

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

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Vatican City

Friday, 23 October 2020

Pope Francis at the International Meeting of Prayer for Peace

Keeping the flame alight



Holy See and China renew Provisional Agreement

Upon the expiration of the Provisional Agreement between the Holy See and the People's Republic of China regarding the appointment of Bishops, which was signed in Beijing on 22 September 2018 and took effect one month later, the two Parties have agreed to extend the experimental implementation phase of the Provisional Agreement for another two years.

The Holy See considers the initial application of the Agreement – which is of great ecclesial and pastoral value – to have been positive, thanks to good communication and cooperation between the Parties on the matters agreed upon, and intends to pursue an open and constructive dialogue for the benefit of the life of the Catholic Church and the good of Chinese people.

Motivations
behind the decision

FOR THE HOLY FATHER'S WORDS SEE PAGE 6/7

PAGE 10

Pope to EAO

Hunger is a tragedy
for humanity

PAGE 4

Interview with Bartholomew I

Abandon indifference and
cynicism

PAGE 9

Sunday Angelus

A peaceful future
for Libya

PAGE 12

Fraternity: prophetic vision and artisanal work

ANDREA MONDA

The sun is gently setting on the Capitoline Hill leaving behind a cold breeze, as a young woman reads the Appeal for Peace that concludes the prayer meeting, “*No one is saved alone. Peace and Fraternity*” organized by the Sant’Egidio Community in the spirit of the great event that took place in Assisi on 27 October 1986: “To leaders of nations we say: let us work together to create a new architecture of peace”, the young woman reads with emotion. It is then that we understand that what all the religious leaders are doing, sitting side by side, is not a beautiful “fashion show”, an event designed to thrill on a beautiful Roman October evening, because peace is not a feeling, but rather a job. Tiring, constant, patient, a job

that requires creativity: the architecture of peace must be “new”. The preceding one is apparently no longer enough. It must be repaired, updated, reinvented. Europe too can win a Nobel Peace prize like eight years ago, but it is evident that the driving push that was born at the end of the Second World War (precisely in Rome with the Treaties of the 1950s) appears to have become clouded over, to have taken a downward trend.

The word “architecture” is striking: it makes one think of the capacity for vision, projects, dreams, the vision that spurred John Paul II to begin this story in 1986 with a gesture that was, Francis says today, “a prophetic seed that by God’s grace has gradually matured through unprecedented encounters, acts of peacemaking and fresh initiatives of

fraternity”. The latter, like peace, is not only a vision but itself also a job, a commitment made of physical strain, an “artisanal” job, an “architecture” that bears in itself the image of a dusty open construction site where it is still not easy to glimpse the final project, unless you are an architect. In the Gospel, Jesus is called “the son of the carpenter” which is translated from the Greek *tekton*, from which comes architect, head carpenter.

God is the true architect of peace. Only he can achieve a “new architecture of peace”. But what is mankind’s task within this open – “unaccomplished”, one could say, using another term dear to Pope Francis – building site? It is a big task, of which the appeal outlines certain

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

VATICAN BULLETIN



Audiences

Thursday, 15 October

Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti, titular Archbishop of Ravello, Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain

Archbishop Joseph Marino, titular Archbishop of Natchitoches, President of the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy

Archbishop Fernando Chica Arellano, Holy See Permanent Observer to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture (FAO, IFAD and WFP)

Friday, 16 October

Mr Christian Wulff, former President of the Federal Republic of Germany

Cardinal Michael Louis Fitzgerald, M.Afr.

Archbishop Dagoberto Campos Salas, titular of Forotonianna, Apostolic Nuncio to Liberia, Gambia and Sierra Leone

Saturday, 17 October

Archbishop Giovanni Gaspari, titular Archbishop of Alba marittima, Apostolic Nuncio to Angola and to São Tomé and Príncipe, with family members

H.E. Mr Panos Kalogeropoulos, Ambassador of Greece to the Holy See, on the occasion of the presentation of his Letters of Credence

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

Carabinieri of the "Roma San Pietro" district

Monday, 19 October

Archbishop Nikola Eterović, titular Archbishop of Cibale, Apostolic Nuncio to the Federal Republic of Germany

Archbishop Augusto Paolo Lojudice of Siena-Colle di Val d'Elsa-Montalcino, Italy

Dr Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and entourage

CHANGE IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed Fr William D. Byrne as Bishop of Springfield, Massachusetts, United States of America. Until now he has served as parish priest of the Our Lady of Mercy parish in Potomac (14 Oct.).

Bishop-elect Byrne, 56, was born in Washington, D.C. He was ordained a priest on 25 June 1994. In 1986 he obtained a bachelor's degree from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. He carried out his ecclesiastical studies at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome, as a student of the Pontifical North American College (1989-1994).

The Holy Father appointed as coadjutor Bishop of Serrinha, Brazil, Bishop Hélio Pereira dos Santos. Until now he has served as titular Bishop of Tiava and Auxiliary of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of São Salvador da Bahia, Brazil (16 Oct.).

Bishop dos Santos, 52, was born in Pão de Açúcar, Brazil. He was ordained a priest on 19 December 1996. He was ordained a bishop on 22 July 2016, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Thiava and Auxiliary of São Salvador da Bahia.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation from the pastoral care of the Diocese of Kalisz, Poland, presented by Bishop Edward Janiak and at the same time appointed Archbishop Grzegorz Ryś of Łódź as Apostolic Administrator "sede vacante" (17 Oct.).

On Saturday, 17 October, the Holy Father appointed as Auxiliary Bishops of Monterrey, Mexico, the following:

– Fr César Garza Miranda, OFM, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Magnetum. Until now he has served as parish priest, dean and member of the presbyteral council representing consecrated life.

Bishop-elect Garza Miranda, 49, was born in San Nicolás de los Garza, Mexico. Member of the Order of Friars Minor, he was ordained a priest on 14 December 2002. He qualified as an accountant and studied philosophy and theology in the Franciscan Faculty of Guadalajara and Monterrey.

– Fr Juan Carlos Arcq Guzmán, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Milevi. Until now he has served as rector of the Archdiocesan Seminary of Monterrey.

Bishop-elect Arcq Guzmán, 54, was born in Monterrey, Mexico. He was ordained a priest on 15 August 1997.

– Fr José Manuel Garza Madero, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Tiburnia. Until now he has served as rector of the Cathedral and episcopal vicar.

Bishop-elect Garza Madero, 68, was born in Monterrey, Mexico. He was ordained a priest on 8 September 1979.

EASTERN CHURCHES

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Marián Andrej Pačák, CSSR, from the pastoral care of the Eparchy of Saints Cyril and

Methodius of Toronto for Slovaks, Canada (20 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Kurt R. Burnette as Apostolic Administrator *sede vacante* of Saints Cyril and Methodius of Toronto for Slovaks. Until now he has served as Eparchial Bishop of Passaic for Ruthenians, United States of America (20 Oct.).

COUNCIL OF CARDINALS

The Holy Father confirmed as coordinator of the Council of Cardinals to assist the Holy Father in the government of the Universal Church and to draw up a plan for the revision of the Apostolic Constitution "Pastor Bonus" on the Roman Curia Cardinal Óscar Andrés Rodríguez Maradiaga, SDB, Archbishop of Tegucigalpa, Honduras (15 Oct.).

The Holy Father has furthermore confirmed as members of the aforementioned Council, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State; Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley, OFM Cap, Archbishop of Boston, USA; Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, India; Cardinal Reinhard Marx, Archbishop of München and Freising, Federal Republic of Germany; and Cardinal Giuseppe Bertello, President of the Governorate of Vatican City State (15 Oct.).

The Supreme Pontiff has also appointed as members of the same Council Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo Besungu, Archbishop of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo; and appointed as Secretary of the said Council Bishop Marco Mellino, titular of Cresima, until now adjunct secretary (15 Oct.).

PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

The Holy Father appointed as ordinary member of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences Prof. José Nelson Onuchic, professor of molecular biophysics at Rice University in Houston, United States of America, (14 Oct.).

