, documents have been published to help the understanding of it and to expand on many of its aspects. With regard to community life, the 1994 document of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *“Fraternal Life in*

*Community”*, begins by stating that disciples, “those gathered together in religious communities, women and men ‘from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues’ (Rev 7:9), have been and still are a particularly eloquent expression of this sublime and boundless love”. Nevertheless it also emphasizes that “in some places, it seems that religious community has lost its relevance in the eyes of women and men religious and is, perhaps, no longer an ideal to be pursued”. We must absolutely not think that religious life is a failure or an impossible dream; of course it is an arduous, at times painful journey, where one even falls, but then gets back up just as Jesus did in carrying the cross, because following him is not child's play. Community life is a great trial since sometimes diversity scares us, causing us to build barriers. However it is in it

Obedience is fundamental in Christian and religious life; in it God calls us to freedom, rendering us docile to his will, which is why authentic obedience brings peace and joy, even in the suffering of renouncing what we think is best for us. Pope Francis once again reminds us: “Being Christian is thus ‘being free’ through ‘trust’ in God”, as Saint Paul persistently repeated. Being free and happy adults; loving, living in the fullness of the Spirit and illuminating the world is the purpose of all consecrated life; it is impossible to ignore this commitment, this great mission of the Church. Those who choose the way of chastity, poverty and obedience knowingly and joyfully renounce the very manner of hearing and seeing in order to conform oneself fully to Christ. This does not mean abdicating those talents that God has given

men religious involved in university academic activities. In female religious communities frequently this important service rendered to the Church is not appreciated; it is even transformed into a burden to bear. Most of the women religious who have faced this, have expressed the personal human and psychological distress to which they are subjected. In some cases it is the superiors themselves who do not consider university teaching a ‘mission’ of the congregation, insisting on apostolic ‘integration’ in their schools and ignoring the work load and responsibility that being a university instructor entails. Thus a strong doubt emerges that many have not understood the genuine meaning of the word ‘mission’, that it seems not to be so if it does not coincide with the institute's specific apostolate. “God so loved the

world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (Jn 3:16).

It is not we who are the origin, the meaning and the centre of the Christian mission, but the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, of God who becomes flesh, Jesus, and enters history through the Holy Spirit. The missionary dimension of the Church, and of those who take part in her, is all-encompassing, it embraces everything. We are on mission when we catechize, visit the sick, administer the sacraments, when we work for peace and the well-being of mankind, or for integral human development and justice. For this reason, and for others as well, religious

life, if it means to continue to be the sign and presence of God in the world, must think in other terms: inclusion, sharing, acceptance, mission. The Gospel message implies an impressive change of mindset beginning with those who support the communities. Saint Basil of Caesarea teaches us that no superior must think of ‘imposing’ her will as the will of God, since it is the Gospel that confers authority; moreover, her action must be oriented not toward the good of the individual but of the community (cf. Rules). The community is the place of discussion, of maturing, of growth, of good example, but also of amends and forgiveness when we confront our own limitations. Everyone is useful and no one is indispensable, because Christ is one, and has given to women, to all, the right to count.



that the evangelical ideal of love for neighbour takes form in the image of the Trinity, and is “like the precious oil upon the head, running down upon the beard, upon the beard of Aaron” (Ps 133:2), or at least it feels like it.

That said, community is not to be idealized nor degraded: it needs to be believed in and built together by placing Christ at the centre; otherwise we will see it crumble under the weight of our individualism. Sadly, at times we witness – and Cucci and others bear witness to it – that egocentrism and the desire for power are in fact the principle causes for triggering purely human dynamics which then end up consuming the weakest individuals, perhaps the very ones who sincerely believe in religious consecration and are later inserted into a rather unnatural framework of obedience/submission.

us, but rather: they are to be placed at the service of all. Yet in certain female religious communities, ‘thinking’ – no one knows why – is considered the eighth capital sin, which closely embraces arrogance and a lack of humility. It is a subtle and dangerous way to kill the personal charisms that do so much good for the community and the Church; without wanting to, one buries the gifts of the Spirit in order to make room for ‘uniformity’ which leads to a sort of intellectual and spiritual flattening. Charisms do not always enter the circle of ‘creative faithfulness’, but rather are ‘betrayed’ by wanting ‘to be’ in the world, by activism and, as Pope Francis says, by a “lack of docility” to the Word of God, thinking that one's own “interpretation” of it is “more just”.

A never considered and truly important theme is that of wo-



## ANGELUS

*At the Angelus on Sunday, 13 September, Pope Francis reflected on the day's passage from the Gospel of Matthew (18:21-35) on forgiveness. He followed his reflection with two appeals in light of the various protests taking place in recent weeks in different parts of the world: that government leaders listen to "the voice of the people", and that demonstrators not "give in to the temptations of aggression and violence". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's reflection, which he delivered in Italian.*



Pope's appeal in light of the various protests taking place in different parts of the world

## May Government leaders listen to the voice of the people and protests be peaceful

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning,

In the parable in today's Gospel reading, that of the merciful King (cf. Mt 18:21-35), we find this plea twice: "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything" (vv. 26, 29). The first time it is pronounced by the servant who owes his master ten thousand talents, an enormous sum. Today it would be millions and millions of euros. The second time it is repeated by another servant of the same master. He too is in debt, not towards his master, but towards the same servant who has that enormous debt. And his debt is very small, maybe like a week's wages.

