

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH

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Vatican City

Friday, 20 November 2020

Mass for the Fourth World Day of the Poor



Let us not be infected by indifference

“The Economy of Francesco”, an international event featuring young economists and entrepreneurs from all over the world, began on 19 November. It is being livestreamed on the francescoeconomy.org portal.



FOR THE HOLY FATHER'S HOMILY SEE PAGE 4

The necessary courage in this time of uncertainty

ANDREA MONDA

Kalòs kindinos. Ancient Greek wisdom used to say that ‘danger, risk, is beautiful’. In his own way too, Pope Francis repeated this concept on Sunday morning as he commented on the Parable of the Talents: “In the Gospel, good servants are those who *take risks*. They are not fearful and overcautious, they do not cling to what they possess, but put it to good use. For if goodness is not invested, it is lost, and the grandeur of our lives is not measured by how much we save but by the fruit we bear. How many people spend their lives simply accumulating possessions, concerned only about the *good life* and not the *good they can do*. Yet how empty is a life centred on *our needs* and blind to the *needs of others!* The reason we *have gifts* is so that we can *be gifts* for others... Taking risks: there is no faithfulness without risk. Fidelity to God means handing over our life”

Thus, *Kalòs kindinos*. However, from ancient times to our day something has happened. Along the tortuous path of thought, both

‘high’, philosophical, and ‘low’, common thinking. It is a fact that today’s leading ‘dogma’ is the certainty and security that Saint Paul talks about in the Letter to the Thessalonians quoted by the Pope: “When people say, ‘There is peace and security’, then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape”. Both the biblical text and the Pope warn about the illusory nature of this attitude of avoiding the thrill of risk in favour of a comforting certainty, but there is nothing to do: in the thriving, safe and sound post-war West, the only prevailing thought is what identifies truth with certainty, for which the only dimension that has the right to call itself ‘true’ is the scientific one. Those who spend time in classrooms, after just a few days, can confirm: for the younger generations ‘true’ is the same as certain, sure, testable, reproducible. Thus, also the concept of ‘just’ becomes blurred and inevitably confused with the concept of ‘correct’ or, even worse, ‘legal’. The legalism of those who seek certainties in order to avoid risks was already

present in Jesus’ time and still today this attitude takes root among Christians. For this reason too, the Pope again in his homily yesterday [to the poor] warned against the temptation to “play a defensive game, content only to observe rules and obey commandments. Those ‘moderate’ Christians who never go beyond boundaries, never, because they are afraid of risk. And those, allow me this image, those who take care of themselves to avoid risk begin in their lives a process of mummification of their souls, and they end up as mummies. Following rules is not enough; fidelity to Jesus is not just about not making mistakes”.

However, at least apparently, today’s prevailing thought is precisely that: true equals certain. A thought that seeks to distance itself from this reduction of the concept of truth, as in Italy, for example, that of Prof. Silvano Petrosino of the Catholic University, will have a very hard time catching on. For the professor from Milan, ancient wisdom, biblical in particular, has a

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VATICAN BULLETIN



AUDIENCES

Thursday, 12 November

Archbishop Lévon Boghos Zékian of Istanbul of the Armenians, Turkey

Delegation of the "Communauté du Chemin Neuf"

Archbishop Mario Giordana, titular Archbishop of Minori, Apostolic Nuncio

Bishop Ambrogio Spreafico of Frosinone-Veroli-Ferentino, Italy

Friday, 13 November

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

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

Saturday, 14 November

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

Delegation from the "Congrès Mission" of France

Bishop Giovanni D'Ercole, Bishop emeritus of Ascoli Piceno, Italy

Archbishop Angelo Vincenzo Zani, titular Bishop of Volturmo, Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education (for Educational Institutes)

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Petrus Canisius Mandagi, MSC, as Metropolitan Archbishop of Merauke, Indonesia. Until now he has served as Bishop of Amboina, Indonesia (11 Nov.).

Archbishop Mandagi, 71, was born in Kamangta, Indonesia. He was ordained a priest on 18 December 1975. He was ordained a bishop on 18 September 1994, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Amboina.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation presented by Bishop Fernando Mason, OFM Conv., from the pastoral care of the diocese of Piracicaba, Brazil (11 Nov.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Devair Araújo da Fonseca as Bishop of Piracicaba. Until now he has served as Auxiliary Bishop of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of São

Paulo and titular Bishop of Uzalis (11 Nov.).

Bishop Araújo da Fonseca, 52, was born in Franca, Brazil. He was ordained a priest on 20 December 1998. He was ordained a bishop on 1 February 2015, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Uzalis and Auxiliary of São Paulo.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Robert Józef Chrzyszcz as Auxiliary Bishop of Kraków, Poland, assigning him the titular See of Forconio. Until now he has served as episcopal vicar of the Jacarepaguá Vicariate in the Archdiocese of São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro and parish priest of São Pedro do Mar in Rio de Janeiro (11 Nov.).

Bishop-elect Chrzyszcz, 51, was born in Wadowice, Poland. He was ordained a priest on 14 May 1994. He holds a degree in Philosophical theology.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation presented by Archbishop Albert D'Souza from the pastoral care of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Agra, India (12 Nov.).

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Raphy Manjaly as Metropolitan Archbishop of Agra. Until now he has served as Bishop of Allahabad, India (12 Nov.).

Archbishop Manjaly, 62, was born in Vendere, India. He was ordained a priest on 11 May 1983. He was ordained a bishop on 30 April 2007, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Varanasi, India. On 17 October 2013 he was appointed Bishop of Allahabad.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation presented by Bishop Paul Ervin Schmitz Simon, OFM Cap., from the pastoral care of the diocese of Bluefields, Nicaragua (12 Nov.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Francisco José Tigerino Dávila as Bishop of Bluefields. Until now he has served as rector of the Nacional Nuestra Señora de Fátima Interdiocesan Seminary in Managua (12 Nov.).

Bishop-elect Tigerino Dávila, 57, was born in Chinandega, Nicaragua. He was ordained a priest on 5 January 2002. He holds: a bachelor's degree in education; a degree in philosophy and theology.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation presented by Bishop Bosco Lin Chi-nan from the pastoral care of the diocese of Tainan, Taiwan (14 Nov.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr John Lee Juo-Wang as Bishop of Tainan. Until now he has served as vicar general (14 Nov.).

Bishop-elect Juo-Wang, 54, was born in Taiwan. He was ordained a priest on 1 January 1993. He holds a degree in Philosophy and theology.