The Holy Father appointed as ordinary member of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences Professor Reinhard Genzel, director of the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics in Garching, Germany (15 Oct.).

START OF MISSION

On 18 September, Archbishop Gábor Pintér, titular Archbishop of Velebusdus, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio to Honduras.

On 24 September, Archbishop Mitja Leskovar, titular Archbishop of Be-neventum, began his mission as Apostolic Nuncio to Iraq.

Holy Father sends aid

In a communiqué released on Wednesday, 21 October, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development announced that Pope Francis will send economic assistance to all the families of crew members of the M/V Gulf Livestock ship, which sank in the Sea of Japan early last month during typhoon Maysak. The cargo ship had set sail from New Zealand's Napier Port with 43 crew members, including 39 Filipinos, two Australians and two New Zealanders, and was headed to the Port of Jingtang, China. There were only two survivors.

In cooperation with the Apostolic Nunciatures and the Stella Maris centres of the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand, the economic assistance will be delivered personally to the families of the missing sailors and the survivors, along with a small personal gift the Pontiff wished to offer to show his personal closeness and solidarity.

A team of professionals, chaplains and sisters of Stella Maris centres have been providing spiritual, psychological and personalized support to the grieving Filipino families from the early days of the tragedy and will continue to do so over the next few months. Until now, due to Covid-19 restrictions, the support has been largely offered through social media and digital platforms.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE

Pope Francis warned against everyday practical atheism, as he concluded his catechesis on the prayer of the Psalms, at the General Audience on Wednesday, 21 October. The following is a translation of his words which he shared in Italian with the faithful gathered in the Paul VI Hall.



The divine image is imprinted in each human being: not recognizing this is a sacrilege and an abomination

To believe in God and hate mankind is practical atheism

Dear brothers and sisters,
Good morning!

Today, we need to slightly change the way the Audience is conducted because of the coronavirus. You are separated, with the protection of masks as well, and I am here, a bit distant and I cannot do what I always do, come near you, because every time I approach you, you come together and we lose the distance, and there is the danger of contagion for you. I apologize for this, but it is for your safety. Instead of coming near you and shaking your hands and greeting you, we have to greet each other from a distance, but know that I am near you with my heart. I hope that you understand why I am doing this. Also, while the readers were reading the biblical passage, my attention was caught by that baby boy or girl who was crying. And I was watching that mum who was cuddling and nursing the baby and I thought: "this is what God does with us, like that mum". With what tenderness she was trying to comfort and nurse the baby.

They are beautiful images. And when this happens in Church, when a baby cries, one knows there is the tenderness of a mother there, like today there is the tenderness of a mother who is the symbol of God's tenderness with us. Never silence a crying baby in Church, never, because it is the voice that attracts God's tenderness. Thank you for your witness.

Today we complete the catechesis on the *prayer of the Psalms*. First of all, we see that a negative figure often appears in the Psalms, that of the "wicked" person, he or she who lives as if God were not there. This is the person without any transcendent referent, whose arrogance has no limits, who fears no judgment regarding what he or she thinks or does.

For this reason, the Psalter presents prayer as the fundamental reality of life. The reference to

the absolute and to the transcendent – which the spiritual masters call the "holy fear of God" – is what makes us completely human, it is the boundary that saves us from ourselves, preventing us from venturing into life in a predatory and voracious manner. Prayer is the salvation of the human being.

There certainly also exists a false prayer, prayer that is said only for the admiration of others. The person or persons who go to Mass only to show that they are Catholics or to show off the latest fashion they bought, or to make a good impression in society. They move toward false prayer. Jesus strongly admonished against such prayer (cf. Mt 6:5-6; Lk 9:14). But when the true spirit of prayer is sincerely received and enters the heart, it then lets us contemplate reality with God's very eyes.

When one prays, everything acquires "depth". This is interesting in prayer, perhaps something subtle begins but in prayer that thing acquires depth, it becomes weighty, as if God takes it in hand and transforms it. The worst service someone can give God and also mankind is to pray wearily, by rote. To pray like par-

rots. No, we pray with the heart. Prayer is the centre of life. If there is prayer, even a brother, a sister, even an enemy becomes important. An old saying from the first Christian monks reads: "Blessed the monk who regards every human being as God, after God" (Evagrius Ponticus, *Trattato sulla preghiera*, n. 123). Those who adore God, love his children. Those who respect God, respect human beings.

And so, prayer is not a sedative to alleviate life's anxieties; or, in any case, this type of prayer is certainly not Christian. Rather, prayer makes each of us responsible.

We see this clearly in the "Our Father" that Jesus taught his disciples.

To learn how to pray this way, the Psalter is a tremendous school. We saw how the Psalms do not always use refined and genteel language, and that they often bear the scars of existence. And yet, all these prayers were first used in the Temple of Jerusalem and then in the synagogues; even the most intimate and personal ones. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* puts it this way: "The Psalter's many forms of prayer take shape both in the liturgy of the Temple and in the human heart" (n. 2588). And thus, personal prayer draws from and is nourished first by the prayer of the people of Israel, then by the prayer of the Church.

Even the Psalms in the first person singular, which confide the most intimate thoughts and problems of an individual, are a collective heritage, to the point of being prayed by everyone and for everyone. The prayer of Christians has this "breath", this spiritual "tension" that holds the temple and the world together. Prayer can begin in the half light of a church's nave, but then come to

an end on the city streets. And vice versa, it can blossom during the day's activities and reach its fulfillment in the liturgy. The church doors are not barriers, but permeable "membranes", willing to receive everyone's cry.

The world is always present in the Psalter's prayer. The Psalms, for example, voice the divine promise of salvation for the weakest: "Because the poor are despoiled, because the needy groan I will now arise," says the Lord; "I will place him in the safety for which he longs" (12:5). Or again, they warn about the danger of worldly riches because "man cannot abide in his pomp, he is like the beasts that perish" (49:20). Or still, they open the horizon to God's gaze over history: "The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nought; he frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the Lord stands for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations" (33:10-11).

In short, where there is God, the human person must be there too. Sacred Scripture is categorical: We love because he loved us first. He always goes before us. He always awaits us because he loves us first, he looks at us first, he understands us first. He always awaits us. If any one says 'I love God' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his own brother who he can see, cannot love God who he cannot see.

If you pray many rosaries each day but then gossip about others, and nourish grudges inside, if you hate others, this is pure artifice, it is not the truth. And this is the commandment we have from him: "that he who loves God should love his brother also" (1 Jn 4:19-21). Scripture acknowledges the case of a person who, even while sincerely seeking God,



CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

On World Food Day the Pope relaunches appeal to establish a global fund for the development of poorer countries

Hunger is a tragedy for humanity

In a video message to participants in a ceremony held in Rome on Friday, 16 October, to mark World Food Day and the 75th anniversary of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, EAO, Pope Francis stressed that hunger "is not only a tragedy for humanity, but also a shame". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's message, which he shared in Spanish.

To His Excellency
Mr Qu Dongyu
Director General of FAO

On the day in which FAO celebrates the 75th anniversary of its creation, I wish to greet you and all the members that are a part of it. Its mission is beautiful and important because you work with the objective of defeating hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

The theme chosen for this year's World Food Day is significant: "Grow, Nourish, Sustain", and to do so, "Together. Our actions are our future". This theme underscores the need to act jointly and with firm determination in order to create initiatives that improve the environment around us and promote hope in many persons and peoples.

Throughout these 75 years FAO has learned that it is not enough to produce food, but that it is also important to guarantee that food systems be sustainable and offer healthy diets accessible to all. It is a matter of adopting innovative solu-



tions that can transform the way we produce and consume food for the wellbeing of our communities and of our planet, thus strengthening the capacity to recover and long term sustainability.

Therefore, at this time of great difficulty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, it is even more important to sustain initiatives put into action by organizations like FAO, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in order to promote sustainable and diversified agriculture, support small agricultural communities and cooperate in the rural development of the poorest countries.

