

# L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH*Unicuique suum Non praevalerunt*

Fifty-third year, number 49 (2.675)

Vatican City

Friday, 4 December 2020

Pope Francis created 13 new cardinals in the 7th Consistory of his Pontificate

## On the road with Jesus

Visit to Benedict XVI and concelebration of Mass on the First Sunday of Advent



Let us “pass from being off the road to journeying on God’s road”: Pope Francis advised this attitude of conversion to the 13 new Cardinals created in the Ordinary Public Consistory held in the Vatican Basilica on Saturday afternoon, 28 November. The rite – which bore the signs of the health emergency that prevented two of the newly appointed cardinals from being present and required measures such as physical distancing to prevent the spread of infection – was celebrated at the Altar of the Chair, rather than the Altar of Confession, and afterwards Francis accompanied the 11 new Cardinals to the *Mater Ecclesiae* Monastery in the Vatican to visit Benedict XVI who blessed the new Cardinals after the recitation of the “Salve Regina”.

The following day they concelebrated Mass with Pope Francis for the First Sunday of Advent.

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Pope Francis' Message for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities

### Frailty is part of everyone's life

*The Holy Father's Message for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities was released on Thursday, 3 December. This year's theme is: "Building Back Better: Toward a Disability-inclusive, Accessible and Sustainable post-COVID-19 World." I find the expression "building back better" quite striking. It makes me think of the Gospel parable of the house built on rock or sand (cf. Mt 7:24-27; Lk 6:46-49). So I take this special occasion to share some reflections based on that parable.*

Dear brothers and sisters, This year's celebration of the *International Day of Persons with Disabilities* is an occasion to express my closeness to those experiencing situations of particular difficulty during the crisis caused by the pandemic. All of us are in the same boat in the midst of a turbulent sea that can frighten us. Yet in this same boat, some of us are struggling more; among them are persons with serious disabilities.

The theme of this year's celebration is “Building Back Better: Toward a Disability-inclusive, Accessible and Sustainable post-COVID-19 World.” I find the expression “building back better” quite striking. It makes me think of the Gospel parable of the house built on rock or sand (cf. Mt 7:24-27; Lk 6:46-49). So I take this special occasion to share some reflections based on that parable.

#### 1. The threat of the throwaway culture

In the first place, the “rain”, the “rivers” and the “winds” that threaten the house can be identified with the throwaway culture widespread in our time (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 53). For that culture, “some parts of our human family, it appears, can be readily sacrificed for the sake of others considered



worthy of a carefree existence. Ultimately, persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected, especially when they are poor and disabled” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 18).

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# VATICAN BULLETIN

## AUDIENCES

*Monday, 23 November*

Mr Carmelo Barbagallo, President of the Financial Information Authority (AIF)

Delegation of Fairtrade International

Delegation of the "National Basketball Players Association"

Cardinal-elect Marcello Semeraro, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints

*Thursday, 26 November*

Cardinal Edoardo Menichelli, Archbishop emeritus of Ancona-Osimo, Italy

Msgr Bruno Marie Duffé, Secretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

Fr Tomaž Mavrič, CM, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission (Lazarists)

*Friday, 27 November*

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

Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco, Archbishop emeritus of Genoa, Italy

## Communiqué

### Bishop ordained in PRC

On 24 November, in response to questions from journalists, Mr Matteo Bruni, Director of the Holy See Press Office, confirmed the following:

"With regard to the news of the recent episcopal ordination in Qingdao (Province of Shandong, PRC), I can confirm that the Rev. Thomas Chen Tianhao is the third Bishop appointed and ordained within the normative framework of the Provisional Accord between the Holy See and the People's Republic of China regarding the appointment of Bishops. I can also add that certainly, in the future other episcopal consecrations are foreseen, because various processes are underway for the new episcopal appointments".



Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson, Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

H.E. Mr Majid Al-Suwaidi, Ambassador of the Emirates to Spain

## CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed Fr Wayne Lawrence Lobsinger as Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Hamilton, Canada, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Gemellae in Numidia. Until now he has served as episcopal vicar for consecrated life and parish priest of Saint Thomas the Apostle, Waterdown, in the same diocese (21 Nov.).

Bishop-elect Lobsinger, 54, was born in the Waterloo Region, Canada. He was ordained a priest on 7 May 1994. He holds a Master of Divinity.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation presented by Bishop Peter Kang U-il from the pastoral care of the Diocese of Cheju, Korea. He is succeeded by Bishop Pius Moon Chang-woo, coadjutor of the said Diocese (22 Nov.).

Bishop Moon Chang-woo, 57, was born in Cheju, Korea. He was ordained a priest on 10 February 1996. He was ordained a bishop on 15 August 2017, subsequent to his appointment as coadjutor Bishop of Cheju.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation presented by Bishop Kevin Patrick Dowling, CSSR, from the pastoral care of the Diocese of Rustenburg, South Africa (25 Nov.).

The Holy Father appointed Fr Robert Mogapi Mphiwe as Bishop of Rustenburg. Until now he has served as vicar general (25 Nov.).

Bishop-elect Mogapi Mphiwe, 48, was born in Pretoria, South Africa. He was ordained a priest on 1 November 1997. He studied philosophy and theology and holds a licence in liturgy.

The Holy Father appointed Bishop Xolelo Thaddaeus Kumalo as Bishop of Witbank, South Africa. Until now he has served as Bishop of Eshowe, South Africa (25 Nov.).

Bishop Kumalo, 66, was born in Gogela, South Africa. He was ordained a priest on 10 October 1991. He was ordained a bishop on 7 June

2008, subsequent to his appointment as Bishop of Eshowe.

The Holy Father appointed Fr Jacek Grzybowski as Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Warszawa-Praga, Poland, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Nova. Until now he has served as director of the diocesan office for university pastoral ministry.

Bishop-elect Grzybowski, 47, was born in Wołomin, Poland. He was ordained a priest on 30 May 1998. He studied philosophy and theology; he holds a doctorate in philosophy.

The Holy Father appointed as Auxiliary Bishops of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Guadalajara, Mexico: Fr Manuel González Villaseñor, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Ploaghe. Until now he has served as parish priest of San Francisco Javier de Las Colinas; Fr Eduardo Muñoz Ochoa, assigning him the titular episcopal See of Satafis. Until now he has served as formator at the Major Seminary (27 Nov.).

— Bishop-elect Villaseñor, 56, was born in Guadalajara, Mexico. He was ordained a priest on 19 May 1991.

## Christmas tree arrives in Saint Peter's Square From the forrests of Slovenia

From the area of Novi Lazi and Kočevska Reka, in southeastern Slovenia, a red spruce (*Picea abies*) has arrived in Saint Peter's Square to be decorated for Christmas. Staff members of the Vatican's gardens and environmental services raised the tree on Monday morning, 30 November, after its arrival the night before. The 75-year-old spruce stands at an imposing 30 metres (98.5 feet) high, 67 centimetres in diameter and weighs some seven tons. The lighting ceremony will take place at 4:30 pm on Friday, 11 December, respecting health regulations for the containment of the pandemic. Cardinal Giuseppe Bertello and Bishop Fernando Vérgez Alzaga, respectively the President and Secretary General of the Vatican City State Governorate, will preside over the ceremony. The tree and Nativity scene will remain on display in Saint Peter's Square until Sunday,

— Bishop-elect Muñoz Ochoa, 52, he was born in Guadalajara, Mexico. He was ordained a priest on 22 May 1997. He holds a licence in dogmatic theology; and in philosophy.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation presented by Archbishop Anthony Mancini from the pastoral care of the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth, Canada. He is succeeded by Archbishop Brian Joseph Dunn as Coadjutor of the said Archdiocese (27 Nov.).

Archbishop Dunn, 65, was born in Saint John's, Newfoundland, Canada. He was ordained a priest on 28 August 1980. He was ordained a bishop on 9 October 2008, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Munatiana and Auxiliary of Sault Sainte Marie, Canada. On 21 November 2009 he was appointed Bishop of Antigonish. He was appointed coadjutor Archbishop of Halifax-Yarmouth, Canada, on 13 April 2019.

## NECROLOGY

Bishop Jožef Smej, Auxiliary Bishop emeritus of Maribor, Slovenia, titular Bishop of Tzernicus, at age 98 (21 Nov.).

Bishop Damián Iguacén Borau, Bishop emeritus of Tenerife, Spain, at age 104 (24 Nov.).

Bishop Benjamín Jiménez Hernández, Bishop emeritus of Culiacán, Mexico, at age 82 (26 Nov.).