The Holy Father appointed Fr François Achille Eyabi as Bishop of the diocese of Eséka, Cameroon. Until now he has served as episcopal vicar and parish priest of the Cathedral (14 Nov.).

Bishop-elect Eyabi, 59, was born in Ngambe, Cameroon. He was ordained a priest on 3 July 1988. He holds a doctorate in Sacred Theology with a dogmatic focus.

The Holy Father appointed as Auxiliary Bishops of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Tegucigalpa, Honduras:

– Fr Teodoro Gómez Rivera, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Castellum Tatroportus. Until now he has served as vicar general and episcopal vicar for pastoral ministry (14 Nov.).

Bishop-elect Gómez Rivera, 57, was born in El Banquito, Honduras. He was ordained a priest on 27 January 1996. He holds a degree in philosophy and theology; a licence in Sacred Theology with a dogmatic focus;

– Fr Walter Guillén Soto, SDB, assigning him the titular see of Nasbinca. Until he has served as rector of the Santuario Nacional de la Juventud San Juan Bosco of Tegucigalpa (14 Nov.).

Bishop-elect Guillén Soto, 59, was born in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. He was ordained a priest on 5 November 1988. He holds a licence in theology; a licence in pedagogy and educational sciences; and a doctorate in education and pedagogical sciences.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation presented by Archbishop Alain Paul Lebeauin, titular of Vico Quense, from the office of Apostolic Nuncio to the European Union (16 Nov.).

The Holy Father accepted the resignation presented by Bishop Joseph Shipandeni Shikongo, OMI, from the pastoral care of the Apostolic Vicariate of Rundu, Namibia (16 Nov.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Linus Ngenomesho, OMI, as Apostolic Administrator *Sede vacante et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* of the Vicariate of Rundu (16 Nov.).

PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

The Holy Father appointed as advisor to the Pontifical Commission for Latin America Fr. Alexandre Awi Mello of the Schönstatt Fathers, secretary of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life (13 Nov.).

CARDINAL TAKES POSSESSION

On 15 November, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, Prefect emeritus of the Congregation for Bishops and Dean of the College of Cardinals, took possession of the title of the Suburbicarian Church of Ostia, in the Cathedral of Sant'Aurea in Ostia Antica.

Cardinal Henryk Gulbinowicz dies

The Polish Bishops' Conference announced the death of 97-year-old Cardinal Henryk Gulbinowicz, Archbishop emeritus of Wrocław, via a tweet on Monday morning.

Henryk Roman Gulbinowicz was born on 17 October 1923 in Sukiškės in the Archdiocese of Vilnius, and received his priestly ordination on 18 June 1950.

On 12 January 1970, he was appointed titular Bishop of Acci and Apostolic Administrator of Vilnius for the territory included in the Polish political borders. He was ordained a bishop on 8 February 1970. On 3 January 1976, he was appointed Archbishop of Wrocław.

In the Consistory of 25 May 1985, he was created a Cardinal with the title of Immacolata Concezione di Maria a Grottarossa. He resigned from the pastoral care of the archdiocese on 3 April 2004.

On November 6 a statement by the Apostolic Nunciature in Poland announced that the Cardinal had been subjected to disciplinary measures following an investigation into charges of sexual harassment.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE

As he continued his series of catecheses on prayer at the General Audience on Wednesday morning, 18 November, Pope Francis reflected on the Virgin Mary as a prayerful woman and a model of humility. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's words which he shared in Italian from the private library of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace.



Pope Francis' catechesis on Mary, prayerful woman and model of humility

Prayer transforms restlessness into openness

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

In our course of catecheses on prayer, today we meet the *Virgin Mary as the prayerful woman*. Our Lady prayed. When the world still knew nothing of her, when she was a simple girl engaged to a man of the house of David, Mary prayed. We can imagine the young girl of Nazareth wrapped in silence, in continuous dialogue with God who would soon entrust her with a mission. She is already full of grace and immaculate from the moment she was conceived; but she knows nothing yet of her surprising and extraordinary vocation and the stormy sea she will have to cross. One thing is certain: Mary belongs to a great host of the humble of heart whom the official historians never include in their books, but with whom God prepared the coming of his son.

Mary did not autonomously conduct her life: she waited for God to take the reins of her path and guide her where he wanted. She was docile, and with her availability she prepared the grand events in which God takes part in the world. The *Catechism* recalls her constant and caring presence in the benevolent design of the Father throughout the course of Jesus' life (cf. CCC, 2617-2618).

Mary was praying when the Archangel Gabriel came to bring his message to her in Nazareth. Her small yet immense "Here I am", which made all of creation jump for joy in that moment, had been preceded throughout salvation history by many other "Here I am", by many trusting obediences, by many who were open to God's will. There is no better way to pray than to place oneself like Mary in an attitude of openness, with a heart open to God: "Lord, what you want, when you want, and how you want". That is, a heart open to God's will. And God always responds. How many believers live their prayer like this! Those who are more humble of heart pray like this: with essential humility, let's put it that way; with simple humility: "Lord, what you want, when you want, and how you want". And they pray

like this and do not get upset when problems fill their days, but rather they face reality, knowing that in humble love, in love offered in each situation, we become instruments of God's grace. "Lord, what you want, when you want, and how you want". A simple prayer, but one in which we place ourselves in the Lord's hands so that he may guide us. We can all pray like this, almost without words.

Prayer knows how to calm restlessness. But we are restless, we always want things before asking for them, and we want them right away. This restlessness harms us. And prayer knows how to calm restlessness, knows how to transform it into availability. When we are restless, I pray and prayer opens my heart and makes me open to God's will. In those few moments of the Annunciation, the Virgin Mary knew how to reject fear, even while sensing that her "yes" would bring her tremendously difficult trials. If in prayer we understand that each day given by God is a call, our hearts will then widen and we will accept everything. We will learn how to say: "What you want, Lord. Promise me only that you will be present every step of my way". This is what's important: to ask the Lord to be present in every step of our way: that he not leave us alone, that he not abandon us in temptation, that he not abandon us in the bad moments. The end of the Our Father is like this: the grace that Jesus himself taught us to ask of the Lord.

