

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

WEEKLY EDITION  IN ENGLISH*Unicuique suum Non praevalerunt*

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Vatican City

Friday, 4 May 2018

Violence on worshippers in Africa

At least 15 people were killed and dozens injured when unidentified gunmen launched grenades and opened fire on worshippers attending morning Mass on Tuesday, 1 May, at a church in Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic.

Fr Albert Toungoumale Baba was among those who died in the attack on Notre Dame de Fatima Church which had also been the target of a 2014 assault that had claimed the life of a priest and several faithful. Although the perpetrators of the most recent attack have not been identified, the country has seen repeated episodes of interfaith violence in recent years.

Meanwhile, in Nigeria 1 May, an attack on attributed to the Islamist militant group, Boko Haram, killed at least 27 people and injured more than 50 at a mosque in Mubi, in the country's northeast. Two suicide bombers, one inside the mosque and another who detonated his device as worshippers fled the scene, were responsible for the carnage. The bombings are the latest in a series of attacks in north-eastern Nigeria.

Cardinal Archbishop of Seoul

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Pope Francis opens the Marian month with the Rosary

Pilgrimage for peace in the world

At the Shrine of Our Lady of Divine Love

GAETANO VALLINI

During World War II the people of Rome made a vow to Our Lady of Divine Love, so that the city be spared from the bombings. Their prayers were answered and the Romans held true to their promise to build a new shrine. Seventy-four years later, on Tuesday, 1 May, Pope Francis opened the Marian month at the feet of that same Virgin, by imploring the gift of peace for Syria, tormented by seven years of war, and for the entire world.

There was no vow this time, just a choral prayer, the recitation of the Rosary, for a world scarred by dozens of conflicts – the piecemeal third world war so often evoked by the Pontiff. Two days earlier, at Sunday's Regina Caeli, the Pope had invited everyone to join him in prayer, looking ahead to this May Day visit; his intentions are found in a precursory admonition from his *Urbi et Orbi* Message on Easter Sunday: from the central loggia of the Vatican Basilica on 1 April, Francis had in fact invoked the "fruits" of peace, reconciliation and hope "upon the entire world, beginning with the beloved and long-suffering land of Syria, whose people are worn down by an apparently endless war"; to which he had added an additional plea: "may the light of the risen Christ illumine the consciences of all political and military leaders, so that a swift end may be brought to the carnage in course, that humanitarian law may be respected and that provisions be made to facilitate access to the aid so urgently needed by our brothers and sisters, while also ensuring fitting conditions for the return of the displaced". These words resonated anew in Francis' first-ever visit to this Shrine so dear to the Roman people. The brief visit, which lasted little more than an hour, was transformed into a pilgrimage under the sign of peace.

Speaking from the Shrine's balustrade upon his arrival, the Pope greeted the thousands of people who had gathered in the square below, and asked them to join him: "I invite you to follow the prayer from here. Let us pray together. We will see each other afterwards. But let us pray". He then paused with groups of scouts, religious, seminarians, sick people, children and other parishioners, before entering the Shrine.

group of 23 elderly patients from a nearby rest home. He greeted them individually; a touching moment comprised of comforting words, requests for blessings, caresses and encouragement. In the next room the Pontiff met children and mothers hosted at two local family shelters. He greeted those present, pausing in particular with the youngest, from whom he received lots of smiles, drawings, poems, and even an in-



Once inside, before the recitation of the Rosary began, the Pope stood and prayed before the icon of Our Lady of the Miracle. The Rosary, with the recitation of the Sorrowful Mysteries, was led by Msgr Marini, Master of Pontifical Liturgical Celebrations. Following the prayer, after imparting the blessing, the Pontiff was given a reproduction of the image venerated in the Shrine. He left a chalice in exchange.

The Pope then went to the first of a number of rooms adjacent to the Church, where he met with a

visitation to lunch – which he did not decline. The Pope was also given a basket of produce from a farming initiative run by one of the homes with the aim of offering dignified work to the disadvantaged, through eco-sustainable agriculture at fair prices.

At the end of the visit, before departing for the Vatican, Pope Francis kept his initial promise: he returned to the balustrade where he thanked all those who were awaiting him and invited them to join him in reciting the *Hail Mary* before he imparted his blessing.