10 January, Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which concludes the Christmas season.

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## GENERAL AUDIENCE

*As he continued his series of catecheses on prayer at the General Audience on Wednesday morning, 2 December, Pope Francis reflected on the importance of blessings, pointing out that "curses cannot come out of a blessed heart". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's words which he offered in Italian from the private library of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace.*



# The world needs blessings

## An essential dimension of prayer

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good morning!

Today we will reflect on an essential dimension of prayer: *blessing*. We are continuing the reflections on prayer. In the creation accounts (cf. Gen 1-2), God continually blesses life, always. He blesses the animals (1:22); he blesses the man and the woman (1:28); finally, he blesses the Sabbath, the day of rest and the enjoyment of all of creation (2:3). It is God who blesses. In the first pages of the Bible, there is a continual repetition of blessings. God blesses, but men give blessings as well, and soon they discover that the blessing possesses a

to bless and the fact of being blessed. God did not make a mistake with creation nor with the creation of man. The *hope of the world* lies entirely in God's *blessing*: he continues to *love us*, to *wish us well*; he is the first, as the poet Péguy said, to continue to hope for our good (The Portico of the Mystery of the Second Virtue, first ed. 1911).

God's great blessing is Jesus Christ; his Son is God's greatest gift. He is a blessing for all of humanity. He is the blessing that saved us all. He is the eternal Word with which the Father

A sinner can remain in error for a long time, but God is patient till the end, hoping that [the sinner's] heart will eventually open and change. God is like a good father and like a good mother – he is also a good mother: they never stop loving their child, no matter what he or she may do wrong, always. What comes to my mind is the many times that I have seen people queue to enter a prison.

Many mothers queue up to see their imprisoned child: they do not stop loving their child and they know that the people passing by on the bus are thinking: "Ah, that is a prisoner's mother". Yet they are not embarrassed about this; or better yet, they are embarrassed but they go ahead, because their child is more important than their embarrassment. Thus we are more important to God than all of the sins that we can commit, because he is a father, he is a mother, he is pure love, he has blessed us forever. And he will never stop blessing us.

It is an impressive experience to read these biblical texts of blessing in a prison, or in a rehabilitation group. To let these people feel that they are still blessed, notwithstanding their grave errors, that the heavenly Father continues to desire their good and to hope that they will open themselves to the good, in the end. Even if their closest relatives have abandoned them since by now they judge them to be irredeemable, they are always children to God. God cannot erase in us the image of sons and daughters; each one of us is his son, his daughter. At times we see miracles happen: men and women who are reborn because they find this blessing that has anointed them as children. For God's grace changes lives: he takes us as we are, but he never leaves us as we are.

Let us think about what Jesus did with Zacchaeus (cf. Lk 19:1-10), for example. Everyone saw evil in him; instead, Jesus spots a glimmer of good, and from that – from his curiosity to see Jesus

– He allows the mercy that saves to pass through. Thus, first Zacchaeus' heart was changed, and then his life. Jesus sees the indelible blessing of the Father in the people who are rejected and repudiated. Zacchaeus was a public sinner; he had done so many awful things, but Jesus saw that indelible sign of the Father's blessing and because of that, he had compassion. That phrase that is repeated often in the Gospel, "He was moved with compassion", and that compassion leads Him to help him and to change his heart. What's more, Jesus came to identify himself with every person in need (cf. Mt 25:31-46). In the passage about the final protocol on which all of us will be judged, Matthew 25, Jesus says: "I was hungry, I was naked, I was in prison, I was in hospital, I was there..."

To God who blesses, we too respond by *blessing* – God has taught us how to bless and we must bless – through the prayer of praise, of adoration, of *thanksgiving*. The Catechism writes: "The prayer of blessing is man's response to God's gifts: because God blesses, the human heart can in return bless the One who is the source of every blessing" (n. 2626). Prayer is joy and thanksgiving. God did not wait for us to convert before beginning to love us, but he loved us long before, when we were still in sin.

We cannot just bless this God who blesses us; we must bless everyone in him, all people, bless God and bless our brothers and sisters, bless the world: this is the root of Christian meekness, the ability to feel blessed and the ability to bless. If we were all to do this, wars would surely not exist. This world needs blessings, and we can give blessings and receive blessings. The Father loves us, and the only thing that remains for us is the joy of blessing him, and the joy of thanking him, and of learning from him not to curse, but to bless. Here, just one

## Appeal for Nigeria

I wish to assure my prayers for Nigeria, where blood has unfortunately been spilled once more in a terrorist attack. Last Saturday, in the northeast of the country, more than 100 farmers were brutally killed. May God welcome them into his peace and comfort their families; and may he convert the hearts of those who commit similar atrocities which gravely offend his name.

special power that accompanies those who receive it throughout their entire life, and disposes man's heart to allow God to change it (cf. Second Vatican Council Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 61).

At the world's beginning, there is thus God who "speaks goodness" [*dice-bene*], he blesses [*benedice*], he speaks goodness [*dice-bene*]. He sees that every work of his hands is good and beautiful, and when he creates man, and creation is complete, he recognizes that it is "very good" (Gen 1:31). Shortly thereafter, the beauty that God had imprinted within his work will change, and the human being will become a degenerate creature, capable of spreading evil and death in the world; but nothing will ever take away God's original imprint, an imprint of goodness that God placed in the world, in human nature, in all of us: the capacity

blessed us "while we were yet sinners" (Rom 5:8), Saint Paul says, the Word made flesh and offered for us on the cross.

Saint Paul proclaims God's plan of love with emotion. And he says it like this: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved" (Eph 1:3-6). There is no sin that can completely erase the image of Christ present in each one of us. No sin can erase that image that God has given us – the image of Christ. Sin can disfigure it, but not remove it from God's mercy.

## FEAST OF THE APOSTLE ANDREW



Photos © Nikolaos Manginas



Message of the Holy Father to Ecumenical Patriarch for the Feast of Saint Andrew

# The primary duty of dialogue

*In the context of the traditional exchange of Delegations for the respective Feast Days of Patron Saints — 29 June in Rome for the celebration of Saints Peter and Paul, and 30 November in Istanbul for the celebration of Saint Andrew — Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, led the Delegation of the Holy See for the celebration of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He was accompanied by the Dicastery's Secretary, Bishop Brian Farrell, and*

*Undersecretary, Msgr Andrea Palmieri. The Delegation was joined in Istanbul by Archbishop Paul F. Russell, Apostolic Nuncio to Turkey. The Holy See's Delegation took part in the solemn Divine Liturgy presided by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I in the Patriarchal Church of Saint George at the Phanar. Cardinal Koch consigned to the Ecumenical Patriarch a Message signed by the Holy Father. The following is the English text of the Message.*



To His All Holiness  
BARTHOLOMEW  
Archbishop of Constantinople  
Ecumenical Patriarch

On the feast of the Apostle Andrew, beloved brother of Saint Peter and patron saint of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, I joyfully convey my spiritual closeness to Your All Holiness once again through the delegation. I join you in giving thanks to God for the rich fruits of divine providence manifest in the life of Saint Andrew.

I likewise pray that through his powerful intercession our Lord, who called him to be among his first disciples, will abundantly bless you, your brothers in the episcopate and members of the Holy Synod, and all the clergy, monks and lay faithful gathered for the Divine Liturgy celebrated

in the Patriarchal Church of Saint George at the Phanar. Calling to mind the charity, apostolic zeal and perseverance of Saint Andrew is a source of encouragement in these difficult and critical times. Giving glory to God also strengthens our faith and hope in the one who welcomed into eternal life the holy martyr Andrew, whose faith endured in time of trial.

I recall with great joy the presence of Your All Holiness at the international meeting for peace held in Rome on 20 October last, with the participation of representatives of various Churches and other religious traditions. Together with the challenges posed by the current pandemic, war continues to afflict many parts of the world, while new armed conflicts emerge to steal the lives of countless men and women. Undoubtedly all initiatives taken by national and international entities aimed at promoting peace are useful and necessary, yet conflict and violence will never cease until all people reach a deeper awareness that they have a mutual responsibility as brothers and sisters. In light of this, the Christian Churches, together with other religious traditions, have a primary duty to offer an example of dialogue, mutual respect and practical cooperation.