Mary accompanied Jesus' entire life in prayer, right up to his death and resurrection; and in the end, she continued and she accompanied the first steps of the nascent Church (cf. Acts 1:14). Mary prayed with the disciples who had witnessed the scandal of the cross. She prayed with Peter who had succumbed to fear and cried in remorse. Mary was there, with the disciples, in the midst of the men and women whom her son had called to form his Community. Mary did not act like a priest among them, no! She is Jesus' Mother who prayed with them, in the community, as a

member of the community. She prayed with them and prayed for them. And, once again, her prayer preceded the future that was about to be fulfilled: by the work of the Holy Spirit she became the Mother of God, and by the work of the Holy Spirit she became the Mother of the Church. Praying with the nascent Church, she became the Mother of the Church, accompanying the disciples in the first steps of the Church in prayer, awaiting the Holy Spirit. In silence, always silently. Mary's prayer was silent. The Gospels recount only one of Mary's prayers at Cana, when she asked her son for those poor people who were about to make a terrible impression during the banquet. So, let us imagine: having a wedding banquet and ending it up with milk because there is no wine! What a bad impression! And she prayed and asked her son to resolve that problem. In and of itself, Mary's presence was prayer, and her presence among the disciples in the Upper Room, awaiting the Holy Spirit, was prayer. Thus Mary gave birth to the Church, she is the Mother of the Church. The *Catechism* explains: "In the faith of his humble handmaid, the Gift of God", that is, the Holy Spirit, "found the acceptance he had awaited from the beginning of time" (CCC, 2617).

In the Virgin Mary, natural feminine intuition is exalted by her most singular union with God in prayer. This is why, reading the Gospel, we note that she seems to disappear at times, only to reappear in crucial moments: Mary was open to God's voice that guided her heart, that guided her steps where her presence was needed. Her silent presence as mother and as disciple. Mary was present because she was Mother, but she was also present because she was the first disciple, the one who best learned Jesus' ways. Mary never said: "Come, I will take care of things". Instead she said: "Do whatever he will tell you", always pointing her finger at Jesus. This behaviour was typical of the disciples, and she was the first disciple: she prayed as Mother and she prayed as a disciple.

"Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart" (Lk 2:19). This is how the evangelist Luke depicts the future that was about to be fulfilled: by the work of the Holy Spirit she became the Mother of the Lord in the infancy Gospel. Everything that happened around her ended up being reflected on in the depths of her heart: the days filled with joy, as well as the darkest moments when she too struggled to understand by which roads Redemption must pass. Everything ended up in her heart so that it might pass through the sieve of prayer and be transfigured by it: whether it be the gifts of the Magi, or the flight into Egypt, until that terrible passion Friday. The Mother kept everything and brought it to her dialogue with God. Someone has compared Mary's heart to a pearl of incomparable splendour, formed and smoothed by patient acceptance of God's will through the mysteries of Jesus meditated in prayer. How beautiful it would be if we too could be a bit like our Mother! With a heart open to God's Word, with a silent heart, with an obedient heart, with a heart that knows how to receive God's Word and allows it to grow with the seed of good for the Church.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I cordially greet the English-speaking faithful. In this month of November, let us continue to pray for our deceased loved ones, and for all who have died, that the Lord in his mercy will welcome them into the Kingdom of heaven. Upon you and your families I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

Lastly as usual my thoughts turn to the elderly, to young people, to the sick and to newborns. I exhort you to love the Church of the Lord; to collaborate with generosity and enthusiasm toward her edification; to live the offer of your suffering as a precious contribution to the House of the Lord, the dwelling place of the Most High among us.

Homily for the Fourth World Day of the Poor

Let us not be infected by indifference

On Sunday 15, November, Pope Francis celebrated Holy Mass in Saint Peter's Basilica to mark the Fourth World Day of the Poor. Attending were a representation of the poor and disadvantaged, along with the volunteers who accompany them and representatives of the charitable entities that assist them on a daily basis. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's homily.

The parable we have just listened to has a beginning, a middle and an end, which shed light on the beginning, the middle and the end of our lives.

The beginning. Everything begins with a *great good*. The master does not keep his wealth to himself, but gives it to his servants; five talents to one, two to another, one to a third, "to each according to his ability" (Mt 25:15). It has been calculated that a single talent was equivalent to the income of some twenty years' work: it was of enormous value, and would be sufficient for a lifetime. This is the beginning. For us too, everything began with the *grace* of God – everything always begins with grace, not with our own efforts – with the grace of God, who is a Father and has given us so many good things, entrusting different talents to each of us. We possess a great wealth that depends not on what we possess but on what we are: the life we have received, the good within us, the indelible beauty God has given us by making us in his image... All these things make each of us precious in his eyes, each one of us is priceless and unique in history! This is how God looks at us, how God feels towards us.

We need to remember this. All too often, when we look at our lives, we see only the things we lack, and we complain about what we lack. We then yield to the temptation to say: "If only...!" If only I had that job, if only I had that home, if only I had money and success, if only I didn't have this or that problem, if only I had better people around me...! But those illusory words – if only! – prevent us from seeing the good all around us. They make us forget the talents we possess. You may not have *that*, but you do have *this*, and the "if only" makes us forget this. Yet God gave those talents to us because he knows each of us and he knows our abilities. He trusts us, despite our weaknesses. God even trusts the servant who will hide his talent, hoping that despite his fears, he too will put to good use what he received. In a word, the Lord asks us to make the most of the present moment, not yearning for the past, but waiting industriously for his return. How ugly is that nostalgia, which is like a black mood poisoning our soul and making us always look backwards, always at others, but never at our



own hands or at the opportunities for work that the Lord has given us, never at our own situation... not even at our own poverty.

This brings us to the *centre* of the parable: the work of the servants, which is *service*. Service is our work too; it makes our talents bear fruit and it gives meaning to our lives. Those who do not live to serve, serve for little in this life. We must repeat this, and repeat it often: those who do not live to serve, serve for little in this life. We should reflect on this: those who do not live to serve, serve for little in this life. But what kind of service are we speaking of? In the Gospel, good servants are those who *take risks*. They are not fearful and overcautious, they do not cling to what they possess, but put it to good use. For if goodness is not invested, it is lost, and the grandeur of our lives is not measured by how much we save but by the fruit we bear. How many people spend their lives simply accumulating possessions, concerned only about the *good life* and not the *good they can do*. Yet how empty is a life centred on *our needs* and blind to the *needs of others*! The reason we *have* gifts is so that we can *be* gifts for others. And here, brothers and sisters, we should ask ourselves the question: do I only follow my own needs, or am I able to look to the needs of others, to whoever is in need? Are my hands open, or are they closed?