We are conscious that there is a need to respond to this challenge in an epoch that is full of contradictions: on the one hand we are witnesses of unprecedented progress in various scientific fields; on the other hand the world is facing several humanitarian crises. Unfortunately we see that according to FAO's most recent statistics, despite the efforts undertaken in the last decades, the number of people fighting against hunger and food insecurity is growing, and the current pandemic will even further worsen these numbers.

Hunger is not only a tragedy for humanity, but also a shame. It is caused largely by an unequal distribution of the fruits of the earth,

compounded by a lack of investment in the agricultural sector, the consequences of climate change and the increase in conflicts in various areas of the planet. On the other hand, tons of food are thrown away. Faced with this reality, we cannot remain insensitive or paralyzed. We are all responsible. The current crisis shows us that policies and concrete action are needed to eradicate world hunger. At times, dialectical or ideological discussions distance us from achieving this objective, and we allow our brothers and sisters to continue dying due to lack of food. A courageous decision would be to establish a "Global Fund" with the money that is used for weapons and other military expenditures, in order to definitively eliminate hunger and contribute to the development of poorer countries. In this way, many wars and the migration of many of our brothers and sisters and their families, forced to abandon their homes and countries to seek a more dignified life, would be avoided (*Iratelli Tutti*, cf. n. 189 and 262).

Mr Director General, in expressing my wish that FAO activities may be ever more incisive and fruitful, I invoke God's Blessing on you and on those who cooperate in this fundamental mission of cultivating the earth, feeding the hungry and safeguarding natural resources so that we all may live with dignity, with respect and with love.

Thank you.

General Audience

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

never succeeds in encountering Him; but it also states that one can repudiate the tears of the poor only at the expense of encountering God. God cannot stand the "atheism" of those who repudiate the divine image that is imprinted in every human being. That everyday atheism: I believe in God but I keep my distance from others and I allow myself to hate others. This is practical atheism. Not recognizing the human person as the image of God is a sacrilege, an abomination, the worst offense that can be directed toward the temple and the altar.

Dear brothers and sisters, the prayers of the Psalms help us not to fall into the temptation of the "wicked", that is, of living, and perhaps also of praying, as if God does not exist, and as if the poor do not exist.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I welcome all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors who join us for today's Audience. Upon you and your families I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

Lastly, my thoughts turn as usual to the *elderly*, to *young people*, to the *sick* and to *newlyweds*. May you know how to also welcome life's difficult and sad moments, uniting yourselves to the sacrifice of the Cross. Through spiritual union with Christ and prayer to the Trinity, you will be cooperators in the evangelizing mission of the Church.

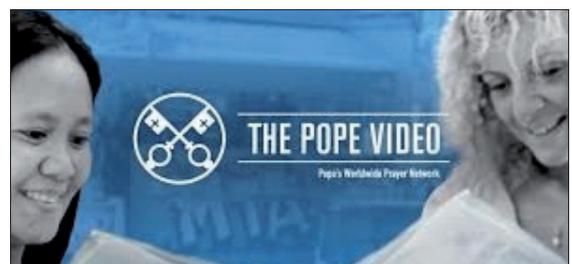
Pope's prayer intention for the month of October

Women in leadership roles in the Church

The prayer intention for the month of October, expressed in a video on the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, is to "create broader opportunities for a more incisive female presence in the Church".

"No one has been baptized a priest or a bishop", the Pontiff explains. "We have all been baptized as lay people", and "lay people are protagonists of the Church". However, he continues, "we must emphasize the feminine lay presence because women tend to be left aside". The Holy Father prays that "by the virtue of baptism, the laity, especially women, may participate more in areas of responsibility in the Church, without falling into forms of clericalism that diminish the lay charism".

The video begins with the image of two women approaching a news stand to buy a copy of the daily edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*, a newspaper in which women find opportunities and offer their contribution to reflection and discussions on matters of faith and the magis-



terium, in dialogue with society. For this reason the Holy See's newspaper, which returned to print its hard copy edition on 4 October, with renewed graphics and content, was chosen as the testimonial for the video whose theme this month is "Women in leadership roles in the Church".

After the first scene, the camera shows faces of women who work in the Vatican, as they pass on copies of our newspaper. In fact, the film was produced in cooperation with the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, and

presents women who hold managerial positions in the Holy See along with journalists from Vatican Media. The video continues with scenes inside the offices of the Roman Curia and concludes with Francis' call to "promote the integration of women, especially where important decisions are made".

As usual, the video is available in nine languages at www.thepopevideo.org, and was created and produced by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network in cooperation with La Machi agency and the Dicastery for Communication.

Meeting of Prayer for Peace: "No One is Saved Alone. Peace and Fraternity"

Peace, dialogue and greater care for one another

On Tuesday, 20 October, the highly anticipated international Prayer for Peace meeting entitled "No One Is Saved Alone. Peace and Fraternity" was held in Rome. The ecumenical initiative was sponsored by Rome's Sant'Egidio Community, and involved the participation of representatives of a variety of religious denominations.

The initiative began with simultaneous prayer services led by different religious groups, with the gatherings held in different places of worship in the Eternal City: in particular, Jews met in the Synagogue, Muslims and Buddhists in the Capitoline Museums, and Christians in the Basilica of Saint Mary in Aracoeli. The ecumenical service was followed by the meeting held in the Piazza di Campidoglio, where various addresses were delivered, offering reflections on the contribution of religion to building peace and fraternity, particularly in light of the pandemic and the widespread social and economic suffering associated with it.

The addresses were followed by a minute of silence in memory of the victims of the pandemic and all wars, and then a reading of the Appeal for Peace ROME 2020, after which each speaker consigned the text and a sprig of an olive tree to a child representing a different part of the world. The children then handed the text to the ambassadors and political authorities. The ceremony continued with the lighting of the candelabrum of peace, beginning with Pope Francis, followed by fellow religious leaders, and ending with Sergio Mattarella, President of the Italian Republic, representing the highest level of political authority.

Joining Pope Francis as speakers at the event were, among others: President Mattarella; Andrea Riccardi, Founder of the Sant'Egidio Community; Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople; Rabbi Haim Korsia, Chief Rabbi of France; Judge Mohamed Abdelsalam Abdellatif, Superior General of the Superior Committee of Human Fraternity; the venerable Shoten Minegishi, representing Soto Zen Buddhism; Dr Karmaljit Singh Dillon of the Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak National Committee in Pakistan, H.E. Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, Chairman of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, provided a recorded video message.

President Mattarella began the series of interventions, noting that "the testimony of religions is the prophecy that can help the world to shake off resignation, distrust, resentment. On the other hand", he said, "it is distorted to the extent of becoming blasphemy when it is twisted to justify contrasts and hatred, to feed conflict, to fuel fanaticism and violence among peoples". He emphasized that "Rome and Italy are proud of being, today once again, a crossroads of dialogue and peace".

Recalling his own words in his recent Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis emphasized that "the commandment of peace is inscribed in the depths of the religious traditions". Indeed, "believers have understood that religious differences do not justify indifference or enmity", he said, but "rather, on the basis of our religious faith we are enabled to become peacemakers,



rather than standing passively before the evil of war and hatred". He observed that "religions stand at the service of peace and fraternity", and thus the occasion offered "an incentive to religious leaders and to all believers to pray fervently for peace, never resigned to war, but working with the gentle strength of faith to end conflicts".

Mr Riccardi noted that the message gleaned from the day's meeting is that "peace means building together in dialogue, without excluding or abusing others. Religions exist on dialogue, because their first job is prayer, which is dialogue with God".

Patriarch Bartholomew expressed the idea that our common home should be regarded as "a house of mirrors, a mirror in which we see our own image reflected, like that of every fellow human being and with

us every element of creation. Created in God's image and likeness", he said, "we see our fellow human being's image in ourselves and the divine fragment in every human being. Looking at what is around us, we see divine work contained therein". Thus, ecology should be understood "as a sign of the presence of the divine in creation".

Rabbi Korsia emphasized that "our fraternity needs to be practiced in encounter, in debate, sometimes even in lively discussion, but always in the hope of meeting the other, in order to find oneself."