VATICAN BULLETIN

AUDIENCES

Thursday, 26 April

Archbishop Michel Aupetit of Paris, France

Members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria, on a visit *ad limina Apostolorum*:

– Cardinal John Olorunfemi Onaiyekan, Archbishop of Abuja, with Auxiliary Bishop Anselm Umoren, titular Bishop of Scampa

– Bishop William Amove Avenya of Gboko

– Bishop Anthony Ademu Adaji of Idah

– Bishop Peter Iornzuul Adoboh of Katsina-Ala

– Bishop Matthew Ishaya Audu of Lafia

– Bishop Martin Dada Abejide Olurunmolu of Lokoja

– Bishop Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe, CME, of Makurdi



– Bishop Michael Ekwoyi Apochi of Otukpo

– Archbishop Augustine Obiora Akubeze of Benin City

– Bishop Gabriel Ghicakhomo Dunia of Auchi

– Bishop Hyacinth Oroko Egbebo of Bomadi

– Bishop Michael Odogwu Elue of Issele-Uku

– Bishop Donatus Aihmision Ogun, OSA, of Uromi

– Bishop John Oke' Afareha of Warri

– Archbishop Joseph Effiong Ekuwem of Calabar

– Bishop Camillus Raymond Umoh of Ikot Ekpene

– Bishop Donatus Edet Akpan of Ogoja

– Bishop Camillus Archibong Etokudoh of Port Harcourt

– Bishop John Ebebe Ayah of Uyo

– Archbishop Gabriel 'Leke Abegunrin of Ibadan, with Archbishop emeritus Felix Alaba Adeosin Job

– Bishop Felix Femi Ajakaye of Ekiti

– Bishop Ayo-Maria Atoyebi, OP, of Ilorin

– Bishop Jude Ayodeji Arogundade of Ondo

– Bishop John Akinkunmi Oyejola of Osogbo

– Bishop Emmanuel Adetoyese Badejo of Oyo

– Archbishop Ignatius Ayau Kaigama of Jos

From the Holy See Press Office

The Holy See has taken note of the decision issued by judicial authorities in Australia regarding His Eminence Cardinal George Pell. Last year, the Holy Father granted Cardinal Pell a leave of absence so he could defend himself from the relative accusations. The leave of absence remains in effect.

Suspicious deaths of priests in Mexico

The Mexican Episcopal Conference has expressed its "profound solidarity" with the family, fellow clergy and parishioners of 83-year-old Fr Moises Fabila Reyes, a priest of the Archdiocese of Mexico who was reported kidnapped while on vacation in Cuernavaca on 3 April and was found dead on Wednesday, 25 April. An autopsy revealed that the Chaplain emeritus of the National Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe had died of a heart attack. His family had paid a ransom of more than 100,000 US dollars for his release.

Fr Reyes is the 25th priest, and the third within a week, to have been murdered or to have died under suspicious circumstances since December 2012.

Just days before Fr Reyes's body was discovered, 33-year-old Fr Juan Miguel Contreras Garcia was shot dead on the outskirts of Guadalajara, and Fr Ruben Alcantara Diaz, 50, was stabbed to death near Mexico City. Observers have speculated that the killings, rather than having Church-related motivations, are more broadly associated with crime and weakened social values.

Friday, 27 April

Archbishop Eugene Martin Nugent, titular Archbishop of Domnach Sechnaill, Apostolic Nuncio in Haiti

Bishop Eduardo Maria Taussig of San Rafael, Argentina

Bishop Guglielmo Borghetti of Albenga-Imperia, Italy

Saturday, 28 April

Archbishop Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, SJ, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, with Archbishop Giacomo Morandi, titular Archbishop of Cerveteri, Secretary of the said Dicastery

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

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

Bishop Pedro Daniel Martinez Perea of San Luis, Argentina

Monday, 30 April

H.E. Mr Miroslav Lajčák, President of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly, with his entourage

Archbishop Julio Murat, titular Archbishop of Orange, Apostolic Nuncio in Cameroon and in Equatorial Guinea

Archbishop Salvatore Fisichella, titular Archbishop of Voghenza, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization

Msr Luigi Mistò, Secretary of the Administration of the Secretariat for the Economy

CHANGES IN EPISCOPATE

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of Batouri, Cameroon, Fr Marcellin-Marie Ndayemba from the clergy of Douala, Cameroon. Until now he has served as director of the Notre Dame des Nations College in Douala (25 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Ndayemba, 52, was born in Logbikoy, Cameroon. He holds a licence in spiritual theology from the Teresianum, Rome. He was ordained a priest on 13 April 1996. He has served as: teacher at the Saint Paul of Nylon Minor Seminary in Douala; professor and spiritual father at the Paul VI Interdiocesan Major Seminary.