It is significant that fully four times those servants who invested their talents, who took a risk, are called "*faithful*" (vv. 21,23). For the Gospel, faithfulness is never risk-free. "But, father, does being a Christian mean taking risks?" – "Yes, dearly beloved, take a risk. If you do not take risks, you will end up like the third [servant]: burying your abilities, your spiritual and material riches, everything". Taking risks: there is no faithfulness without risk. Fidelity to God means hand-

ing over our life, letting our carefully laid plans be disrupted by our need to serve. "But I have my plans, and if I have to serve...". Let your plans be upset, go and serve. It is sad when Christians play a defensive game, content only to observe rules and obey commandments. Those "moderate" Christians who never go beyond boundaries, never, because they are afraid of risk. And those, allow me this image, those who take care of themselves to avoid risk begin in their lives a process of mummification of their souls, and they end up as mummies. Following rules is not enough; fidelity to Jesus is not just about not making mistakes, this is quite wrong. That is what the lazy servant in the parable thought: for lack of initiative and creativity, he yielded to needless fear and buried the talent he had received. The master actually calls him "wicked" (v. 26). And yet he did nothing wrong! But he did nothing good either. He preferred to sin by omission rather than to risk making a mistake. He was not faithful to God, who spends freely, and he made his offence even worse by returning the gift he had received. "You gave me this, and I give it to you", nothing more. The Lord, for his part, asks us to be generous, to conquer fear with the courage of love, to overcome the passivity that becomes complicity. Today, in these times of uncertainty, in these times of instability, let us not waste our lives thinking only of ourselves, indifferent to others, or deluding ourselves into thinking: "peace and security!" (1 Thess 5:3). Saint Paul invites us to look reality in the face and to avoid the infection of indifference.

How then do we serve, as God would have us serve? The master tells the faithless servant: "You ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest" (v. 27). Who are the "bankers" who can provide us with long-term interest? They are the *poor*. Do not forget: the poor are at the heart of the Gospel; we cannot understand the Gospel without the poor. The poor are like Jesus himself, who, though rich, emptied himself, made himself poor, even taking sin upon himself: the worst kind of poverty. The poor guarantee us an eternal income. Even now they help us become rich in love. For the worst kind of poverty needing to be combated is our poverty of love. The worst kind of poverty needing to be combated is our poverty of love. The Book of Proverbs praises the woman who is rich in love, whose value is greater than that of pearls. We are told to imitate that woman who "opens her hand to the poor" (Prov 31:20): that is the great richness of this woman. Hold out your hand to the poor, instead of demanding what you lack. In this way, you will multiply the talents you have received.

The season of Christmas is approaching, the holiday season. How often do we hear people ask: "What can I buy? What more can I have? I must go shopping". Let us use different words: "What can I give to others?", in order to be like Jesus, who gave of himself and was born in the manger.

We now come to the *end* of the parable. Some will be wealthy, while others, who had plenty and wasted their lives, will be poor (cf. v. 29). At the end of our lives, then, the truth will be revealed. The pretence of this world will fade, with its notion that success, power and money give life meaning, whereas love – the love we have given – will be revealed as true riches. Those things will fall, yet love will emerge. A great Father of the Church wrote: "As for this life, when death comes and the theatre is deserted, when all remove their masks of wealth or of poverty and depart hence, judged only by their works, they will be seen for what they are: some truly rich, others poor" (SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Homilies on the*

The necessary courage

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

much broader concept of truth that does not coincide with certainty but with fecundity (which is not the same as fertility). And it is precisely the Parable of the Talents that demonstrates this. The "wicked" servant is afraid of risk, of the uncertainties of the market, and clings to the one certainty he thinks he has: that one talent that his master has given him (which the master invested in him). And his "non-choice" will inevitably remain fruitless while the others are the true faithful servants, because they took risks and freely and courageously interpreted their role,

revealing themselves to be fecund.

This parable, like the others in the Gospel, has a lot to say especially today, 'in these times of uncertainty and instability' as the Pope defined them on Sunday. If we look at our time, indeed we see society shaken to its core precisely because all our certainties have crumbled; the pandemic has put every kind of certainty – even scientific – into crisis. If we continue to seek certainties then we risk going mad; even means of communication bombard us with data and statistics. From this standpoint they seem to reflect the uneasiness and general uncertainty. Perhaps be-

cause we need to re-examine our concept of truth, of what is truly reliable. Perhaps we should also consider that this 'destruction' that suddenly struck us is in reality fecund, because indeed it resembles the 'contractions' of a pregnant woman who is thus preparing, carrying within her a paradoxical means of growth and salvation. But in order to understand it we need to invest in dreams and creativity, running the risk of even changing the very rules of life to which we are too attached, like that single talent that we end up idolizing, preserving it underground, just like a mummy.

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Fratelli Tutti

Reflection by the Major Archbishop-Catholicos of Trivandrum

Dialogue, the Path for Universal Fraternity

CARDINAL BASELIOS CLEEMIS

In many respects the apostolic work of Pope Francis can be compared to that of St. Augustine: the Bishop of Hippo who advocated a rigorous approach to inner church discipline yet kept a compassionate outlook to the human reality around him and he may be regarded as the first proponent of love as a political value. In *De Civitate Dei*, Augustine approaches secular history and politics with a methodical distrust and, envisages a 'politics' based on the perennial principles of divine revelation as constituting Christian identity.

Fratelli Tutti, the latest encyclical of Pope Francis re-proposes love as a political value and continues to represent the Lord's compassionate gaze on the human misery. Yet it progressively redefines the idea of Christian identity. In fact, the heart of this encyclical is a radical challenge to all types of self-enclosed identities – local, cultural, political and religious. It challenges them to grow beyond themselves by finding the correct balance between integral growth and self-giving. It challenges them to do away with boundaries by dynamically and correctly correlating the local and the global, the political and the spiritual, the historical and the perennial aspects of their self-definitions. The Document prophetically proposes that the correct balance is not the safe balance, but the challenging balance – a balance that ensures progress.