In his address, Judge Mohamed Abdelsalam, spoke about the importance of the "pioneering role in the necessary adoption of the renewable concept of human fraternity" assumed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, H.E. Prof. Ahmed Al Tayyeb, who could not be present at the event. Following his introduction, he read out loud a speech written for the occasion by the Grand Imam who said that "the time has come for us to adopt a new form of globalization based on human fraternity that treats all human beings as equal in rights and duties and strengthens social coexistence".

Meanwhile, Ven. Shoten Minegishi highlighted that all "religious people should have strong cooperation among themselves so that all people, regardless of the differences of the religions or cultural positions, can be accepted as they are in their entirety".

In his reflection at the Basilica of Saint Mary in Aracoeli, H.E. Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, said that it is "through the trinity of Praying, doing justice and becoming one" that Churches can be "heralds and agents of God's healing", and "signs of peace and brother and sisterhood".

The event was broadcast in full live streaming on the event website and on the social channels of the Sant'Egidio Community.

Fraternity: prophetic vision and artisanal work

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

concrete and urgent aspects: "Let us join forces to promote life, health, education and peace. The time has come to divert the resources employed in producing ever more destructive and deadly weapons to choosing life and to caring for humanity and our common home. Let us waste no time! Let us start with achievable goals: may we immediately unite our efforts to contain the spread of the virus until there is a vaccine that is suitable and available to all. The pandemic is reminding us that we are blood brothers and sisters".

The blood shed from the Covid-19 pandemic has surpassed millions of victims worldwide; the cry of which God speaks in dialogue with Cain who is indifferent to his brother's destiny, comes to mind:

"Where is your brother Abel?". Cain answers: "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?". God says: "What have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground!" (cf. Gen 4:9-10). In the moment of prayer, Elie Wiesel was cited: "The opposite of love is not hatred, but indifference".

This is the spirit that has moved and gathered all the leaders to Rome to say "enough" to war and to pray together for peace, the spirit of responsibility that brings one to emphatically state: "No one can feel exempted from this. All of us have a shared responsibility. All of us need to forgive and to be forgiven. The injustices of the world and of history are not healed by hatred and revenge, but by dialogue and forgiveness". This is what it means to be architects and artisans of peace: to circulate new currency

that is creative and life generating, the currency of dialogue and forgiveness which, if carried out in a way that is "honest, persistent and courageous" becomes an "antidote to distrust, division and violence" and dismantles "arguments for wars that destroy the fraternity to which our human family is called".

The meeting ends and the breeze has become even colder, but there is a large fire on the stage that shines and warms. It is the candelabrum of peace made of candles lit by each of the protagonists of the event. A small "artisanal" gesture, but which in the end created an architecture that generates heat and light, a light of hope that shines in the beautiful Roman evening and warms the heart of the many people present, who in an orderly and hopeful manner, return to their homes.

A. MONDA

INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF PRAYER FOR PEACE

Pope's homily during the Moment of Christian Prayer for Peace

Others are the means to our salvation

The following is the English text of the Holy Father's homily for the Moment of Christian Prayer for Peace: "No One is Saved Alone, Peace and Fraternity", which was held at the Church of Saint Maria in Araucoli in Rome on Tuesday, 20 October.

It is a gift to pray together. I greet all of you cordially and with gratitude, especially my brother, His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, and dear Bishop Heinrich, President of the Council of the Evangelical Church of Germany. Sadly, Justin, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was unable to be here because of the pandemic.

The passage from the account of the Lord's Passion that we have just heard comes shortly before Jesus' death. It speaks of the temptation he experienced amid the agony of the cross. At the supreme moment of his sufferings and love, many of those present cruelly taunted him with the words: "Save yourself!" (Mk 15:30). This is a great temptation. It spares no one, including us Christians. The temptation to think only of saving ourselves and our own circle. To focus only on our own problems and interests, as if nothing else mattered. It is a very human instinct, but wrong. It was the final temptation of the crucified God.

Save yourself. These words were spoken first "by those who passed by" (v. 29). They were ordinary

people, those who had heard Jesus teach and who witnessed his miracles. Now they are telling him, "Save yourself, come down from the cross." They had no pity, they only wanted miracles; they wanted to see Jesus descend from the cross. Sometimes we too prefer a wonder-working god to one who is compassionate, a god powerful in the eyes of the world, who shows his might and scatters those who wish us ill. But this is not God, but our own creation. How often do we want a god in our own image, rather than to become conformed to his own image. We want a god like ourselves, rather than becoming ourselves like God. In this way, we prefer the worship of ourselves to the worship of God. Such worship is nurtured and grows through indifference toward others. Those passers-by were only interested in Jesus for the satisfaction of their own desires. Jesus, reduced to an outcast hanging on the cross, was no longer of interest to them. He was before their eyes, yet far from their hearts. Indifference kept them far from the true face of God.

Save yourself. The next people to speak those words were the chief priests and the scribes. They were the ones who had condemned Jesus, for they considered him dangerous. All of us, though, are specialists in crucifying others to save ourselves. Yet Jesus allowed himself to be crucified, in order to teach us not to shift evil to others. The chief priests accused him precisely because of what he had done for others: "He saved others and cannot save himself!" (v. 31). They knew Jesus; they remembered the healings and liberating miracles he performed, but they drew a malicious conclusion. For them, saving others, coming to their aid, is useless; Jesus, who gave himself unreservedly for others was himself lost! The mocking tone of the accusation is garbed in religious language, twice using the verb to save. But the "gospel" of save yourself is not the Gospel of salvation. It is the falseness of the apocryphal gospels, making others carry the cross. Whereas the true Gospel bids us take up the cross of others.

Save yourself. Finally, those who were crucified alongside Jesus also joined in taunting him. How easy it is to criticize, to speak against others, to point to the evil in others but not in ourselves, even to blame

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Appeal for Peace

War is a failure of humanity

The following is the English text of the "Appeal for Peace" read during the International Meeting of Prayer for Peace in Rome on Tuesday, 20 October.

Gathered in Rome, in "the spirit of Assisi", and spiritually united to believers worldwide and to all men and women of good will, we have prayed alongside one another to invoke upon our world the gift of peace. We have called to mind the wounds of humanity, we are united with the silent

prayers of so many of our suffering brothers and sisters, all too often nameless and unheard. We now solemnly commit ourselves to make our own and to propose to the leaders of nations and the citizens of the world this Appeal for Peace.

On this Capitoline Hill, in the wake of the greatest conflict in history, the nations that had been at war made a pact based on a dream of unity that later came true: the dream of a united Europe. Today, in these uncertain times, as we feel the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic that threatens peace by aggravating inequalities and fear, we firmly state that no one can be saved alone: no people, no single individual!

Wars and peace, pandemics and health care, hunger and access to food, global warming and sustainable development, the displacement of populations, the reduction of inequalities: these are not matters that concern individual nations alone. We understand this better nowadays, in a world that is amply connected, yet often lacks a sense of fraternity. All of us are brothers and sisters! Let us pray to the Most High that, after this time of trial, there may no longer be "others", but rather, a great "we", rich in diversity. The time has come to boldly dream anew that peace is possible, that it is necessary, that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Holy Father's discourse at Rome's Capitoline Hill

The duty to say 'no' to arms and violence

The following is the English text of the Holy Father's address at the International Meeting of Prayer for Peace held in Rome's Piazza di Campidoglio and organized by the Community of Saint Egidio, on Tuesday, 20 October.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I rejoice and give thanks to God that here on the Capitoline Hill, in the heart of Rome, I can meet with you, distinguished religious leaders, public authorities and so many friends of peace. At each other's side, we have prayed for peace. I greet the President of the Italian Republic, the Honourable Sergio Mattarella. I am happy to encounter once more my brother, the Ecumenical Patriarch, His Holiness Bartholomew. I am most grateful that, despite the difficulties of travel these days, he and other leaders wished to take part in this prayer meeting. In the spirit of the Assisi Meeting called by Saint John Paul II in 1986, the Community of Saint Egidio celebrates annually, in different cities, this moment of prayer and dialogue for peace among believers of various religions.