With profound gratitude to God, I have experienced this fraternity at first hand in the various encounters we have shared. In this regard, I acknowledge that the desire for ever greater closeness and understanding between Christians was manifest in the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople before the Catholic Church and other Churches engaged themselves in dialogue. This can be seen clearly in the encyclical letter of the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate addressed to the Churches worldwide exactly one hundred years ago. Indeed, its words remain relevant today: "When the several Churches are inspired by love, and place it before everything else in their judgment of the others and in relation towards each other, they will be able, instead of increasing and widening the existing dissensions, to lessen and diminish the same as far as possible; and by promoting a constant brotherly interest in the condition, the stability, and the prosperity of the other Churches, by their eagerness in watching what is happening in those Churches, and by obtaining a more accurate knowledge of them, and by their readiness to give, whenever occasion arises, a hand of help and assistance, they then will do and achieve many

good things to the glory and profit both of themselves and of the whole Christian body, and to the advance of the matter of the union".

We can thank God that relations between the Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate have grown much over the past century, even as we continue to yearn for the goal of the restoration of full communion expressed through participation at the same Eucharistic altar. Although obstacles remain, I am confident that by walking together in mutual love and pursuing theological dialogue, we will reach that goal. This hope is based on our common faith in Jesus Christ, sent by God the Father to gather all people into one body, and the cornerstone of the one and holy Church, God's holy temple, in which all of us are living stones, each according to our own particular charism or ministry bestowed by the Holy Spirit.

With these sentiments, I renew my warmest best wishes for the feast of Saint Andrew, and exchange with Your All Holiness an embrace of peace in the Lord.

Rome, Saint John Lateran,  
30 November 2020

FRANCIS



## Pope Francis creates 13 new Cardinals



Rome, 28 November

On Saturday afternoon, 28 November, in Saint Peter's Basilica, the Supreme Pontiff Francis held an Ordinary Public Consistory for the creation of 13 new Cardinals, the imposition of the biretta, the consignment of the ring

and the assignment of the title or deaconry.

The Holy Father entered the Basilica at 4:00 pm. in procession and took his place at the Altar of the Chair in Saint Peter's Basilica. He was greeted by the Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops, the first of the new Cardinals. Having said the initial prayer, the Pope delivered his Address after the proclamation of the Gospel. He then read out the formula for the creation of Cardinals, reading out their names:

– Mario Grech, Bishop emeritus of Gozo, Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops;

– Marcello Semeraro, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, Apostolic Administrator of Albano, Italy;

– Antoine Kambanda, Archbishop of Kigali, Rwanda;

– Wilton Daniel Gregory, Archbishop of Washington, USA;

– Jose Fuerte Advincula, Archbishop of Capiz, Philippines;

– Celestino Aós Braco, Archbishop of Santiago de Chile, Chile;

– Cornelius Sim, titular Bishop of Putia in Numidia, Vicar Apostolic of Brunei;

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

– Mauro Gambetti, titular Archbishop of Thesiduo;

– Felipe Arizmendi Esquivel, Archbishop emeritus of San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Mexico;

– Silvano Maria Tomasi, titular Archbishop of Asolo, Apostolic Nuncio, Special Delegate to the Sovereign Military Order of Malta;

– Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher of the Papal Household;

– Enrico Feroci, titular Archbishop of Cures Sabinorum.

Due to Covid restrictions Msgr Advincula and Msgr Sim were unable to attend the ceremony.

The imposition of the biretta on the new Cardinals, the consignment of the ring and the assignment of the title or deaconry followed. The ceremony concluded with the Apostolic Blessing that the Holy Father imparted to everyone present and the singing of the *Salve Regina*.

Cardinal Grech's address to the Holy Father at the Consistory

## Synodality as a pattern and style of the Church

*At the beginning of the Consistory on Saturday afternoon, 28 November, at the Altar of the Chair in Saint Peter's Basilica, the Holy Father was greeted by Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops, the first of the new Cardinals. The following is a translation of the Cardinal's address, which was given in Italian.*

Your Holiness,

Called together in a Consistory during such a grave time for all of humanity due to the current pandemic, we wish to extend our thoughts to all of our brothers and sisters who are suffering. The dramatic circumstances that the Church and the world are living, challenge us to offer a reading of the pandemic that might help each and every person to see also in this tragedy an opportunity to "rethink our styles of life, our relationships, the organization of our societies and, above all, the meaning of our existence".

As a "sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race", the Church is called to open ways, or better she herself needs to set out anew on the journey. This is the lesson from the Second Vatican Council in the second chapter of *Lumen Gentium* that recovers the idea of the People of God on a journey. According to the New Testament, the condition of the Christian is that of a pilgrim, who lives in the world as a stranger, well aware that fulfilment can only be reached in the Kingdom of God. Once again, at the beginning of a new millennium, the Spirit seems to be saying to us that we must return to being "those who belong to The Way" (cf. Acts 9:2).

A Church that journeys is a Church that "journeys together". The People of God are not a sum of individuals; rather they are "God's faithful, holy people". If they walk 'together' they will not take the wrong road because as all of the faithful possess the capacity of 'infallibility in credendo', the *sensus fidei* that you often invite us to is listening in order to discern "that which the Spirit is saying to the Church". These were the solicitations you gave, your holiness, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the institution of the Syn-

od, when you traced the profile of the Church as constitutively synodal.

A synodal Church is a "Church that listens". Mutual listening, as listening to the Holy Spirit, is perhaps the truest realisation of that "open or incomplete thought, always open to the *maius* of God and the Truth, always developing", which you, Your Holiness, emphasise as the disposition of a good philosopher, a good theologian, and evidently also of a 'good bishop'. One here is not speaking of some form of relativism. Rather, what one understands here is the dynamism of Tradition itself, by virtue of which "the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfilment in her".

Within this dynamism is clarified the profile of the synodal Church and synodality as a pattern and style of the Church. This is the vision that you, Holy Father, strongly propose to us. The Constitution *Episcopalis communio* seeks to implement it, interpreting the Synod of Bishops not as an event anymore, but as a process in which the People of God, the College of Bishops and the Bishop of Rome are involved in synergy, each according to its proper function. I would like to emphasise the indispensable role that the People of God play in this process. In this way, the *sensus fidei* recuperates its active function, allowing it to practice listening as the principle of a Church that is truly and completely synodal.

Synodality introduces every aspect of the Church's life and mission in a dynamic of circular fruitfulness. The particular Churches, the provinces and ecclesiastical regions, the Church universal, in which even the College of Cardinals offers its part, all are inserted in that synodal process which manifests "a dynamism of communion which inspires all ecclesial decisions".

This is the basis of the task that together we are called to carry out, and which the Secretariat of the Synod seeks to serve. It can collaborate in facilitating the connection between the various levels of the exercise of synodality. Its primary contribution is specifically that of listening. I have already written to all the bishops, offering our availability, and many, from every part of the



world, confirmed the importance of mutual listening. But I believe and desire that the Secretariat may be able to do more, for example, supporting the bishops and the episcopal conferences in maturing in a synodal style, without interfering, but accompanying the processes underway at various levels in the Church's life.

This could be the way in which the Secretariat of the Synod can participate in the dynamism of the "Church which goes forth" in a world that, in the dramatic circumstances in which we are living, has even more need that the Church truly be the "universal sacrament of salvation".

Sustaining us is hope, the Holy Spirit's gift for difficult times. In *The Portal the Mystery of Hope*, Charles Péguy imagines hope as "a girl from nowhere", the smallest of the sisters, between faith, compared to a bride, and charity, viewed as a mother. He concludes:

"The Christian people don't pay attention, except the two older sisters. The first and the last... They are blind who cannot see otherwise. That it is she in the middle who leads her older sisters along".

"Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of hope"! May Mary, Star of the Sea, whom we Maltese venerate under the title of Madonna Ta' Pinu, grant us this hope.

To you, Holy Father, who desired to choose us for a more direct service to the Church, we ask that you bless us.

*The Cardinal's address with all references may be found at: <http://www.synod.va/content-synod/en/news/address-of-h-c-mario-cardinal-grech-to-the-holy-father-during-t.html>*



Homily at the Ordinary Public Consistory for the creation of 13 new Cardinals

## On the road

On Saturday afternoon, 28 November, Pope Francis presided at the Ordinary Public Consistory held in Saint Peter's Basilica for the creation of 13 new cardinals. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's homily, which he gave in Italian.

Jesus and his disciples were on the road. *The road* is the setting for the scene just recounted by the Evangelist Mark (10:32-45). It is always the setting, too, for the Church's journey: the road of life and history, which is salvation history insofar as it is travelled *with Christ* and leads to his paschal mystery. Jerusalem always lies ahead of us. The cross and the resurrection are part of our history; they are our "today" but also and always the goal of our journey.