An Economy of Care

Fratelli Tutti is not primarily concerned with the economic aspects of human welfare, but an awareness that economic inequality constitutes a major hindrance to the building up of true fraternity. Presupposing the magisterial teaching hitherto regarding private property and its just use (123), it addresses several contexts of modern life where attitude to material well-being causes divisions between individuals, nations and societies. Economic forces are at work, for example, behind increasing isolation and reduction of individuals into consumers (12), alienation and abandonment of individuals that are 'no longer needed' (18-19), reduction and misinterpretation of rights and opportunities (20, 22), propagation of hatred and violence through misinformation (45) violence under various cultural and political guises (25) and marginalization of immigrants (37). Not only individuals but even small nations are intimidated by the forces of market (51) and sometimes nations treat

their neighbors with fear and mistrust, characteristic of individualistic ideology (152). Populism and liberal capitalism, the two dominant ideologies that control market and political psyche, manage only to mislead people for the benefit of few; and the left ideologies that may console smaller groups remain ineffective at the larger scale. Pope Francis points out that we cannot let the falsely conceived ideals of freedom and efficiency, as promoted by the market economy, determine our lives. He proposes inclusive decision-making (137-138), promotion of solidarity (114-117), and 're-envisioning the social role of property' (118-120) among solutions to the situation. But above all, it is about being truly a brother. 'A truly human and fraternal society will be capable of ensuring in an efficient and stable way that each of its members is accompanied at every stage of life.' (109) And as the Pontiff explains with the help of the leading image of the Good Samaritan, the accompaniment involves both personal care given to one's brother in need and ensuring that the systems of care are made use of (the inn in the parable, 78).

A Politics of Love

It is easy to see that in *Fratelli Tutti*, the Pope's primary reference as system of care is the nation state and he builds on the traditional catholic view that the Church and the state need to co-operate for common good. The problems of our age are so large that they cannot be resolved only through co-operation between individuals or even between small groups (126). States have a significant role to play in this context. While states are ideally conceived as systems protecting those inviolable rights with which human beings are born and they are to flourish, in our present day they are dominated by the forces of market economy (172) and a collective form of individualism, the latter leading to exclusive nationalism (141, 152). Humanitarian crises in different parts of the world make migration inevitable and ensues a new interpretation of the inviolable rights of people for living with dignity – including right of land beyond the borders of their nations of origin (121-126). The pandemic situation also reveals the limits of governments dominated by economic and nationalistic concerns. Consequently, states need to affirm their authority over economy (177), and should look forward to 'forging a common project for the human family, now and in the future' (178).



Release of the Malayalam edition of 'Fratelli Tutti' in Kerala, India.
From the left: Fr James Alakkuzhiyil, OCD, His Beatitude Baselios Cardinal Cleemis,
Mr John Venitius and Fr Joseph Nellikasseri

To block the prevalence of economics over politics, 'it is essential to devise stronger and more efficiently organized international institutions, with functionaries who are appointed fairly by agreement among national governments, and empowered to impose sanctions' (172). As a concrete measure, the Pope calls for a reform of the UN (173).

Here we are into the practical dimensions of the magisterial teachings of Pope emeritus Benedict XVI on the political aspect of love, summarily presented in *Deus Caritas Est* (28b) and further detailed in *Caritas in Veritate* (7 et passim). Commitment to common good, expressed in gestures of mutual care, becomes a power that can really transform the world. Charity enlightened by truth – about the true nature and dignity of humanity – is 'the spiritual heart of politics' (187). Here charity not only informs a personal act, but also aims to transform the social structures (186), empowering others to face miseries of the human condition on their own, with dignity (187). It helps politicians to overcome populist impulses and to find effective solutions to situations of social exclusion and injustices. Charity will drive them to move from fine discourse to concrete action, first and foremost in ensuring fundamental rights – like the right to food (189) – for all people and everywhere.

In order to make love a cultural and political value we must be ready to overcome the aspects of cultural fragmentation prevalent in our present-day society and to forego pursuit of success in view of real fruitfulness. It requires a special strength to be tender, to have 'the love that draws near and becomes real' (194). It requires also courage to start actions whose fruits will be reaped by others. Without these, the qualities of the Good Samaritan, there is no political love. It is with the same strength and courage, imbibed with the Christian hope that love can transform life and its structures, that the Pope calls for disavowal of terror – including that of war – in political activity and abolition of death penalty (255-270).

An Ethnicity of Universal Fraternity

Crossing the borders set by ethnic (and religious) differences with courage and generosity is a key moment in the story of the Good Samaritan. Still, the stranger on the road is a problematic sign for our times – as revealed by the context of migration. The national and cultural heritages that constitute ethnicities are of great importance – they are not to be simply set aside or neglected. Yet cultures are to be encouraged to open to other cultures in a mutually enriching dialogue; and the same is true of national identities. Ethnicities are to move forward, while being grounded in their original cultural substratum (134-137). Of course, such encounters are to be backed with governmental action such as developmental aid to weaker nations and political validation and accommodation of emigrants. But the major attention of *Fratelli Tutti* is on building up of the larger family – the human family. The true worth of a nation is not in its ability to think of itself as a nation but also as a part of a larger human family (141).

The Document certainly alludes to the theological foundation of human family – that all are children of one Father (46) and all are part of the universal plan of redemption in Christ (85). But the more frequent appeal is to the human nature itself (87). Human beings have an innate (70) capacity and almost a necessity to be connected to one another. Perhaps the Holy Father perceives this as a more inclusive ground for realization of universal fraternity. But this innate ability has a theological dimension (93) and moral virtues find their fuller meaning only with 'charity that God infuses' (91). This love that helps us to seek for others the best in their lives (104) and opens up what is best in us for the good of all around us. This love, which is universal in both geographic and existential dimensions, is the real life-force of human fraternity.

The Holy Father takes special effort to point out that this universalism will become an empty notion without a preferential outlook for those who are in gravest need (187, existential foreigner in 97), and

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faces of the Church

Fr Luke on the island of Rhodes

A pastor for refugees

ROBERTO CETERA

Do you speak Italian? “I am more Italian than the Italians!” This is how Fr Luke, a parish priest, introduced himself. He is a Franciscan ministering on the islands of Rhodes and Kos. And indeed when speaking to Father Luke I noticed he has all the typical ways of native Italian speakers: the gift of gab, lively gesticulation, pleasant facial expressions, and the floodgates open when I inquire about his mission to refugees, quite the contrary of that stereotypical reserved, somewhat impassive manner of the British. Yet Fr Luke Gregory really is English, born 62 years ago in Sheffield, the cradle of the industrial revolution in South Yorkshire, just above the Midlands.

What is an English Franciscan doing in Rhodes? “Actually, I belong to the Custody of the Holy Land, whose jurisdiction has always, as is well known, also extended into some areas bordering the land of Jesus, such as Rhodes. I arrived here somewhat by chance”, he says, “after having served in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and from obedience, I have been here for many years now. Perhaps because originally I too come from an island, but I felt at home right away on this island, and today, I’ll tell you: I could not imagine myself elsewhere”.