The Assisi meeting and its vision of peace contained a prophetic seed that by God's grace has gradually matured through unprecedented encounters, acts of peacemaking and fresh initiatives of fraternity. Although the intervening years have witnessed painful events, including conflicts, terrorism and radicalism, at times in the name of religion, we must also acknowledge the fruitful steps undertaken in the dialogue between the religions. This is a sign of hope that encourages us to continue cooperating as brothers and sisters. In this way, we arrived at the important Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, which I signed with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, in 2019.

Indeed, "the commandment of peace is inscribed in the depths of the religious traditions" (Fratelli Tutti, 284). Believers have understood that religious differences do not justify indifference or enmity. Rather, on the basis of our religious faith we are enabled to become peacemakers, rather than standing passively before the evil of war and hatred. Religions stand at the service of peace and fraternity. For this reason, our present gathering also represents an incentive to religious leaders and to all believers to pray fervently for peace, never resigned to war, but working with the gentle strength of faith to end conflicts.

We need peace! More peace! We cannot remain indifferent. Today the world has a profound thirst for peace. In many countries, people are suffering due to wars which, though often forgotten, are always the cause of suffering and poverty" (Address to Participants in the World Day of Prayer for Peace, Assisi, 20 January 2016). The world, political life and public opinion all run the risk of growing injured to the evil of war, as if it were simply a part of human history. "Let us not remain mired in theoretical discussions, but touch the wounded flesh of the victims... Let us think of the refugees and displaced, those who suffered the effects of atomic radiation and chemical attacks, the mothers who lost their children, and the boys and girls maimed or deprived of their childhood" (Fratelli Tutti, 261). Today the sufferings of war are aggravated by the suffering caused by the coronavirus and the impossibility, in many countries, of access to necessary care.

In the meantime, conflicts continue, bringing in their wake suffering and death. To put an end to war is a solemn duty before God incumbent on all those holding political responsibilities. Peace is the priority of all politics. God will ask an accounting of those who failed to seek peace, or who fomented tensions and conflicts. He

will call them to account for all the days, months and years of war that have passed and been endured by the world's peoples!

The words Jesus spoke to Peter are incisive and full of wisdom: "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Mt 26:52). Those who wield the sword, possibly in the belief that it will resolve difficult situations quickly, will know in their own lives, the lives of their loved ones and the lives of their countries, the death brought by the sword. "Enough!" says Jesus (Lk 22:38), when his disciples produce two swords before the Passion. "Enough!" That is his unambiguous response to any form of violence. That single word of Jesus echoes through the centuries and reaches us forcefully in our own time: enough of swords, weapons, violence and war!

Saint Paul VI echoed that word in his appeal to the United Nations in 1965: "No more war!" This is our plea, and that of all men and women of goodwill. It is the dream of all who strive, work for peace in the realization that "every war leaves our world worse than it was before" (Fratelli Tutti, 261).

How do we find a way out of intransigent and festering conflicts? How do we untangle the knots of so many armed struggles? How do we prevent conflicts? How do we inspire thoughts of peace in warlords and those who rely on the strength of arms? No people, no

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Meeting of Prayer for Peace: “No One is Saved Alone. Peace and Fraternity”

The others are the means to our salvation

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

ing the weak and the outcast! But why were they upset with Jesus? Because he did not take them down from the cross they said to him: “Save yourself *and us!*” (Lk 23:39). They looked to Jesus only to resolve their problems. Yet God does not come only to free us from our ever-present daily problems, but rather to liberate us from the real problem, which is the lack of love. This is the primary cause of our personal, social, international and environmental ills. Thinking only of ourselves: this is the father of all evils. Yet one of the thieves then looks at Jesus and sees in him a humble love. He entered heaven by doing one thing alone: turning his concern from himself to Jesus, from himself to the person next to him (cf. v. 42).

Dear brothers and sisters, Calvary was the site of a great “duel” between God, who came to save us, and man, who wants to save only himself; between faith in God and worship of self; between man who accuses and God who excuses. In the end, God’s victory was revealed; his mercy came down upon the earth. From the cross forgiveness poured forth and fraternal love was



reborn: “the Cross makes us brothers and sisters” (BENEDICT XVI, *Address at the Way of the Cross at the Colosseum*, 21 March 2008). Jesus’ arms, outstretched on the cross, mark the turning point, for God points a finger at no one, but instead embraces all. For love alone extinguishes hatred, love alone can ultimately triumph over injustice. Love alone

makes room for others. Love alone is the path towards full communion among us.

Let us look upon the crucified God and ask him to grant us the grace to be more united and more fraternal. When we are tempted to follow the way of this world, may we be reminded of Jesus’s words:

“Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel’s will save it” (Mk 8:35). What is counted loss in the eyes of the world is, for us, salvation. May we learn from the Lord, who saved us by emptying himself (cf. Phil 2:7) and *becoming other*: from being God, he became man; from spirit, he became flesh; from a king, he became a slave. He asks us to do the same, to humble ourselves, to “become other” in order to reach out to others. The closer we become to the Lord Jesus, the more we will be open and “universal”, since we will feel responsible for others. And others will become the means of our own salvation: all others, every human person, whatever his or her history and beliefs. Beginning with the poor, who are those most like Christ. The great Archbishop of Constantinople, Saint John Chrysostom, once wrote: “If there were no poor, the greater part of our salvation would be overturned” (*On the Second Letter to the Corinthians*, XVII, 2). May the Lord help us to journey together on the path of fraternity, and thus to become credible witnesses of the living God.

War is a failure of humanity

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a world without war is not utopian. This is why we want to say once more: “No more war”!

Tragically, for many, war once again seems to be one possible means of resolving international disputes. It is not. Before it is too late, we would remind everyone that war always leaves the world worse than it was. War is a failure of politics and of humanity.

We appeal to government leaders to reject the language of division, often based on fear and mistrust, and to avoid embarking on paths of no return. Together let us look at the victims. All too many conflicts are presently in course.

To leaders of nations we say: let us work together to create a new architecture of peace. Let us join forces to promote life, health, education and peace. The time has come to divert the resources employed in producing ever more destructive and deadly weapons to choosing life and to caring for humanity and our common home. Let us waste no time! Let us start with achievable goals: may we immediately unite our efforts to contain the spread of the virus until there is a vaccine that is suitable and available to all. The pandemic is reminding us that we are blood brothers and sisters.

To all believers, and to men and women of good will, we say: let us become creative artisans of peace, let us build social friendship, let us make our own the culture of dialogue. Honest, persistent and courageous dialogue is the antidote to distrust, division and violence. Dialogue dismantles at the outset the arguments for wars that destroy the fraternity to which our human family is called.

No one can feel exempted from this. All of us have a shared re-

sponsibility. All of us need to forgive and to be forgiven. The injustices of the world and of history are not healed by hatred and revenge, but by dialogue and forgiveness.

May God inspire in us a commitment to these ideals and to the journey that we are making together. May he touch every heart and make us heralds of peace.

Rome, Capitoline Hill,
20 October 2020



The duty to say ‘no’ to violence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

social group, can *single-handedly* achieve peace, prosperity, security and happiness. None. The lesson learned from the recent pandemic, if we wish to be honest, is “the awareness that we are a global community, all in the same boat, where one person’s problems are the problems of all. Once more we realized that no one is saved alone; we can only be saved together” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 32).

Fraternity, born of the realization that we are a single human family, must penetrate the life of peoples, communities, government leaders and international assemblies. This will help everyone to understand that we can only be saved together through encounter and negotiation, setting aside our conflicts and pursuing reconciliation, moderating the language of politics and propaganda, and developing true paths of peace (cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 231).

We have gathered this evening, as persons of different religious traditions, in order to send a message of peace. To show clearly that the religions do not want war and, indeed, disown those who would enshrine violence. That they ask everyone to pray for reconciliation and to strive to enable fraternity to pave new paths of hope. For indeed, with God’s help, it will be possible to build a world of peace, and thus, brothers and sisters, to be saved together. Thank you.