This Gospel passage has often accompanied consistories for the creation of new Cardinals. It is not merely a "backdrop" but also a "road sign" for us who today are journeying together with Jesus. For he is our strength, who gives meaning to our lives and our ministry.

Consequently, dear brothers, we need carefully to consider the words we have just heard.

Mark emphasizes that, on the road, the disciples were "amazed" and "afraid" (v. 32). Why? Because they knew what was ahead of them in Jerusalem. They not only had a sense of it; they knew well what was ahead, because, more than once, Jesus had already spoken to them openly about it. The Lord knew what his followers were experiencing, nor was he indifferent to it. Jesus never abandons his friends; he never neglects them. Even when it seems that he is going his own way, he is always doing so *for our sake*. All that he does, he does for us and for our salvation. In the specific case of the Twelve, he did this *to prepare them* for the trials to come, so that they could be *with him*, now and especially later, when

he would no longer be in their midst. So that that they could always be *with him*, *on his road*.

Knowing that the hearts of his disciples were troubled, Jesus "once more" called the Twelve and told them "what was to happen to him" (v. 32). We have just heard it ourselves: the third announcement of his passion, death and resurrection. This is *the road taken by the Son of God*. The road taken by the *Servant of the Lord*. Jesus identifies himself with this road, so much so that he himself is the road. "I am the way" (Jn 14:6), he says. *This way*, and none other.

At this point, a sudden shift takes place, which enables Jesus to reveal to James and John - but really to all the Apostles, and to us - the fate in store for them. Let us imagine the scene: after once again explaining what will happen to him in Jerusalem, Jesus looks the Twelve squarely in the eye, as if to say: "Is this clear?" Then he resumes his journey, walking ahead of the group. Two of his disciples break away from the others: James and John. They approach Jesus and tell him what they want: "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory" (v. 37). They want to take *a different road*. Not Jesus' road, but a different one. The road of those who, perhaps even without realizing it, "use" the Lord for their own advancement. Those who - as Saint Paul says - look to their own interests and not those of Christ (cf. *Phil* 2:21). Saint Augustine speaks of this in his magnificent sermon on shepherds (n. 46). A sermon we always benefit from rereading in the Office of Readings.

Jesus listens to James and John. He does not get upset or angry. His patience is indeed infinite, also towards us. He tells the two: "You do not know what you are asking" (v. 38). In a way, he excuses them, while at the same time reproaching them: "You do not realize that you have gone *off the road*". Immediately after this, the other ten apostles will show by their indignant reaction to the sons of Zebedee how much *all of them* were tempted to go *off the road*.

Dear brothers, all of us love Jesus, all of us want to follow him, yet we must always be careful to remain *on the road*. For our bodies can be with him, but our hearts can wander far afield and so lead us *off the road*. We can think of so many kinds of corruption in the priestly life. The scarlet of a Cardinal's robes, which is the colour of blood, can, for a worldly spirit, become the colour of a secular "eminence". In that case, you will no longer be a shepherd who is close to his people. You will simply think that you are an "eminence". Once you feel that way, you are already off the road.

In this passage of the Gospel, we are always struck by the *sharp contrast* between Jesus and his disciples. Jesus is aware of this; he knows it and he

accepts it. Yet the contrast is still there: Jesus is *on* the road, while they are *off* the road. Two roads that cannot meet. Only the Lord, through his cross and resurrection, can save his straying friends who risk getting lost. It is for them, as well as for all the others, that Jesus is journeying to Jerusalem. For them, and for everyone, will he let his body be broken and his blood shed. For them, and for all, will he rise from the dead, and forgive and transform them by the gift of the Spirit. He will at last put them back *on his road*.

Saint Mark - like Matthew and Luke - included this story in his Gospel because it contains a saving truth necessary for the Church in every age. Even though the Twelve come off badly, this text entered the canon of Scripture because it *reveals the truth* about Jesus and about us. For us too, in our day, it is a message of salvation. We too, Pope and Cardinals, must always see ourselves reflected in this word of truth. It is a sharpened sword; it cuts, it proves painful, but it also heals, liberates and converts us. For conversion means precisely this: that we pass from being *off the road* to journeying *on God's road*.

May the Holy Spirit give us this grace, today and for ever.

## The Pope and the new Cardinals visit Benedict XVI



Following the celebration of Saturday afternoon's Ordinary Public Consistory, the Holy Father and the 13 new Cardinals present in Rome visited Benedict XVI in the chapel of the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery inside the Vatican during which the Cardinals were introduced individually to the Pope emeritus. Benedict XVI expressed his joy for the visit and blessed the new Cardinals after the recitation of the "Salve Regina".



US Archbishop Wilton Gregory of Washington (right)



Mass with the new Cardinals on the First Sunday of Advent

# Closeness and watchfulness

On Sunday morning, 29 November, the first Sunday of Advent, Pope Francis celebrated Mass in Saint Peter's Basilica with the newly created Cardinals. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's homily, which he shared in Italian.

Today's readings propose two key words for the Advent season: *closeness* and *watchfulness*. God's closeness and our watchfulness. The prophet Isaiah says that God is close to us, while in the Gospel Jesus urges us to keep watch in expectation of his return.

**Closeness.** Isaiah begins by speaking personally to God: "You, O Lord, are our father" (63:16). "Never has anyone heard", he continues, "[of] any God, other than you, who has done so much for those who trust in him" (cf. 64:3). We are reminded of the words of Deuteronomy: who is like the Lord our God, so close to us whenever we call upon him? (cf. 4:7). Advent is the season for remembering that closeness of God who came down to dwell in our midst. The prophet goes on to ask God to draw close to us once more: "O that you would tear open the heavens and come down!" (Is 64:1). We prayed for this in today's responsorial psalm: "Turn again... come to save us" (Ps 80:15, 3). We often begin our prayers with the in-

ends with this prayer: "Come, Lord Jesus". We can say that prayer at the beginning of each day and repeat it frequently, before our meetings, our studies and our work, before making decisions, in every more important or difficult moment in our lives: *Come, Lord Jesus!* It is a little prayer, yet one that comes from the heart. Let us say it in this Advent season. Let us repeat it: "Come, Lord Jesus!"

If we ask Jesus to come close to us, we will train ourselves to be *watchful*. Today Mark's Gospel presented us with the end of Jesus' final address to his disciples, which can be summed up in two words: "Be watchful!" The Lord repeats these words four times in five verses (cf. Mk 13:33-35, 37). It is important to remain watchful, because one great mistake in life is to get absorbed in a thousand things and not to notice God. Saint Augustine said: "*Timeo Iesum transeuntem*" (*Sermons*, 88, 14, 13), "I fear that Jesus will pass by me unnoticed". Caught up in our own daily concerns (how well we know this!), and distracted by so many vain things, we risk losing sight of what is essential. That is why today the Lord repeats: "*To all, I say: be watchful!*" (Mk 13:37). Be watchful, attentive.

Having to be watchful, however, means it is now night. We are not living in broad daylight, but awaiting the dawn, amid darkness and weariness. The light of day will come when we shall be with the Lord. Let us not lose heart: the light of day will come, the shadows of night will be dispelled, and the Lord, who died for us on the cross, will arise to be our judge. Being watchful in expectation of his coming means not letting ourselves be overcome by discouragement. *It is to live in hope.* Just as before our birth, our loved ones expectantly awaited our coming

into the world, so now Love in person awaits us. If we are awaited in Heaven, why should we be caught up with earthly concerns? Why should we be anxious about money, fame, success, all of which will pass away? Why should we waste time complaining about the night, when the light of day awaits us? Why should we look for "patrons" to help advance our career? All these things pass away. Be watchful, the Lord tells us.

Staying awake is not easy; it is really quite hard. At night, it is natural to sleep. Even Jesus's disciples did not manage to stay awake when told to stay awake "in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn" (cf. v. 35). Those were the very times they were not awake: in



the evening, at the Last Supper, they betrayed Jesus; at midnight, they dozed off; at the cock's crow, they denied him; in the morning, they let him be condemned to death. They did not keep watch. They fell asleep. But that same drowsiness can also overtake us. There is a dangerous kind of sleep: it is the *slumber of mediocrity*. It comes when we forget our first love and grow satisfied with indifference, concerned only for an untroubled existence. Without making an effort to love God daily and awaiting the newness he constantly brings, we become mediocre, lukewarm, worldly. And this slowly eats away at our faith, for faith is the very opposite of mediocrity: it is ardent desire for God, a bold effort to change, the courage to love, constant progress. Faith is not water that extinguishes flames, it is fire that burns; it is not a tranquilizer for people under stress, it is a love story for people in love! That is why Jesus above all else detests lukewarmness (cf. Rev 3:16). God clearly disdains the lukewarm.