The heart of the parable is the indulgence the master shows towards his servant with the bigger debt. The evangelist underlines that, "moved with compassion the master" – we should never forget this word of Jesus: "with compassion", Jesus always had compassion – "moved with compassion the master let him go and forgave him the loan" (v. 27). An enormous debt, therefore a huge remission! But that servant, immediately afterwards, shows himself to be pitiless towards his companion, who owed him a modest amount. He does not listen to him, he is extremely hostile against him and has him thrown in prison until his debt is paid back (cf. v. 30), that small debt. The master hears about this and, indignant, calls the wicked servant back and has him condemned (cf. vv. 32-34): "I forgave you a great deal and you are not capable of forgiving so little?".

In the parable we find two different attitudes: God's – represented by the king who forgives a lot, because God always forgives – and that of the man. In the divine attitude justice is pervaded with mercy, whereas the human attitude is limited to justice. Jesus exhorts us to open ourselves with courage to the strength of forgiveness, because in life not everything can be resolved with

justice. We know this. There is a need for that merciful love, which is also at the basis of the Lord's answer to Peter's question, which precedes the parable. Peter's question goes like this: "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" (v. 21). And Jesus replies, "I do not say to you, seven times but seventy times seven" (v. 22). In the symbolic language of the Bible this means that we are called to forgive always.

How much suffering, how many wounds, how many wars could be avoided if forgiveness and mercy were the style of our life! Even in families, even in families. How many disunited families, who do not know how to forgive each other. How many brothers and sisters bear this resentment within. It is necessary to apply merciful love to all human relationships: between spouses, between parents and children, within our communities, in the Church and also in society and politics.

Today, in the morning, as I was celebrating Mass, I paused, touched by a phrase in the first Reading from the book of Sirach. The phrase says, "Remember the end of your life, and cease from enmity". A beautiful phrase! Think of the end! Think that you will be in a coffin... and will you take hatred there? Think of the end, stop hating! Stop the resentment. Let's think of this phrase that is very touching. Remember the end of your life, and cease from enmity".

It is not easy to forgive because in moments of calm we say: "Yes, this person has done so many things to me but I have done many too. Better to forgive so as to be forgiven". But then resentment returns like a bothersome fly in the summer that keeps coming back. Forgiveness isn't something we do in a moment, it is something continuous, against that resentment, this hatred that keeps coming back. Let's think of our end and stop hating.

Today's parable helps us to grasp fully the meaning of that phrase we recite in the Lord's Prayer: "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us" (cf. Mt 6:12). These words contain a decisive truth. We cannot demand God's forgiveness for ourselves if we in turn do not grant forgiveness to our neighbour. It is a condition: think of your end, of God's forgiveness, and stop hating. Reject resentment, that bothersome fly that keeps coming back. If we do not strive to forgive and to love, we will not be forgiven and loved either.

Let us entrust ourselves to the maternal intercession of the Mother of God: May she help us to realise how much we are in debt to God, and to remember that always, so that our hearts may be open to mercy and goodness.

*After the Angelus the Pope continued:*

Dear brothers and sisters, in recent days, a series of fires have devastated the refugee camp of Moria on the Island of Lesbos, leaving thousands of people without a shelter, even a precarious one. I still remember my visit there and the appeal I launched together with the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens, to "do our part towards giving migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers a humane reception in Europe" (16 April 2016). I express my solidarity and closeness to all the victims of these dramatic events.

In addition, in these weeks we are witnessing numerous popular protests all over the world – in many parts – expressing the growing unease of civil society in the face of particularly critical political and social situations. While I urge the demonstrators to present their demands peacefully, without giving in to the temptation of aggression and violence, I appeal to all those with public and governmental responsibilities to listen to the voice of

their fellow citizens and to meet their just aspirations, ensuring full respect for human rights and civil liberties. Finally, I invite the ecclesial communities living in such contexts, under the guidance of their Pastors, to work for dialogue, always in favour of dialogue, and in favour of reconciliation – we have talked about forgiveness, about reconciliation.

Due to the pandemic, this year the traditional Collection for the Holy Land was moved from Good Friday to today, the eve of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. In today's context, this Collection is an even greater sign of hope and solidarity and closeness with the Christians living in the Land where God became flesh and died and rose again for us. Today we make a spiritual pilgrimage, in spirit, with our imagination, with the heart, to Jerusalem, where, as the Psalm says, are our sources (cf. Ps 87:7), and we make a gesture of generosity towards those communities.

I greet you all, faithful of Rome and pilgrims from various countries. In particular, I greet the cyclists suffering from Parkinson's disease who have travelled the Via Francigena from Pavia to Rome. You have been fast! Thank you for your witness. I greet the Madonna Addolorata Confraternity of Monte Castello di Vibio. I see that there is also a *Laudato Si'* Community: thank you for what you do; and thank you for the meeting yesterday here, with Carlin Petri and all the leaders who are going forward in this struggle for the protection of creation.

I greet all of you, all of you, especially the Italian families who in August dedicated themselves to the hospitality of pilgrims. They are many! I wish you all a good Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch and *Arrivederci!*