INTERVIEW

with Patriarch Bartholomew I



The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople on "Fratelli Tutti"

Abandon indifference and cynicism

The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew I, grants an interview to Vatican media about Pope Francis' Encyclical "Fratelli Tutti", saying Christians dream of our world as a united family.

ANDREA TORNIELLI

"We completely agree" with Pope Francis' invitation to "abandon indifference or even the cynicism that governs our ecological, political, economic and social life in general, including our self-centered form of unity, and to dream of our world as a united human family".

With these words, Patriarch Bartholomew, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, on a visit to Rome, commented on Pope Francis' Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* in a conversation with the Vatican media.

Your Holiness, what was your reaction to Pope Francis' Encyclical "Fratelli Tutti"?

Even before we learned about our brother Pope Francis' Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, we were certain that it would be another example of his unshakable interest in man, "beloved by God", through the manifestation of solidarity with all "the weary and burdened" and the needy, and that it would contain concrete proposals to face the great challenges of the moment, inspired by the inexhaustible source of Christian tradition, and emerging from his heart full of love.

Our expectations were fully met after completing the analysis of this very interesting Encyclical, which is not simply a compendium or summary of previous Encyclicals or other texts of Pope Francis, but the crowning and happy conclusion of all social doctrine.

We completely agree with His Holiness' invitation and challenge to abandon indifference or even the cynicism that governs our ecological, political, economic and social life in general, including our self-centered form of unity, and to dream of our world as a united human family, in which we are all brothers and sisters without exception. In this spirit we express the hope and

hope that the Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* will prove to be a source of inspiration and fruitful dialogue through the taking of decisive initiatives and cross-cutting actions on an inter-Christian, inter-religious and pan-human level.

The first chapter of the Encyclical speaks of the "shadows" that persist in the world. What are those that worry you the most? And what hope do we gain from looking at the world through the Gospel?

With his acute humanistic, social and spiritual sense, Pope Francis identifies and names the "shadows" in the modern world. We speak of "modern sins", although we like to emphasize that the original sin did not occur in our time and in our age. We do not idealize the past at all. Rightly, however, we are disturbed by the fact that modern technical and scientific developments have strengthened the "hubris" of man. The achievements of science do not respond to our fundamental existential quests, nor have they eliminated them. We also note that scientific knowledge does not penetrate the depths of the human soul. We know it, but act as if we do not.

The Pope also speaks of the persistent gap between the few who possess much and the many who possess little or nothing...

Economic development has not reduced the gap between the rich and the poor. Rather, it has prioritized profit, to the detriment of the protection of the weak, and

contributes to the exacerbation of environmental problems. And politics has become the servant of the economy. Human rights and international law are elaborated and serve purposes alien to justice, freedom and peace. The problem of refugees, terrorism, state violence, humiliation of human dignity, modern forms of slavery and the Covid-19 epidemic are now putting politics before new responsibilities and erasing its pragmatic logic.

What is Christianity's proposal in the face of this situation?

The Church's proposal of life is the trajectory towards "one thing is necessary", and this is love, openness to the other and the culture of persons in solidarity. Before the modern arrogant "man-god" we preach the "God-Man". In the face of "economicism", we give way to the ecological economy and economic activity based on social justice. We oppose the policy of "might makes right", with the principle of respect for the inalienable rights of citizens and international law. In the face of the ecological crisis, we are called to respect creation, simplicity and awareness of our responsibility to give the next generation an intact natural environment. Our effort to address these problems is indispensable, but we know that he who works through us is the God who is the friend of men.

Why is the image of the Good Samaritan relevant today?

Christ connects, in particular, the "first and great commandment" of love for God with the "second commandment similar to the first" commandment of love of neighbor (Mt 22:36-40). And He adds: "On these two commandments all the Law and the Prophets depend". And John the theologian is very clear: "He who does not love, has not known God" (Jn 4:8). The parable of the Good Samaritan is close to the parable of the Judgment (Mt 25:31-46), it is (Lk 10:25-37) the biblical text, which reveals to us the whole truth of the commandment of love. In this parable, the Priest and the Levite represent religion, which is closed in itself, it is only concerned with keeping the "law" unchanged, ignoring and pharisaically neglecting the "most serious prescriptions of the law" (Mt 23:23), love and support for one's neighbor. The Good Samaritan turns out to be the foreign philanthropist close to the one who has been beaten by bandits and wounded. To the initial question of the doctor of the law "Who is my neighbor?" (Lk 10:29), Christ answers with a question: "Which one of these three seems to you to have been the neighbor of the one who ran into the bandits? (Lk 10:36)". Here man is not allowed to ask questions, but he is asked and called to act. It is always necessary to bring out the neighbor, the brother, before and in the face of the distant, the foreigner and the enemy. It should be noted that in the parable of the Good Samaritan, according to the question of the doctor of the law who tests Christ "What must I do to inherit eternal life" (cf. Lk 10:25), in response to it, real love for one's neighbor has a clear soteriological reference. This is also the message of the passage on Judgment.

On what basis can we all consider ourselves brothers and sisters, and why is it important to discover

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Patriarch receives Honorary Doctorate in philosophy

The Pontifical Antonianum University of Rome awarded the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I an honorary doctorate in philosophy on the occasion of the start of its academic year.

In his address during the opening ceremony, Bartholomew called for the promotion of a culture of respect for creation, for building bridges of dialogue among Christians and towards believers of other faiths as well as non-believers.



INTERVIEW

with Peter Maurer



Interview with the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross

With the Pope to build a united and inclusive society

MARIO GALGANO

A merging of viewpoints, values and aspirations in a wounded world now struck by the pandemic of the new virus that worsens existing problems. This was highlighted by the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross Peter Maurer in the following interview with Vatican News and *L'Osservatore Romano* on Tuesday, 20 October. Earlier Mr Maurer had met with Pope Francis.

You met His Holiness, Pope Francis this Monday morning. Afterwards, you also met Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin. How are these meetings in the Vatican for you?

Well, first, it is, of course, a very special moment to meet the Pope and to be here in Rome. It is also a good moment very frankly because there are few visits I do around the world in which we have so much convergence of views, of values, of also aspirations that we represent. Whether you argue the world's analysis and response to crises in the world from a point of view of your religious beliefs, or from a

point of view of international humanitarian law which at the end of the day enshrines decades and centuries of values of good behavior in society. So, coming to Rome is a very positive experience. And of course, talking with the Pope, knowing about his support for what we are doing in the field for people affected by war and violence is a positive energy that I take home from Rome.

Pope Francis stressed in his new Encyclical "Fratelli Tutti" the importance of global solidarity to face the challenges in the world. In your opinion, what are Pope Francis' strengths that correspond to the lines of the International Red Cross? What corresponds with your mission as Red Cross?

Well, let's start with *Fratelli Tutti*. I think this is a key slogan which has motivated decades of work for the Red Cross. And I think at the core of the belief that we, as Red Cross, and the Vatican and the Pope represent is, at the end of the day, that we have to fight against the fragmentation of society – about divisions, which are so painful in its consequences for civilian populations, for the most vulnerable, for the migrants,

those displaced by war and violence, those affected by the weaponization of societies, those affected by climate change, by underdevelopment, by exclusion, by poverty, by injustice. And I think developing a counter-narrative as you would say in modern language. Developing a vision of a society which is different, which is inclusive, which brings people together and which builds bridges where reality separates societies. This is at the core of our common view and endeavors. We certainly are very proud to be close to the Holy See and to the Pope in his efforts.

The International Red Cross faces many challenges. How is that situation in the context of the current coronavirus pandemic?

I think coronavirus has accelerated and accentuated many of the problems that we knew before. And it has come on top of a lot of problems that we have been fighting against over the last decades. We have seen war and violence affecting societies. We have seen poverty, we have seen climate change coming on top of all the complications, particularly in vulnerable contexts like the Sahel

of Lake Chad or the Horn of Africa or the Pacific. And we see today that Covid comes on top of it and functions as an accelerator and complicator of all those factors. And I think that's what is so tragic to see: that we see more divisions and also if the rich have become richer, the poor have become poorer and more excluded. And I think that's the big issue we are fighting.