For many years many people have looked toward the beauty of Rhodes: “Fr Luke is an extraordinary person, you’ll see”. And in fact, from our first contact I could see the prediction was spot-on. If you expect to find a missionary who sadly tells you about the many tribulations of the poor people he helps, you will be disappointed. Fr Luke has the extraordinary ability to navigate between true pain and despair while maintaining an approach that is always positive, full of hope and good will, joyful in the Franciscan sense. And his character is certainly the most important element of the charity that he dispenses with both hands. “Yes, I bring them a lot of things they need to live” – he says, speaking of the refugees – “but what makes them happier and more grateful is that I spend time with them, listen to them, talk to them, offer them a word of hope. It is important to understand that the first and most difficult thing a refugee has to suffer is loneliness, the feeling of strangeness you feel when you are in a land that is not your own. Far from your home, from your birth-place”.

But tell us a little of your life before, Fr Luke. “I went to school in Sheffield, where I learned to love the classic Greek and Latin languages and cultures. I never would have imagined that my love for ancient

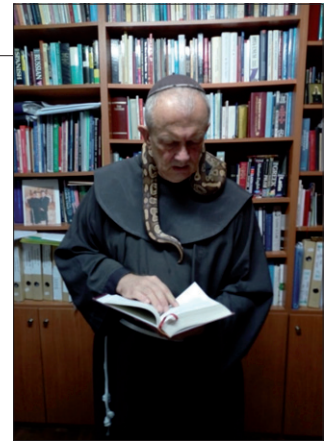
Greek would one day be useful, living on a Greek island full of history. I then moved to London for university; I enrolled at the prestigious King’s College. But before I began university, as a gap year, I decided to take a course in Applied Social Science. It was a course that included a lot of field experience, so I found myself coming to know for the first time in my life many marginal realities that I did not even imagine existed. The homeless, the sick, various forms of addiction, contact with a world that touched and changed me deeply. While continuing my classical studies with a passion, I realized that my life was beginning to take an unexpected path, that of a vocation at the service of the poor, the discarded, the least. Galeotto was on a pilgrimage accompanying the sick to Lourdes. There”, Fr Luke continues, “I met a Franciscan friar who fascinated me very much, telling me about the ‘fifth Gospel’: the Land of Jesus. So I went to Jerusalem and there I discovered the link between my passion for the ancient world, the historical truth of *Kerygma*, and life dedicated to others. I found myself naturally, so to speak, a Franciscan novice in Ein Karen, the village of the Baptist; and then in Jerusalem to study theology.

I spent some very happy years in the Holy Land; I was a cantor at the Holy Sepulchre, a secretary of the Custody, and then in Bethlehem during the very difficult time of the second *Intifada*. I lived the beauty of the ancient liturgies at the Holy Sepulchre, but also the terrible aspects of human suffering in the Occupied Territories”. As we talk, Fr Luke walks around the friary garden proudly showing me his crops. “Here there were some beautiful roses. I took them out and now there are these, which are even more beautiful”, and he shows me a row of zucchini, tomatoes, lettuce, eggplants. “Refugees need food more

than roses! And then, I must tell you, I am an enthusiastic supporter of Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si’*. Here you will find ecology in practice: we recycle everything; we preserve water and energy; we don’t use plastic; we have our animals; we go almost everywhere on foot”.

We return to the friary which once housed dozens of friars. “I’ll introduce you to my lovely little pet Percy”. I imagine that in the island evenings the friar keeps the company of a faithful dog or an affectionate kitten. I am therefore open-mouthed with amazement when I meet Percy: a splendid python, a couple of meters long. Fr Luke doesn’t seem at all surprised by my astonishment, and remaining angelic – and rather British – he impassively explains to me: “Percy, Perseus; like the son of Zeus and Danae, but also like the constellation between Andromeda and Auriga”.

The turning point in Fr Luke’s life happened just 10 years ago, with the outbreak of civil war in Syria. Many fled from the bombs, and Rhodes is one of the safer and closer harbours where the rubber boats of the desperate can make port. They would arrive in the hundreds and then thousands during these years. And they would always find Fr Luke, even at night, waiting to welcome them, refresh them, and support them. “Actually I have never wondered what I should be doing. It is natural to welcome a brother or sister, who flees. There really is little to think about, isn’t there? I don’t ask them anything but they themselves tell their stories and their faces speak volumes. I bring them food but also shampoo, soap and razors. I stock up in the local supermarkets, inaccessible to them. I buy things with the money sent to me by the Father Custos, the Commissariats of the Holy Land, and from Italy, the generous donations of the *Pro Terra Sancta* association. In the summer months when there



are many tourists on the island, I tell them: ‘Before you depart, leave anything you can, even opened containers of toothpaste or bodywash, slippers, the food you haven’t eaten: here everything is useful’”. He continues: “I try to help them in every way I can, except for transit procedures. I don’t want to interfere with the work of the local authorities, and they in turn leave me to do my job, even if at times they try to prevent the landings. After the first arrivals I decided to go to Syria, to my confreres in Aleppo and also to Damascus, to become better aware of the situation they were fleeing. I saw devastation and despair like never before. Today the origin of refugees has changed: there are fewer Syrians, and more Africans from the north and the Horn of Africa, and especially many Palestinians fleeing from Gaza. With the Palestinians I feel at home again. At the moment”, he continues, “there are about 250 refugees on the island; they are camped out in a warehouse, in what was once the slaughterhouse for the island: a terrible symbol. I do what I can; I try to help everyone. Many are Muslims and it seems not to matter at all that I am a Catholic priest; they seem to be very fond of me. During the Islamic holidays I prepare typical sweets in order to help them feel less far from home. On the other hand, here in Rhodes solidarity makes everyone brothers and sisters. I have an excellent relationship also with our Orthodox brothers and sisters and also with the Protestants. We have set up a chapel on our premises for the Lutheran pastor so they can celebrate their liturgy”. Fr Luke continues to work even while he is speaking to me; he seems to never tire. “Do you never tire of doing good?”, I ask him. “No, I feel I am a fulfilled man: what is it that could possibly make you happier in life than to see the results of the good things you are trying to do?”.

And by now Fr Luke’s efforts are well known even beyond the confines of the island and also outside the ecclesial circuits, earning solidarity, support and also gratitude. So it was that the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, wanted to express his appreciation for Fr Luke’s work with refugees, honouring him with the title of Knight of the Order of the Star of Italy. Patrizia Falcinelli, the Ambassador of



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Cardinal Raúl Eduardo Vela Chiriboga, Archbishop emeritus of Quito, passed away at the age of 86 on Sunday, 15 November, in the Ecuadorian capital. He had been hospitalized for palliative care for a month and a half, during which time Apostolic Nuncio Andrés Carrascosa Coso visited him several times and Pope Francis offered comfort and cheer.