How can we rouse ourselves from the slumber of mediocrity? With the *vigilance of prayer*. When we pray, we light a candle in the darkness. Prayer rouses us from the tepidity of a purely horizontal existence and makes us lift our gaze to higher things; it makes us attuned to the Lord. Prayer allows God to be close to us; it frees us from our solitude and gives us hope. Prayer is vital for life: just as we cannot live without breathing, so we cannot be Christians without praying. How much we need Christians who keep watch for those who are slumbering, worshipers who intercede day and night, bringing before Jesus, the light of the world, the darkness of history. How much we need worshipers. We have lost something of our sense of adoration, of standing in silent adoration before the Lord. This is mediocrity, lukewarmness.

There is also another kind of interior slumber: the *slumber of indifference*. Those who are indifferent see everything the same, as if it were night; they are unconcerned about those all around them. When

everything revolves around us and our needs, and we are indifferent to the needs of others, night descends in our hearts. Our hearts grow dark. We immediately begin to complain about everything and everyone; we start to feel victimized by everyone and end up brooding about everything. It is a vicious circle. Nowadays, that night seems to have fallen on so many people, who only demand things for themselves, and are blind to the needs of others.

How do we rouse ourselves from the slumber of indifference? With the *watchfulness of charity*. To awaken us from that slumber of mediocrity and lukewarmness, there is the watchfulness of prayer. To rouse us from that slumber of indifference, there is the watchfulness of charity. Charity is the beating heart of the Christian: just as one cannot live without a heartbeat, so one cannot be a Christian without charity. Some people seem to think that being compassionate, helping and serving others is for losers. Yet these are the only things that win us the victory, since they are already aiming towards the future, the day of the Lord, when all else will pass away and love alone will remain. It is by works of mercy that we draw close to the Lord. This is what we asked for in today's opening prayer: "Grant [us]... the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming". The resolve to run forth to meet Christ with good works. Jesus is coming, and the road to meet him is clearly marked: it passes through works of charity.

Dear brothers and sisters, praying and loving: that is what it means to be watchful. When the Church worships God and serves our neighbour, she does not live in the night. However weak and weary, she journeys towards the Lord. Let us now call out to him. Come, Lord Jesus, we need you! Draw close to us. You are the light. Rouse us from the slumber of mediocrity; awaken us from the darkness of indifference. Come, Lord Jesus, take our distracted hearts and make them watchful. Awaken within us the desire to pray and the need to love.



vacation: "God, come to my assistance". The first step of faith is to tell God that we need him, that we need him to be close to us.

This is also the first message of Advent and the liturgical year: we need to recognize God's closeness and to say to him: "Come close to us once more!" God wants to draw close to us, but he will not impose himself; it is up to us to keep saying to him: "Come!" This is our Advent prayer: "Come!" Advent reminds us that Jesus came among us and will come again at the end of time. Yet we can ask what those two comings mean, if he does not also come into our lives today? So let us invite him. Let us make our own the traditional Advent prayer: "Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev 22:20). The Book of Revelation

# The new



# Cardinals

*The following are abridged biographies of the 13 new Cardinals created during the Consistory held on Saturday, 28 November. Coming from eight countries, Italy, Malta, the USA, Brunei, the Philippines, Mexico, Rwanda and Chile, the 13 reflect the universal nature of the Church.*

## MARIO GRECH

Bishop emeritus of Gozo  
Secretary General  
of the Synod of Bishops

Cardinal Mario Grech, 63, was born in Qala, Malta. He completed his studies in philosophy and theology at the Sacred Heart Seminary of Gozo, and was ordained a priest on 26 May 1984. He then studied in Rome, where he obtained a license in canon and civil law at the Lateran University and a doctorate in canon law at the Angelicum.

Upon returning to Malta he exercised his ministry at the Basilica of



the National Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of Ta' Pinu in Gozo. He served as: parish priest in the parishes of Ta' Kerċem and of Saint Lawrence; as Judicial Vicar of the diocese and of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of Malta; as a teacher of canon law at the seminary and as a member of the College of Consultors, of the Presbyteral Council and of the diocesan commissions for theology, family and social communications.

On 26 November 2005 Pope Benedict XVI appointed him Bishop of Gozo, a role he held until 2019. Between 2008 and 2009 he launched the diocesan mission and made several pastoral visits to the Maltese communities in the USA, Albania, Canada, Brazil, Australia and Peru. On 2 October 2019, Pope Francis appointed him Pro-Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops. On 28 April 2020, he was appointed a member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and on 15 September of that same year, Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops.

## MARCELLO SEMERARO

Prefect of the Congregation for the  
Causes of Saints  
Apostolic Administrator of  
Albano, Italy

Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, 72, was born in Monteroni di Lecce, Italy. He received his initial formation at the Pontifical Regional Seminary of Apulia "Pius XI" in Molfetta, and



completed his studies at the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, where he obtained a license and degree in theology. He was ordained a priest on 8 September 1971. He taught theology in various institutes and then ecclesiology at the Pontifical Lateran University until he was appointed Bishop of Oria on 25 July 1998.

In 2001, he served as Special Secretary of the Tenth General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on "The Bishop: Servant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the hope of the world". On 1 October 2004, he was appointed Bishop of Albano. He served first as member then as President of the Commission for the Doctrine of the Faith, Proclamation and Catechesis of the Italian Episcopal Conference, and was appointed a member of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints on 31 January 2009.

On 13 April 2013 he was appointed secretary of the "Council of Cardinals" to assist the Holy Father in governing the universal Church. On 4 November 2013, he was appointed Apostolic Administrator *ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* of the Territorial Abbey of Santa Maria in Grottaferrata, Italy, and on 4 April 2016, Papal Delegate for the Italian Basilian Or-

der of Grottaferrata. He is a member of the Dicastery for Communication and consultor of the Congregation for Oriental Churches. He was appointed Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints ten days before the announcement of his appointment as Cardinal.

## ANTOINE KAMBANDA

Archbishop of Kigali, Rwanda

Cardinal Antoine Kambanda, 62, was born in Nymata, Rwanda. All members of his family, except for one brother, were killed during the war of 1994. He studied philosophy and theology in Kenya before returning to his native Rwanda to complete his theological studies at the Major Seminary of Nyakibanda, in the Diocese of Butare. He was ordained a priest on 8 September 1990 by Saint John Paul II, during the Holy Father's pastoral visit to Rwanda.



Following his ordination he served as an English professor and as Prefect of Saint Vincent Minor Seminary of Ndera, Kigali from 1990 to 1993, and then studied from 1993 to 1999 at the Alfonsiana Academy and the Saint Paul Pontifical College in Rome, obtaining a degree in moral theology. From 1999 to 2005 he served as: director of the diocesan Caritas in Kigali; director of the diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace; professor of moral theology at the Major Theology Seminary in Nyakibanda; and spiritual director at the Major Seminary of Rutongo. He then served as rector of the Major Philosophical Seminary of Kabgayi from 2005 to 2006; and from 2006 he served as rector of the Saint Charles Major Seminary of Nyakibanda, in the Diocese of Butare. On 7 May 2013 he was appointed Bishop of Kibungo and served in that role until 19 November 2018, when Pope Francis appointed him Archbishop of Kigali.

## WILTON DANIEL GREGORY

Archbishop of Washington, USA



Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory, 72, was born in Chicago, Illinois, USA. He studied philosophy at Niles College of Loyola University and theology at Saint Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Chicago on 9 May 1973. He earned a doctorate in Liturgy at the Pontifical University of Sant'Anselmo in Rome.

He served as parish vicar at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish; professor of liturgy at Saint Mary of the Lake Seminary; a member of the archdiocesan Office for the Liturgy; master of ceremonies for Archbishop John Cody of Chicago and his successor Joseph Louis Bernardin from 1980 to 1983. He was appointed titular Bishop of Oliva and Auxiliary of Chicago on 18 October 1983, and was installed as Bishop of Belleville on 10 February 1994. He was appointed Metropolitan Archbishop of Atlanta on 9 December 2004. He served first as Vice-president (1998-2001) and then as President (2001-2004) of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Throughout the duration of his mandate, the crisis brought on by the sexual abuse carried out by some members of the clergy worsened, and under his guidance, the national episcopate promoted concrete initiatives aimed at providing a response to the tragic phenomenon. Within the USCCB he served as: member of the Executive and Administrative Committees, the Committee on Doctrine, and the Committee on International Policy; Chair of: the Committee on Personnel, the Committee for Divine worship, the Committee on the Third Millennium/Jubilee Year 2000 (1998-2001) and the Committee on Liturgy (1991-1993). On 4 April 2019 Pope Francis appointed him Metropolitan Archbishop of Washington.