We also see the secondary impact of the pandemic: the unemployment that has affected many poor countries and populations has been even worse than before Covid.

Unfortunately, there are still many war zones in the world where the International Red Cross brings aid and support to the civilians involved. Which regions are currently most affected where the Red Cross is at the forefront of aid? What can you tell us?

Well, if you just look at our budget and where most of our people are, more than 40 percent of our activities are in Africa. More than 30 additional percent are in the Middle East. So, the regions of the Middle East and the conflict of the Middle East and in Africa remain at the forefront of our activities. It is the Sahel, the Lake Chad, the Sudans, the Congos, the Horn of Africa, Libya of course in Africa. But it's the Middle East with the Syrian conflict, the Yemeni conflict, the Iraqi conflict which is at the fore of our attention. Then, there are other parts of the world which have newly added to the list that I made which is a long-standing list. We have been surprised in the last 6 years to see Ukraine come in as a top operation of ICRC. We have recently seen Nagorno-Karabakh and the Armenian Azeri conflict blowing up in our face and accentuating the problems. And of course, we have long-term engagements in Afghanistan and also in Latin America.

Abandon indifference and cynicism

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

ourselves as such for the good of humanity?

The Christians of the nascent Church called each other "brothers". This spiritual and Christ-centered fraternity is deeper than natural kinship. For Christians, however, brothers and sisters are not only members of the Church, but all peoples. The Word of God has taken on human nature and united everything in itself. Just as all human beings are God's creation, so all have been included in the plan of salvation. The love of the believer has no boundaries and limits. In fact, it embraces the whole of creation, it is "the burning of the heart for the

whole of creation" (Isaac the Syrian). Love for the brethren is always incomparable. It is not an abstract feeling of sympathy towards humanity, which usually ignores the neighbor. The dimension of personal communion and fraternity distinguishes Christian love and fraternity from abstract humanism.

The Pope in his Encyclical strongly condemns war and the death penalty. How would you comment on that chapter of "Fratelli Tutti"?

This theme was referred to by the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church (Crete, June 2016), among others, as follows: "The Church of Christ condemns war in general, recognizing it as the result of the

presence of evil and sin" (*The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today's World*, D, 1). On the lips of every Christian, there must be the slogan "No more war!" And the attitude of a society towards the death penalty is an indicator of its cultural orientation and consideration of human dignity. The worthy system of European constitutional culture, of which one of the fundamental pillars is the idea of love, as an expression of its Christian beliefs, requires us to consider that every man must be given the possibility of repentance and improvement, even if he has been condemned for the worst crime. It is therefore a logical and moral consequence that even he who condemns war should reject the death penalty.

Extension of the Provisional Agreement between the Holy See and the People's Republic of China

The motivations behind the decision

The Provisional Agreement between the Holy See and the People's Republic of China regarding the appointment of Bishops was signed in Beijing on 22 September 2018. That Agreement expires today since it went into effect one month later, with the term of two years *ad experimentum*. As this date drew near, the two parties evaluated various aspects of the Agreement's application, and through an official exchange of *Note Verbale*, have agreed to prolong the term for another two years, until 22 October 2022. Therefore, the renewal of the Provisional Agreement seems to be a propitious occasion to explore its objective and motivations. The primary objective of the Provisional Agreement regarding the appointment of Bishops in China is that of sustaining and promoting the proclamation of the Gospel in that land, restoring the full and visible unity of the Church. In fact, the primary motivations that have guided the Holy See in this process, in dialogue with the Government leaders of that country, are fundamentally of an ecclesiological and pastoral nature. The question regarding the appointment of Bishops is of vital importance for the life of the Church, both at the local as well as at the universal levels. In this regard, Vatican Council II, in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, stated that "Jesus Christ, the eternal Shepherd, established His holy Church, having sent forth the apostles as He Himself had been sent by the Father (cf. John 20:21); and He willed that their successors, namely the bishops, should be shepherds in His Church even to the consummation of the world. And in order that the episcopate itself might be one and undivided, He placed Blessed Peter over the other apostles, and instituted in him a permanent and visible source and foundation of unity of faith and communion" (*Lumen Gentium*, 18).

This fundamental teaching regarding the particular role of the Supreme Pontiff within the Episcopal College and in the appointment of Bishops itself, inspired the negotiations and was a point of reference in the drafting of the text of the Agreement. Thus, little by little as things go forward, both the unity of faith and the communion among the Bishops will be ensured, as well as being able to completely be at the service of the Catholic community in China. As of today, for the first time after many decades, all of the Bishops in China are in communion with the Bishop of Rome and, thanks to the implementation of the Agreement, there will be no more illegitimate ordinations.

It should, however, be noted that all the open issues or situations that are still of concern for the Church have not been treated in the Agreement, but solely the issue of episcopal appointments, which is decisive and essential to guarantee the ordinary life of the Church in China, as in all other parts of the world. His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Pa-

rolin, Vatican Secretary of State, recently spoke about "*The Catholic Church in China, past and present*" at a Convention held in Milan this month for the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the PIME missionaries in Henan. On that occasion, he pointed out that various misunderstandings had arisen regarding the Provisional Agreement. Many of them originated because extraneous objectives or unrelated events regarding the life of the Catholic Church in China were attributed to the Agreement and it was even connected to political issues that have nothing to do with the actual Agreement. Recalling that the Agreement exclusively concerns the appointment of Bishops, Cardinal Parolin stated he is aware of the existence of various problems regarding the life of the Catholic Church in China, but also that it is impossible to confront all the issues together.

The stipulation of the Agreement, therefore, constitutes the destination point of a long journey undertaken by the Holy See and the People's Republic of China, but it is also and above all, the point of departure for broader and more far-sighted agreements. The Provisional Agreement, the text of which, given its experimental nature, has been consensually kept confidential, is the fruit of an open and constructive dialogue. This dialogic posture, nourished by respect and friendship, is strongly willed and promoted by the Holy Father. Pope Francis is well aware of the wounds the Church's communion has sustained in the past, and after years of prolonged negotiations that his Predecessors had begun and carried on and indubitably in continuity with their thought, he has re-established full communion with the Chinese Bishops who were ordained without the necessary Pontifical mandate and authorized the signing of the Agreement regarding the appointment of Bishops, which had already been approved by Pope Benedict XVI in draft form.

Cardinal Parolin emphasized that the current dialogue between the Holy See and China has age-old roots and is the continuation of a journey begun a long time ago. The last Pontiffs, in fact, sought that which Pope Benedict XVI described as the overcoming of the heavy "situation of misunderstandings and incomprehension" that serves neither the "interests of ... the Chinese authorities nor the Catholic Church in China". Citing his predecessor, Pope John Paul II, he wrote in 2007: "*It is no secret that the Holy See, in the name of the whole Catholic Church and, I believe, for the benefit of the whole human family, hopes for the opening of some form of dialogue with the authorities of the People's Republic of China. Once the misunderstandings of the past have been overcome, such a dialogue would make it possible for us to work together for the good of the Chinese People and for peace in the world*" (*Letter of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI to the Bishops, priests, consecrated persons and lay faithful of the Catholic Church of the People's Re-*

public of China, n. 4).

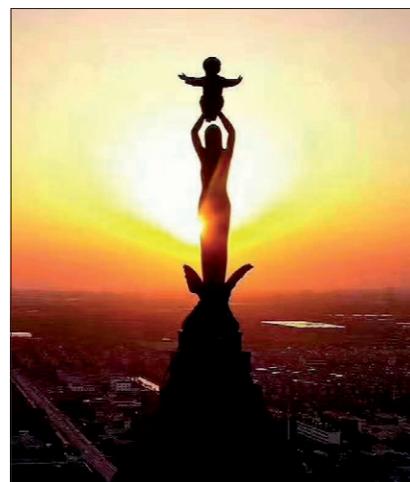
Some sectors of international politics have sought to analyze the Holy See's work primarily along geopolitical lines. Regarding the scope of the Provisional Agreement, instead, the Holy See views it as a profoundly ecclesiological issue, in conformity with two principles stated thus: "*Ubi Petrus, ibi Ecclesia*" (Saint Ambrose, "Where Peter is, there is the Church") and "*Ubi episcopus, ibi Ecclesia*" (Saint Ignatius of Antioch, "Where the Bishop is, there is the Church"). Moreover,

there also exists an awareness that the dialogue between the Holy See and the People's Republic of China favors the search for the common good for the benefit of the entire international community.