The late Cardinal was born in Riobamba in 1934. One of nine children, he attended Don Bosco Salesian high school before entering the San José Major Seminary, where he studied theology and philosophy. He also studied abroad, taking courses in theological, pastoral and liturgical formation.

He was ordained a priest on 28 July 1957 and served as secretary of the diocesan curia for 10 years, until 1967. During those years he also served as director of Caritas Riobamba and cooperated with pastoral service for indigenous people. He established the Colegio de Fátima to help educate young people in the face of life's challenges. In 1968, he was appointed Undersecretary of the Ecuadorian Episcopal

Archbishop emeritus of Quito

Remembering Cardinal Vela Chiriboga

Upon learning of the Cardinal's death, Pope Francis expressed his condolences in a telegram addressed to Archbishop José Espinoza Mateus of Quito. The following is a translation of the Pope's telegram which was written in Spanish, accompanied by a brief biography of the late Cardinal.

In hearing the news of the death of Cardinal Raúl Eduardo Vela Chiriboga, Archbishop emeritus of Quito, I offer you, Your Excellency, my condolences, asking that you kindly pass them on to the family members of the late prelate and to those who belong to that ecclesial community. Likewise, remembering this selfless pastor who for years faithfully dedicated his life to the service of God and the Church, I offer suffrage for his soul's eternal rest, that the Lord grant him the crown of glory that never fades, and to all I impart my Apostolic Blessing as a sign of Christian hope in the Risen Lord

FRANCISCUS PP.

Conference, serving until 1970 when he was elected Secretary General.

On 20 April 1972 he was appointed titular Bishop of Ausafa and Auxiliary Bishop of Guayaquil. He selected "*Cum Maria Matre Jesu*" as his episcopal motto and was ordained a bishop on 21 May 1972 by Cardinal Pablo Muñoz Vega, then the Archbishop of Quito. During this time he also worked with the Christian Family Movement. In Guayaquil he worked in particular with Archbishop Bernardino Echeverría Ruiz, whom he considered a point of reference and spiritual teacher.

On 29 April 1975 he was appointed Bishop of Azogues, a poor and new diocese, in which he worked among indigenous people and focused on social promotion. He enabled many Church lands to pass to the poorest. The Episcopal Conference of Ecuador entrusted him with many roles including, in February

1979, that of Delegate to the third General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate in Puebla de los Angeles. From 1981 to 1988 he served as a member of the Episcopal Conference of Latin America (CELAM). Among his roles within the Conference was that of President of the commissions for social ministry (1980-1986) and for liturgy (1986-1995).

On 8 July 1989 he was appointed Military Ordinary of Ecuador and transferred to the titular see of Pazuera, where he continued to carry out his ministry even after retiring from the titular Church in 1998. At the Vatican in October 1994, he participated in the Ninth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the theme "Consecrated Life and its Mission in the Church and in the World". In 2000 he was elected President of the "*Misas para los sacerdotes del Ecuador*"

foundation, an organization that gathers Mass intentions in countries with a greater availability of money, which is then distributed among the neediest Ecuadorian priests.

On 21 March 2003 he was appointed Archbishop of Quito, where he worked above all for education and priestly formation and implemented a project that engaged all the parishes in the education of young people. He opened a clinic offering medical assistance to indigent priests and opened an auditorium named after Benedict XVI in the diocesan home for the clergy. He retired as Archbishop of the Metropolitan See on 11 September 2010 and in October of that year served as the Pope's Special Envoy to celebrate the 475th anniversary of the first diocese of Peru and South America, the current Archdiocese of Cuzco. He was created the fifth Ecuadorian cardinal by Benedict XVI in the Consistory of 20 November 2010, with the Title of Santa Maria in Via, and participated in the Conclave which elected Pope Francis on 13 March 2013. He served as the Pope's Special Envoy to the 10th anniversary celebrations for the National Eucharistic Congress of Peru in 2015, and for the concluding jubilee celebrations of the Archdiocese of Lima in 2017, on the occasion of the fourth centenary of the death of Saint Rose of Lima.

Among the honours bestowed on him, he received Ecuador's Decoration of the Armed Forces and National Police, and received an honorary degree from the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, 17 November in the Cathedral of Quito.

Dialogue, the Path for Universal Fraternity

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without care to respect, preserve and enrich individual (100, 106-111) and local identities (142-153). His 'war' is on the self-enclosed identities (e.g., local narcissism 146; narrow nationalism 11), and ideologies like individualism, that make creative dialogue impossible.

A Culture of Dialogue

A significant part of Pope Francis' criticism of contemporary culture is directed against opinionated standpoints, false ideologies, misinformation perpetrated in everyday life (gossips) and in social media, and shallow relationships promoted in new media culture. After defining real sociality as getting near and getting real in spirit of fraternity, the Pope contemplates more the world of opinions and beliefs and its relation to truth in the last three chapters of *Fratelli Tutti*.

Truth has historical and contextual manifestations, which need to reform themselves through en-

counter with its perennial embodiments. Since nobody can claim a monopoly on the latter, the only possible way ahead is getting into sincere dialogue, with the conviction that others have something worthwhile to contribute. With patience and commitment, it is possible to build consensus, which are prejudicial neither to objective truth nor to genuine interests of the society. Encountering the other, in sincere aspiration to find points of contact and platforms to promote work for common good, need to develop into a culture.

Patience with the social reality is key in this process. Remarkable is the Pontiff's admission that even refusal to accept good ideas and violent social protests can have a genuine context (219). Conflicts with those who offend our dignity are legitimate and genuine love requires our commitment to make them realize their mistakes (241). Forgiveness in social context, thus, is neither a mute compromise with evil, nor forgetting the wounds of

the past but the capacity to reach peace through dialogue and honest negotiation.

The sincerity of the Holy Father's proposals for meaningful co-existence of human beings can be seen in his readiness to apply the same principle – rejection of self-enclosed, non-dialogical identities – to the plurality of religions as well. *Fratelli Tutti* is not only offering a creative challenge to the contemporary world, but also is proposing numerous points for introspection and self-reform to all units and levels of ecclesial life.

For the world to move forward and to realize the common call of all humanity to live as one family, the only way is to engage in open and sincere dialogue, not only at the personal level, but also at all levels of social and political life. That is the central message of *Fratelli Tutti*, the way for universal fraternity.