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of Paranaíba, Brazil, Fr Mário Spaki from the clergy of the Diocese of Ponta Grossa, Brazil. Until now he has served as executive secretary of the Regional Episcopal Council Sul 2 of the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil with its headquarters in Curitiba (25 Apr.).

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'No' to the one who divides

The Pope recalls that in Baptism we renounce the devil's temptations

"In the same measure with which I say 'no' to the suggestions of the devil — the one who divides — I am able to say 'yes' to God". Pope Francis emphasized this concept at the General Audience in Saint Peter's Square on Wednesday, 2 May. Addressing the faithful, he continued a series of reflections on the theme of Baptism. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's catechesis, which he gave in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

Continuing the reflection on Baptism, today I would like to focus on the main rites, which take place at the baptismal font.

Let us consider first and foremost the *water*, on which the power of the Holy Spirit is invoked so that it may have the capacity to regenerate and renew (cf. Jn 3:5; Tit 3:5). Water is the matrix of life and wellbeing, whereas its absence causes all fruitfulness to die out, as happens in the desert. Water, however, can also be a cause of death, when one is submerged among its waves or when, in great quantity, it engulfs everything. Lastly, water has the capacity to wash, cleanse and purify.

Beginning with this natural, universally recognized symbolism, the Bible describes God's interventions and promises with the sign of water. However, the power to forgive sins does not lie in the water itself, as Saint Ambrose explained to the newly baptized: "You have seen the water, but water does not heal all things: healing water has the grace of Christ.... The action is of the water, the effectiveness is of the Holy Spirit" (cf. *On the Sacraments*, 1:15).

For this reason the Church invokes the action of the Holy Spirit on the water so that all those "who are buried with Christ in the death of baptism" may rise again with him

to eternal life (cf. *Rite of Baptism for Children*, 54). The prayer of the benediction says that God "made a sign of the waters of baptism" and recalls the principal biblical foreshadowing: the Spirit moved over



The Holy Father greets a group of chefs from Tuscany at the General Audience

the waters of the origin to render them the seed of life (cf. Gen 1:1-2); the waters of the flood signaled the end of sin and the beginning of new life (cf. Gen 7:6-8, 22); through the waters of the Red Sea the chil-

dren of Abraham were freed from slavery in Egypt (cf. Ex 14:15-31). In relation to Jesus, we recall his baptism in the Jordan (cf. Mt 3:13-17), the blood and water that poured from his side (cf. Jn 19:31-37), and the mandate to his disciples to baptize all peoples in the name of the Trinity (cf. Mt 28:19). Strengthened by this memory, we ask God to instill the water of the font with the grace of the dead and Risen Christ (cf. *Rite of Baptism for Children*, 54). And thus, this water is

Once the water of the font has been blessed, the heart must be prepared to accept Baptism. This occurs with the renunciation of Satan and the Profession of Faith, two actions which are closely connected. In the same measure with which I say "no" to the suggestions of the devil — the one who divides — I am able to say "yes" to God who calls me to conform to him in thoughts and deeds. The devil divides. God always unites the community, mankind, into one single people. It is not possible to adhere to Christ by placing conditions. It is necessary to detach oneself from certain bonds in order to truly embrace others. One is either well with God or well with the devil. For this reason, the renunciation and the act of faith go together. It is necessary to burn some bridges, leaving them behind, in order to undertake the new Way which is Christ.

The response to the questions — "Do you renounce Satan, all his works and all his empty promises?" — is made in first person singular: "I do". And the profession of faith is made in the same way: "I believe". I renounce and I believe: this is the foundation of Baptism. It is a responsible choice which demands to be transformed into concrete gestures of trust in God. The act of faith assumes a commitment which Baptism itself will help to keep with perseverance in the various situations and trials of life. Let us recall the ancient wisdom of Israel: "My son, if you come forward to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for temptation" (Sir 2:1): that is, prepare yourself for battle. And the presence of the Holy Spirit gives us the strength to fight well.

Dear brothers and sisters, when we dip our hand into the blessed water — when entering a church, we touch the blessed water — and we make the sign of the Cross, let us think with joy and gratitude of the Baptism we received — this blessed water reminds us of Baptism — and let us renew our "Amen" — "I am happy" — in order to live immersed in the love of the most Holy Trinity.