Specifically with this intention, Archbishop Paul R. Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States, met with Mr. Wang Yi, State Councilor and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, on 14 February 2020 in Munich, Bavaria, in the context of the 56th Munich Security Conference, even though their first personal meeting, although not official, had taken place on the occasion of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization in New York in 2019. It should be noted that both meetings took place in the context of multilateral diplomatic meetings in favor of global peace and security, thus seeking to pick up on even the slightest signal to foster and sustain the culture of encounter and dialogue.

As was made public by the Holy See, the two diplomats acknowledged the contact between the two parties that had developed positively over time during the meeting that took place in Germany. On that occasion, the desire to pursue the bilateral dialogue at the institutional level fostering the life of the Catholic Church and the good of the Chinese people was reiterated. In addition, the hope was expressed that increased international cooperation would promote civil co-existence and peace in the world and considerations were exchanged regarding intercultural dialogue and human rights. In particular, the importance of the Provisional Agreement regarding the appointment of Bishops, which has now been renewed, was highlighted with the hope that its fruits might grow on the basis of the experience gained over the first two years of it being in force.

Regarding the results achieved so far, on the basis of the regulatory framework established by the Agreement, two Bishops have been appointed (His Excellency Antonio Yao Shun, Diocese of Jining, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, and His Excellency Stefano Xu Hongwei, Diocese of Hanzhong, Shaanxi



Province), while various other processes for new episcopal appointments are in the process, some at the initial stage, others in more advanced stages. Even though, statistically speaking, these results may not seem to be that great, nevertheless they represent a good start, in the hope that other positive goals might be progressively reached. It cannot be overlooked that in recent months the entire world has been practically paralyzed by the health crisis that has influenced both life and activity in almost all sectors of both public and private life. The same reality has obviously influenced regular contact between the Holy See and the Chinese government as well as the implementation of the Provisional Agreement.

The application of the Agreement, with an effective and progressively more active participation of the Chinese Episcopate is, therefore, of great importance for the life of the Catholic Church in China and, as a consequence, for the universal Church. It is also in that context that the pastoral objective of the Holy See can be situated: to help Chinese Catholics, who have long been internally divided, to manifest signs of reconciliation, collaboration and unity for a renewed and more effective proclamation of the Gospel in China. In a Letter dated 26 September 2018, the Pope had entrusted in a particular way to the Catholic community in China – to the bishops, priests, men and women religious, and lay faithful – the commitment to live love for one another in an authentic spirit, expressing it through concrete actions so as to help overcome misunderstandings, giving witness to their own faith and genuine love. It must be acknowledged that there are still many situations causing serious suffering. The Holy See is very much aware of them, is taking them into account and does not fail to draw them to the attention of the Chinese government so that religious freedom might be truly exercised. There is still a long and difficult road ahead.

ANGELUS

At the end of the Angelus on Sunday, 18 October, Pope Francis spoke about Libya, highlighting that "the time has come to stop every form of hostility, promoting dialogue that leads to peace, to stability and to the unity of the country". Earlier the Holy Father had reflected on the theme of hypocrisy as he commented on the Gospel passage of Matthew on the issue of taxes owed to Caesar (Mt 22:15-21). The following is a translation of the Pope's words which he shared in Italian with the faithful gathered in Saint Peter's Square.



The Pope speaks of World Missionary Day and launches an appeal for the North African country

A peaceful future for Libya

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning,

This Sunday's Gospel reading (cf. Mt 22:15-21) shows us Jesus struggling with the hypocrisy of his adversaries. They pay him many compliments – at the beginning, many compliments – but then ask an insidious question to put him in difficulty and discredit him before the people. They ask him: "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" (v. 17), that is, to pay their tribute to Caesar. At that time, in Palestine, the domination of the Roman Empire was poorly tolerated – and it is understandable, they were invaders – also for religious reasons. For the people, the worship of the emperor, underscored also by his image on coins, was an insult to the God of Israel.

Jesus' interlocutors are convinced that there is no alternative to their questioning: either a "yes" or a "no". They were waiting, precisely because they were sure

to back Jesus into a corner with this question, and to make him fall in the trap. But he knows their wickedness and avoids the pitfall. He asks them to show him the coin, the coin of the taxes, of the tribute, takes it in his hands and asks whose is the imprinted image. They answer that it is Caesar's, that is, the Emperor's. Then Jesus replies: "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (v. 21).

With this reply, Jesus places himself above the controversy. Jesus, always above. On the one hand, he acknowledges that the tribute to Caesar must be paid – for all of us too, taxes must be paid – because the image on the coin is his; but above all he recalls that each person carries within him another image – we carry it in the heart, in the soul – that of God, and therefore it is to Him, and to Him alone, that each person owes his own existence, his own life.

In this maxim of Jesus we find not only the criterion for the distinction between the political sphere and the religious sphere; clear guidelines emerge for the mission of believers of all times, even for us today. To pay taxes is a duty of citizens, as is complying with the just laws of the state. At the same time, it is necessary to affirm God's primacy in human life and in history, respecting God's right over all that belongs to him.

Hence the mission of the Church and Christians: to speak of God and bear witness to him to the men and women of our time. Every one of us, by Baptism, is called to be a living presence in society, inspiring it with the Gospel and with the lifeblood of the Holy Spirit. It is a question of committing oneself with humility, and at the same time with courage, making one's own contribution to building the civilization of love, where justice and fraternity reign.

May Mary Most Holy help us all to flee from all hypocrisy and to be honest and constructive citizens. And may she sustain us disciples of Christ in the mission to bear witness that God is the centre and the meaning of life.

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear Brothers and Sisters, today we celebrate World Missionary Day, which has the theme "Here I am, send me. Weavers of fraternity". This word "weavers" is beautiful: every Christian is called to be a weaver of fraternity. Missionaries – priests, consecrated men and women, and lay people – who sow the Gospel in the great field of the world, are especially so. Let us pray for them and give them our practical sup-

port. In this context I would like to thank God for the long-awaited liberation of Father Pier Luigi Maccalli – we greet him with this applause! – who was kidnapped two years ago in Niger. We also rejoice because three other hostages were released with him. Let us continue to pray for the missionaries and catechists and also for those who are persecuted or kidnapped in various parts of the world.

I wish to address a word of encouragement and support to the fishermen who have been held in Libya for more than a month, and to their families. Entrusting them to Mary Star of the Sea, may they keep alive the hope to be able to embrace their loved ones again soon. I pray also for the various discussions in progress at the international level, that they may be relevant for the future of Libya. Brothers and sisters, the time has come to stop every form of hostility, promoting dialogue that leads to peace, to stability and to the unity of the country. Let us pray together for the fishermen and for Libya, in silence.

I greet you all, people of Rome and pilgrims from various countries. In particular, I greet and bless with affection the Peruvian community of Rome, gathered here with the venerated image of the Señor de los Milagros. A round of applause for the Peruvian community! I also greet the volunteers of the Italian Association for the Protection of Animals.

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

Holy See and China renew Provisional Agreement

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Trusting completely in the Lord of history who unfailingly guides His Church and in the maternal intercession of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Sheshan, the Holy See entrusts this delicate and important step to the gracious support and, above all, to the prayers of all Catholics, and hopes that this contact and dialogue with the People's Republic of China, which has matured to the point of the sign-

ing of the Provisional Agreement on the appointment of Bishops and its renewal today, might contribute to the resolution of the matters of common interest that are still open, in particular, those touching the life of the Catholic community in China, as well as the promotion of an international vision of peace, in a moment in which we are experiencing numerous tensions on an international level.