Major Archbishop-Catholicos, Trivandrum, India.

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A pastor for refugees

Italy in Athens, says Fr Luke is a profound connoisseur of the eastern Mediterranean and of the tensions associated with it. "As well as being an extraordinary example of dedication and generosity in his work in favour of the needy, refugees and migrants, Fr Luke also represents a fundamental point of reference for the Italian community in Rhodes and for the promotion of Italian culture and values on the island. This is why the President wanted to honour him with this recognition, at the recommendation of the Italian Ambassador to Greece".

He seems quite surprised by all this fame: "There is nothing extraordinary in what I do: welcoming the foreign refugee is a duty not a merit. For everyone. And so, when this pandemic ends, plan a holiday to Rhodes: this place is so beautiful, and perhaps you can give me a hand". And, bidding farewell, he saunters away with Percy coiled affectionately around his neck.

ANGELUS

At the Angelus on Sunday, 15 November, the Fourth World Day of the Poor and penultimate Sunday of the liturgical year, the Holy Father invited the faithful to "stretch forth your hand to the poor", as he reflected on the day's Gospel reading on the Parable of the Talents. The following is a translation of the Pope's words which he shared in Italian.



Reach out your hand to those in need

The Pope prays for the Philippines, the Ivory Coast and Romania

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

On this penultimate Sunday of the liturgical year, the Gospel presents us the well-known Parable of the Talents (cf. Mt 25:14-30). It is part of Jesus' discourse on the end times, which immediately precedes his passion, death and resurrection. The parable describes a rich gentleman who has to go away and, foreseeing a long absence, entrusts his property to three of his servants: to the first he entrusts five talents; to the second, two; to the third, one. Jesus specifies that the distribution is made "to each according to his ability" (v. 15). The Lord does so with all of us: he knows us well; he knows we are not all the same and does not wish to favour anyone to the detriment of the others, but entrusts an amount to each according to his or her abilities.

During the master's absence, the first two servants are very busy, to the point of doubling the amount entrusted to them. It is not so with the third servant, who hides the talent in a hole: to avoid risks, he leaves it there, safe from thieves, but without making it bear fruit. The moment comes for the return of the master, who calls the servants to settle ac-

counts. The first two present the good fruit of their efforts; they have worked and the master praises them, compensates them and invites them to partake in his feast, in his joy. The third, however, realizing he is at fault, immediately begins to justify himself, saying: "Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours" (vv. 24-25). He defends his laziness by accusing his master of being "hard". This is a habit that we have too: we defend ourselves, many times, by accusing others. But they are not at fault: the fault is ours; the flaw is ours. And this servant accuses others; he accuses the master in order to justify himself. We too, many times, do the same. So the master rebukes him: he calls the servant "wicked and slothful" (v. 26); he has the talent taken from him and has him cast out of his house.

This parable applies to everyone but, as always, to Christians in particular. Today too, it is very topical: today is the Day of the Poor, in which the Church tells us Christians: "Stretch forth your hand to the poor. Hold out your

hand to the poor. You are not alone in life: there are people who need you. Do not be selfish; hold out a hand to the poor". We have all received from God a "patrimony" as human beings, a human richness, whatever it may be. And as disciples of Christ we have also received the faith, the Gospel, the Holy Spirit, the Sacraments, and so many other things. These gifts should be used to do good, to do good in this life, in service to God and to our brothers and sisters. And today the Church tells you, she tells us: "Use what God has given you and look at the poor. Look: there are so many of them; even in our cities, in the centre of our city, there are many. Do good!".

At times, we think that to be Christian means not to do harm. And not doing harm is good. But not doing good is not good. We must do good, come out of ourselves and look, look at those who are more in need. There is so much hunger, even in the heart of our cities; and many times we enter into that logic of indifference: the poor person is there, and we look the other way. Hold out your hand to the poor person: it is Christ. Some say: "But these priests, these bishops who talk about the poor, the poor... We want them to talk to us about eternal life!". Look, brother and sister, the poor are at the heart of the Gospel; it is Jesus who taught us to speak to the poor; it is Jesus who came for the poor. Hold out your hand to the poor. You have received many things, and you let your brother, your sister die of hunger?

Dear brothers and sisters, may each one say in his or her heart what Jesus tells us today; repeat in your heart: "Hold out your hand to the poor". And Jesus tells us something else: "You know, I am the poor. I am the poor".

The Virgin Mary received a great gift: Jesus himself, but she did not keep him to herself; she gave him to the world, to his

people. Let us learn from her to reach out a hand to the poor.

After the Angelus, the Pope continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, I am close in prayer to the people of the Philippines, who are suffering from the destruction and above all the flooding caused by a strong typhoon. I express my solidarity to the poorest families subjected to these calamities, and my support to those who are trying to aid them.

My thought also goes to the Ivory Coast, which is celebrating the national Day of Peace today, in a context of social and political tensions which, unfortunately have caused many victims. I join in prayer to obtain the gift of national harmony from the Lord, and I exhort all sons and daughters of that dear country to cooperate responsibly for reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. I encourage in particular the different political actors to re-establish a climate of mutual trust and dialogue, in the quest for just solutions that protect and promote the common good.

Yesterday, a fire broke out in a hospital facility in Romania which housed various patients with coronavirus, claiming several victims. I express my closeness and pray for them. Let us pray for them.

I greet all of you, faithful of Rome and pilgrims from various countries. Do not forget, today, that that voice of the Church rings in our heart: "Stretch forth your hand to the poor. Because, you know, the poor person is Christ". I am delighted, in particular, by the presence of the children's choir of Hösels (Germany). Thank you for your hymns!

I wish everyone a happy Sunday and please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch! *Arrivederci!*

World Day of the Poor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Poor Man Lazarus, II, 3). If we do not want to live life poorly, let us ask for the grace to see Jesus in the poor, to serve Jesus in the poor.

I would like to thank all those faithful servants of God who quietly live in this way, serving others. I think, for example, of Father Roberto Malgesini. This priest was not interested in theories; he simply saw Jesus in the poor and found meaning in life in serving them.

He dried their tears with his gentleness, in the name of God who consoles. The *beginning* of his day was prayer, to receive God's gifts; the *centre* of his day was charity, to make the love he had received bear fruit; the *end* was his clear witness to the Gospel. This man realized that he had to stretch out his hand to all those poor people he met daily, for he saw Jesus in each of them. Brothers and sisters, let us ask for the grace to be Christians not in word, but in deed. To bear fruit, as Jesus desires. May this truly be so.