## Biographies of the new Cardinals

**JOSE FUERTE ADVINCULA**  
Archbishop of Capiz, Philippines



Cardinal Jose Forte Advincula, 68, was born in Dimalag, Philippines. After studying philosophy at Saint Pius X Seminary in Roxas City, he studied theology at Saint Thomas University in Manila. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Capiz on 4 April 1976 and was appointed spiritual director of Saint Pius X Seminary, where he also served as professor and Dean of Studies. Afterwards he studied psychology at De la Salle University in Manila and then canon law, both at Saint Thomas University in Manila and at the Angelicum in Rome, obtaining a license in canon law.

After returning to his country he worked at the Immaculate Conception School of Theology in Vigan, Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia and then at Saint Joseph Regional Seminary of Iloilo in the Diocese of Jaro. He was appointed rector of Saint Pius X Seminary of Capiz in 1995, and became Defender of the Bond, Promotor of Justice and lastly, Judicial Vicar in Capiz. In 1999 he served as the first rector of the newly established Major Seminary of Capiz. One year later he served as parish priest of Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish in Dao. On 25 July 2001 he was appointed Bishop of San Carlos, and received his episcopal ordination on 8 September 2001. On 9 November 2011 he was appointed Archbishop of Capiz. Within the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, he has served as a member of the Commissions for the Doctrine of the Faith, for Social Action, for Justice and Peace and for International Eucharistic Congresses. He also led the Committee for Indigenous Peoples.

**CELESTINO AÓS BRACO**  
Archbishop of Santiago  
de Chile, Chile

Cardinal Celestino Aós Braco, 75, was born in Artaiz, Spain. After studying philosophy in Zaragoza and theology in Pamplona he obtained a license in psychology from the University of Barcelona.

He professed his temporary religious vows as a Capuchin Friar on 15 August 1964 and his perpetual

vows on 16 September 1967. He was ordained a priest on 30 March 1968.

As a priest he served as a teacher and professor in Lecaroz, Navarra and Pamplona, and as vicar in Tudela and Zaragoza.



In 1983 he was sent to Chile, where he served as parish vicar of the Parish of Longaví, Superior of his Community in Santa María de Los Angeles, parish priest of Saint Michael Parish in Viña del Mar, Superior of the community in Recreo, and episcopal vicar for female institutes of consecrated life in the Diocese of Valparaíso. In 2008 he was appointed parish vicar of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish in Los Angeles in the Diocese of Santa María de Los Angeles. He has also served as provincial treasurer of the Capuchins in Chile, Promotor of Justice of the ecclesiastical Tribunal of Valparaíso, Judge and psychologist of the interdiocesan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Concepción, and Treasurer of the Chilean Association of Canon Law. He was appointed Bishop of Copiapó on 25 July 2014 and received his episcopal ordination the following 18 October.

On 23 March 2019 he was appointed Apostolic Administrator *sede vacante et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* of the Archdiocese of Santiago de Chile. On 27 December 2019 Pope Francis appointed him Archbishop of Santiago de Chile.

**CORNELIUS SIM**  
titular Bishop of Putia in Numidia  
Vicar Apostolic of Brunei



Cardinal Cornelius Sim, 69, was born in Seria, Brunei. After obtaining a degree in engineering at Dun-

dee University, Scotland, UK, he worked in the oil industry until at the death of his father, he decided to pursue an adult vocational journey that led him to complete a master's in theology at the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, USA. He was ordained a priest on 26 November 1989. After serving in various parishes, in 1995 he was appointed Vicar General of the Territory of Brunei of the Eastern Diocese of Malaysia, and Apostolic Prefect on 21 November 1997. On 20 October 2004 Saint John Paul II elevated him to the rank of Apostolic Vicar in the Apostolic Vicariate of Brunei, appointing him as the first Apostolic Vicar and assigning him the titular episcopal See of Putia in Numidia. Since 2017, he has been Vice-president of the Episcopal Conference of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei and also served for two years as its General Secretary.

**AUGUSTO PAOLO LOJUDICE**  
Archbishop of Siena - Colle di Val  
d'Elsa - Montalcino, Italy

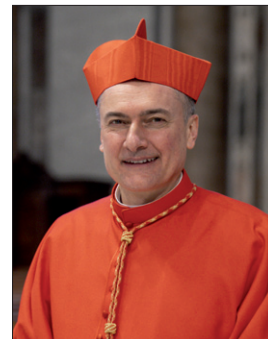
Cardinal Augusto Paolo Lojudice, 56, was born in Rome, Italy. He prepared for the priesthood at the Pontifical Roman Major Seminary and studied philosophy and theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University from 1983 to 1989, obtaining a license in theology with a specialization in fundamental theology. He was ordained a priest on 6 May 1989 for the Diocese of Rome.

He served as parish vicar of the parish of Saint Mary of Good Counsel, parish vicar of San Vigilio Parish, parish priest of Holy Mary



Mother of the Redeemer Parish in Tor Bella Monaca, spiritual director at the Pontifical Roman Major Seminary (2005-2014), and parish priest of San Luca Evangelista al Prenestino. On 6 March 2015, he was appointed titular Bishop of Alba Maritima and Auxiliary Bishop of Rome, receiving his episcopal ordination the following 23 May. He is the Secretary of the Episcopal Commission for Migration of the Italian Episcopal Conference (CEI). On 6 May 2019 Pope Francis appointed him Archbishop of Siena-Colle di Val d'Elsa-Montalcino.

**MAURO GAMBETTI**  
Titular Archbishop of Thisiduo



Cardinal Mauro Gambetti, 55, was born in Castel San Pietro Terme, Bologna, Italy. After obtaining a degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Bologna, in September 1992 he officially began his journey with the Order of Friars Minor Conventual for whom, after a novitiate year, he professed his temporary vows on 29 August 1995, and his perpetual vows on 20 September 1998. He obtained a degree in theology at the Theological Institute of Assisi, and then a license in theological anthropology at the Theological Faculty of Central Italy in Florence. He was ordained a priest on 8 January 2000, and served as animator of youth and vocational ministry for Emilia-Romagna and, from 2005 to 2009 as custos of the Conventual Franciscan community in the Shrine of the Very Holy Crucifix in Longiano. In 2009 he was elected Provincial Minister of the Province of Saint Anthony of Padua. On 22 February 2013 he became General Custodian of the General Custody of the Sacred Convent of Saint Francis in Assisi, a four year term which was reconfirmed in 2017. He was appointed episcopal vicar for pastoral ministry of Saint Francis Papal Basilica and of other places of worship run by the Friars Minor Conventual in the same diocese. He was elected President of the Inter-Mediterranean Federation of Provincial Ministers of his Order in September 2017.

**FELIPE ARIZMENDI ESQUIVEL**  
Archbishop emeritus of  
San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Mexico

Cardinal Arizmendi Esquivel, 80, was born in Chiltepec, Mexico. He studied humanities and philosophy at the seminary of Toluca and theology at the Pontifical University of Salamanca, Spain, where he obtained a license in dogmatic theology and later also specialized in liturgy. He was ordained a priest on 25 August 1963. Within the Diocese of Toluca he served as parish vicar in San Bernardino; prefect of philosophy and teacher at the seminary; parish vicar at Coatepec Harinas

## Biographies of the new Cardinals

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and then at Zacualpan and parish priest of San Andrés Cuexcontitlán in the Otomí indigenous community. He also served as a member of the diocesan Liturgy Commission



from 1967 to 1981, and director of diocesan catechism for three years. Between 1968 and 1970 he served as a member of the first presbyteral council, becoming council secretary from 1974 to 1976 and then council president from 1977 to 1979.

He served as spiritual director (1970-1979) and as prefect of studies (1970-1972) at the minor seminary. He also served as: professor of liturgy and pastoral theology at the major seminary (1968-1991); diocesan coordinator for vocational ministry (1974-1981) and for the commission for social communications (1975-1976); and vicar general (1989-1991). He has served in various organizations on the national level. On 7 February 1991 he was appointed Bishop of Tapachula and was ordained a bishop the following 7 March. During this period he served as Secretary General of the Latin American Episcopal Council. On 31 March 2000 he was appointed Bishop of San Cristóbal de Las Casas.

SILVANO MARIA TOMASI

Titular Archbishop of Asolo  
Apostolic Nuncio  
Special Delegate to the Sovereign  
Military Order of Malta

Cardinal Silvano M. Tomasi, 80, was born in Casoni di Mussolente, Italy. He was educated in Italy and in the USA, where he studied theology and was ordained a priest on 31 May 1965 in the Congregation of the Missionaries of Saint Charles – Scalabrinians. He obtained a bachelor's degree in social sciences and a doctorate in sociology at Fordham University in New York, and was an assistant professor of sociology at the City University of New York and at the New School for Social Research (1970-1974). As the founding director of the Center for Migration Studies, Inc., he established and edited the quarterly journal "International Migration Review", and served as Superior Provincial of his Congregation.

From 1983 to 1987 he served as first director of the Office for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and

Refugees (PCMR) of the US Episcopal Conference. From 1989 to June 1996 he served as secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. On 27 June 1996 he was appointed titular Archbishop of Cercina and Apostolic Nuncio in Ethiopia and Eritrea, Apostolic delegate in Djibouti and Observer at



the African Union. On 24 April 1999 he was appointed Archbishop of the titular See of Asolo and on 23 December 2000 was appointed Apostolic Nuncio in Djibouti. On 10 June 2003 he was appointed Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the Office of the United Nations and Specialized Institutions in Geneva and Permanent Observer to the World Trade Organization, a role he fulfilled until 13 February 2016. On 9 April 2016 Pope Francis appointed him a member of the then Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, now the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

RANIERIO CANTALAMESSA

Preacher of the Papal Household



Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa, 86, was born in Colli del Tronto, Italy. He obtained a doctorate in theology in Freiburg, Switzerland, and a degree in classic literature at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart of Milan. He was ordained a priest on 19 October 1958. Following his studies he became a professor of history of Christian origins and director of the department of religious sciences at the University of the Sacred Heart in Milan. He was a member of the International Theological Commission from 1975 to 1981, and served as a member of the Catholic

delegation for dialogue with the Pentecostal Churches for 12 years. In 1979 he left the field of education to dedicate himself full-time to the ministry of the Word. He was appointed Preacher of the Papal Household by John Paul II in 1980, and confirmed in this position by Benedict XVI in 2005, and by Pope Francis in 2013. In this role, each week during Advent and Lent, he offers a meditation to the Bishop of Rome and the Curia. Because of his particular Apostolic vocation, he has been asked to preach in many countries throughout the world, often by members of other Christian denominations.

He has received honorary degrees, in law from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, in communication science from the University of Macerata, and in theology from the Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. In addition to books and writings of a scientific nature, he has published numerous books on spirituality, resulting from his preaching to the Papal Household, translated into some 20 languages.

ENRICO FEROCI

Titular Archbishop of  
Cures Sabinorum

Parish priest of Holy Mary of the  
Divine Love in Castel di Leva, Italy

the Minor Seminary as vice-rector. In 1976 he became associate parish priest of San Frumenzio ai Prati Fiscali and in 1981, parish priest of the same parish. He has served as: Prefect of the IX Prefecture; Secretary of the Northern Sector; member of the Presbyteral Council, of the Council for economic affairs, and of the College of Consultors of the diocese.

He left San Frumenzio on 1 July 2004 to serve as parish priest of Sant'Ippolito until 1 September 2009, when the Cardinal Vicar appointed him director of the diocesan Caritas. As Caritas director he was also nominated as president of the "Caritas Roma" foundation and of the antiusury foundation "Salus Populi Romani". He then served as president of the "Rome Solidarity Cooperative" and Consultor of the Pontifical Council of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. On 10 November 2017 the Cardinal Vicar appointed him president of the public clerical association of the



Cardinal Enrico Feroci, 80, was born in Pizzoli, Italy. He studied at the Pontifical Roman Minor Seminary and then at the Roman Major Seminary. After studying philosophy, theology and law at the Pontifical Lateran University, he obtained a Master's degree in community education and in psychology from the Pontifical Salesian University and Rome's Sapienza University. He was ordained a priest on 13 March 1965, and served as prefect in the community at the Pontifical Roman Minor Seminary and then assistant and treasurer at the Major Seminary (1966-1968). In 1968 he returned to

Oblate Sons of Our Lady of Divine Love, entrusting him with the responsibility of rector of the Marian Shrine and Rector of the Seminary of Our Lady of Divine Love (1 September 2018). He was appointed Canon and Camerlengo of the Papal Lateran Basilica. On 1 September 2019 he was appointed parish priest of Holy Mary of Divine Love in Castel di Leva. He was ordained a bishop on 15 November 2020 subsequent to his appointment as titular Archbishop of Cures Sabinorum.

## Titles and Deaconries

- Mario Grech, Deaconry of Santi Cosma e Damiano
- Marcello Semeraro, Deaconry of Santa Maria in Domnica
- Antoine Kambanda, Title of San Sisto
- Wilton Daniel Gregory, Title of Immacolata Concezione di Maria a Grottarossa
- Jose F. Advincula, Title of San Vigilio
- Celestino Aós Braco, Title of Santi Nereo ed Achilleo
- Cornelius Sim, Title of San Giuda Taddeo Apostolo
- Augusto Paolo Lojudice, Title of Santa Maria del Buon Consiglio
- Mauro Gambetti, Deaconry of Santissimo Nome di Maria al Foro Traiano
- Felipe Arizmendi Esquivel, Title of San Luigi Maria Grignion de Montfort
- Silvano Maria Tomasi, Deaconry of San Nicola in Carcere
- Raniero Cantalamessa, Deaconry of Sant'Apollinare alle Terme Neroniane-Alessandrine
- Enrico Feroci, Deaconry of Santa Maria del Divino Amore a Castel di Leva.



## Message for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities

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That culture affects especially the most vulnerable, among whom are the persons with disabilities. In the last fifty years, important steps forward have been taken on both the civil and ecclesial levels. Awareness of the dignity of each person has grown, and this has resulted in courageous decisions to promote the inclusion of those experiencing physical and psychological limitations. Yet, on the cultural level, much still stands in the way of this trend. We see it in attitudes of rejection, due also to a narcissistic and utilitarian mentality, that give rise to marginalization that ignores the inevitable fact that *frailty is part of everyone's life*. Indeed, some with even severe disabilities, despite great challenges, have found the way to a beautiful and meaningful life, whereas many "able-bodied" people feel dissatisfied or even desperate. "Vulnerability is intrinsic to the essential nature of humanity" (*Address to the Conference "Catechesis and People with Disabilities"*, 21 October 2017).

Consequently, it is important, on this Day, to promote a *culture of life* that constantly affirms the dignity of every person and works especially to defend men and women with disabilities, of all ages and social conditions.

### 2. The "rock" of inclusion

The present pandemic has further highlighted the disparities and inequalities widespread in our time, particularly to the detriment of the most vulnerable. "The virus, while it does not distinguish between people, has found, in its devastating path, great inequalities and discrimination. And it has only made them worse" (*Catechesis at the General Audience* of 19 August 2020).

For this reason, *inclusion* should be the first "rock" on which to build our house. Although this term is at times overused, the Gospel parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37) continues to be timely. Along the road of life, we often come across wounded people, and these can include persons with disabilities and particular needs. "The decision to include or exclude those lying wounded along the roadside can serve as a criterion for judging every economic, political, social and religious project. Each day we have to decide whether to be Good Samaritans or indifferent bystanders" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 69).

Inclusion should be the "rock" on which to build programmes and initiatives of civil institutions meant to ensure that no one, especially those in greatest difficulty, is left behind. The strength of a chain depends upon the attention paid to its weakest links.

As for ecclesial institutions, I reiterate the need to make available *suitable and accessible means* for handing on the faith. I also hope that these can be made available to those who need them, cost-free to the extent possible, also through the new technologies that have proven



Photo credit: United Nations Social Development Network (unsdn.org)

so important for everyone in the midst of this pandemic. I also encourage efforts to provide all priests, seminarians, religious, catechists and pastoral workers with *regular training* concerning disabilities and the use of inclusive pastoral tools. Parish communities should be concerned to encourage among the faithful a welcoming attitude towards people with disabilities. Creating a fully accessible parish requires not only the removal of architectural barriers, but above all, helping parishioners to develop attitudes and acts of solidarity and service towards persons with disabilities and their families. Our aim should be to speak no longer about "them", but rather about "us".

### 3. The "rock" of active participation

To help our society to "*build back better*", inclusion of the vulnerable must also entail efforts to promote their *active participation*.

Before all else, I strongly reaffirm the right of persons with disabilities

to *receive the sacraments*, like all other members of the Church. All liturgical celebrations in the parish should be accessible to them, so that, together with their brothers and sisters, each of them can deepen, celebrate, and live their faith. Special attention should be paid to people with disabilities who have not yet received the sacraments of Christian initiation: they should be welcomed and included in programmes of catechesis in preparation for these sacraments. No one should be excluded from the grace of these sacraments.

"In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples. All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 120). People with disabilities, both in society and in the Church, also wish to become *active subjects* of our pastoral ministry, and not simply its recipients. "Many persons with disabilities feel that they exist without belong-

ing and without participating. Much still prevents them from being fully enfranchised. Our concern should be not only to care for them, but also to ensure their 'active participation' in the civil and ecclesial community. That is a demanding and even tiring process, yet one that will gradually contribute to the formation of consciences capable of acknowledging each individual as a unique and unrepeatably person" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 98). Indeed, the active participation of people with disabilities in the work of catechesis can greatly enrich the life of the whole parish. Precisely because they have been grafted onto Christ in baptism, they share with him, in their own particular way, the priestly, prophetic, and royal mission of evangelizing *through, with and in the Church*.

The presence of persons with disabilities among catechists, according to their own gifts and talents, is thus a resource for the community. Efforts should be made to provide them with appropriate training, so that they can acquire greater knowledge also in the areas of theology and catechesis. I trust that, in parish communities, more and more people with disabilities can become catechists, in order to pass on the faith effectively, also by their own witness (cf. *Address at the Conference "Catechesis and People with Disabilities"*, 21 October 2017).

"Even worse than this crisis would be the tragedy of squandering it" (*Homily on the Solemnity of Pentecost*, 31 May 2020). For this reason, I encourage all those who daily and often silently devote themselves to helping others in situations of fragility and disability. May our common desire to "*build back better*" give rise to new forms of cooperation between both civil and ecclesial groups and thus build a solid "house" ready to withstand every storm and capable of welcoming people with disabilities, because built on the rock of *inclusion and active participation*.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 3  
December 2020

Franciscus

## Blessings are an essential dimension of prayer

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word for the people who have the habit of cursing, people who always have a bad word, a curse, on their lips and in their hearts. Each of us can think: do I have this habit of cursing like this? And ask the Lord for the grace to change this habit because we have a blessed heart and curses cannot come out of a blessed heart. May the Lord teach us never to curse, but to bless.

Today is the 40th anniversary of the death of four North American missionaries killed in El Salvador:

Maryknoll Sisters Ita Ford and Maura Clarke, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and volunteer Jean Donovan. On 2 December 1980, they were kidnapped, raped and assassinated by a paramilitary group. They were serving in El Salvador within the context of the civil war. With evangelical dedication, and at great risk, they brought food and medicine to the displaced and helped the poorest families. These women lived their faith with great generosity. They are an example for everyone to become faithful missionary disciples.

### SPECIAL GREETINGS

I cordially greet the English-speaking faithful. On our Advent journey, may the light of Christ illumine our paths and dispel all darkness and fear from our hearts. 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 *newlyweds*. I exhort everyone to experience this period of preparation for Christmas with an attitude of watchfulness and generous search for God's will.

## ANGELUS

*At the end of the Angelus on Sunday morning, 29 November, Pope Francis expressed his closeness to the people of Central America who were affected by the recent strong hurricanes. Earlier, he had reflected on the Gospel passage of the First Sunday in Advent. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's words which he offered in Italian.*



## For the populations of Central America struck by hurricanes

Pope Francis' prayer on the First Sunday of Advent

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Good Morning,

Today, the First Sunday of Advent, a new liturgical year begins. In it, the Church marks the passage of time with the celebration of the main events in Jesus' life and the story of salvation. In so doing, as Mother, she illuminates the path of our existence, supports us in our daily affairs and guides us towards the final encounter with Christ. Today's liturgy invites us to live the first "important Season", which is that of Advent, the first of the liturgical year, Advent, which prepares us for Christmas, and is therefore a time of *expectation*, it is a time of *hope*. Expectation and hope.

Saint Paul (cf. 1 Cor 13:9) indicates the object of our expectation. What is it? The "revealing of our Lord" (v. 7). The Apostle invites the Christians of Corinth, and we too, to focus our attention on the encounter with Jesus. For a Christian the most important thing is the continuous encounter with the Lord, being with the Lord. And in this way, accustomed to staying with the Lord of life, we prepare ourselves for the encounter, for being with the Lord for eternity. And this definitive encounter will come at the end of the world. However, the Lord comes every day, so that, with his grace, we might accomplish good in our own lives and in the lives of others. Our God is a God-who-comes, do not forget this: God is a God who comes, who continually comes. He does not disappoint our expectation. The Lord never disappoints. He will perhaps make us wait, he will make us wait a few moments in the dark to allow our expectation to ripen, but he never disappoints. The Lord always comes, He is always by our side. At times he does not make himself seen, but he always comes. He came at a precise moment in history and became man to take on our sins – the feast of the Nativ-

ity commemorates Jesus' first coming in the historical moment –; He will come at the end of times as universal judge; He also comes a third time, in a third manner: He comes every day to visit his people, to visit every man and woman who receives him in the Word, in the Sacraments, in their brothers and sisters. Jesus, the Bible tells us, is at the door and knocks. Every day. He is at the door to our heart. He knocks. Do you know how to listen to the Lord who knocks, who has come today to visit you, who knocks at your heart restlessly, with an idea, with inspiration? He came to Bethlehem, he will come at the end of the world, but every day he comes to us. Be attentive, look at what you feel in your heart when the Lord knocks.

We are well aware that life is made up of highs and lows, of lights and shadows. Each one of us experiences moments of disappointment, of failure and bewilderment. Moreover, the situation we are living in, marked by the pandemic, generates worry, fear and discouragement in many people; we run the risk of falling into pessimism, the risk of falling into closure and apathy. How should we react in the face of all this? Today's Psalm suggests: "Our soul waits for the Lord: he is our help and shield. Yes, our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name" (Ps 33:20-21). That is, the soul awaiting, confidently waiting for the Lord, allows us to find comfort and courage in the dark moments of our lives. And what gives rise to this courage and this trustful pledge? Where do they come from? They are born

of *hope*. And hope does not disappoint, that virtue that leads us ahead, looking at the encounter with the Lord.

Advent is a continuous call to hope: it reminds us that God is present in history to lead it to its ultimate goal, to lead it to its fullness, which is the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ. God is present in the history of humanity. He is the "God-with-us", God is not distant, he is always with us, to the extent that very often he knocks on the door to our heart. God walks beside us to support us. The Lord does not abandon us; He accompanies us through the events of our lives to help us discover the meaning of the journey the meaning of everyday life, to give us courage when we are under duress or suffering. In the midst of life's storms, God always extends his hand to us and frees us from threats. This is beautiful! In the book of Deuteronomy there is a very beautiful passage, in which the Prophet says to the people: "For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is to us?". No-one, only we have this grace of having God close to us. We await God, we hope that he manifests himself, but he too hopes that we manifest ourselves to him!

May Mary Most Holy, woman of expectation, accompany our steps at the beginning of this new liturgical year, and help us to fulfil the task of Jesus' disciples, indicated by the Apostle Peter: And what is this task? To account for the hope that is in us (cf. 1 Pet 3:15).

*After the Angelus the Holy Father continued:*

Dear brothers and sisters, I would like to express again my closeness to the people of Central America, who were struck by strong hurricanes. In particular I recall the Islands of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina, as well as the Pacific coast of the north of Colombia. I pray for all the countries that are suffering due to these disasters.

I renew my warm greeting to you, the faithful of Rome and pilgrims from various countries. In particular, I greet those who, unfortunately in very limited numbers, have come on the occasion of the creation of the new Cardinals, which took place yesterday afternoon. Let us pray for the thirteen new members of the College of Cardinals.

I wish you all a happy Sunday and a blessed Advent journey. Let us try to bring out the good even from the difficult situation that the pandemic imposes upon us: greater sobriety, discreet and respectful attention to our neighbours who may be in need, some prayer also within the family, with simplicity. These three things will help us greatly: greater sobriety, discreet and respectful attention to our neighbours who may be in need, and, very importantly, some moments of prayer within the family, with simplicity. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci*.