SPECIAL GREETINGS

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, particularly those from the United Kingdom, India, Thailand, Canada and the United States of America. In a special way, I greet the members of the Catholic Extension Society of the United States, with gratitude for their contribution to the work of rebuilding in Puerto Rico. In the joy of the Risen Christ, I invoke upon you and your families the loving mercy of God our Father. May the Lord bless you all!

A special thought goes to *young people, the elderly, the sick and newlyweds*. Today is the memorial of Saint Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church. May his holiness, associated with a sound doctrine, support the faith and strengthen the Christian witness of every person.

VATICAN BULLETIN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Bishop-elect Spaki, 46, was born in Irati, Brazil. He studied philosophy and journalism and holds a license in Dogmatic Theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome. He was ordained a priest on 3 August 2003. He has served as parochial vicar and rector of the Seminary of Philosophy of São José.

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of Thanh Hóa, Vietnam, Fr Joseph Nguyen Duc Cuong from the clergy of Đà Lạt. Until now he has served as parish priest and dean of the Deanery of Madagui (25 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Nguyen Duc Cuong, 64, was born in Quang Truong, Vietnam. He was ordained a priest on 27 June 1992. He has served as parochial vicar of Tan Thanh, Bao Loc, and parochial vicar and later parish priest of Tan Bui.

The Holy Father united *in persona episcopi* the Diocese of Alexandria-

Cornwall, Canada, with the Archdiocese of Ottawa and appointed Archbishop Terrence Prendergast, SJ, of Ottawa as Bishop of Alexandria-Cornwall (27 Apr.).

Archbishop Prendergast, 74, was born in Montreal, Canada. He was ordained a priest on 10 June 1972. He was ordained a bishop on 25 April 1995, subsequent to his appointment as titular Bishop of Slebte and Auxiliary of Toronto. He was appointed Archbishop of Halifax on 30 June 1998. On 14 May 2007 he was appointed Archbishop of Ottawa.

The Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Dinualdo D. Gutierrez of Marbel, the Philippines (28 Apr.).

The Holy Father appointed as Bishop of Marbel Fr Cerilo Casicas from the clergy of the said Diocese. Until now he has been director and professor at the St John Vianney Seminary in Camaman-an, Cagayan de Oro City, the Philippines (28 Apr.).

Bishop-elect Casicas, 51, was born in Duero, the Philippines. He holds a licence in dogmatic theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He was ordained a priest on 27 October 1994. He has served in parish ministry and as: chancellor bishop; dean of studies at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Seminary; chaplain of the Filipino community in Rome; professor of philosophy.

SPECIAL ENVOY

The Holy Father appointed Cardinal Anders Arborelius, OCD, Bishop of Stockholm, as his Special Envoy to the celebrations for the 1,000th anniversary of the foundation of Buckfast Abbey, Great Britain, which will take place on 24 May (30 Apr.).

NECROLOGY

Bishop Victor Garaygordóbil Berizbeitia, Bishop-Prelate emeritus of Los Rios, Ecuador, at age 102 (24 Apr.).

Science for the good of humanity

The Pontiff recalls the importance of ethical responsibility

In science, "a sense of ethical responsibility is needed" and "certain limits must be respected for the good of humanity itself". This was the crux of the Pope's address to participants in the 26-28 April "Unite to Cure" international conference, whom he received in audience on Saturday morning, 28 April, in the Paul VI Hall. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's remarks.

Dear Friends,
Good morning!

I offer a warm welcome to all of you. I thank Cardinal Ravasi for his kind words of greeting and for having organized this meeting, which deals with a broad variety of topics that go well beyond a theoretical reflection and indicate new directions for the future.

I am gratified to see people from different cultures, societies and religions come together to set out on a common journey of reflection and commitment to care for the sick, since concern for the human person is truly what unites us. The problem of human suffering challenges us to create new means of interaction between individuals and institutions, breaking down barriers and working together to enhance patient care.

My gratitude goes to all who have contributed to this project of

We are increasingly aware that many evils can be avoided if greater attention is paid to the style of life we adopt and the culture we promote. *Prevention* involves taking a farsighted look at human beings and the environment in which we live. It means aiming for a culture of balance, whose essential factors – education, physical activity, diet, the protection of the environment, respect for the "health codes" practiced by the various religions, timely and precise diagnosis, and so many others – can help us to live better, with fewer health risks.

This is all the more important when we think of children and of young people, who are increasingly

"While the Church applauds every effort in research and application directed to the care of our suffering brothers and sisters, she is also mindful that 'not everything technically possible or doable is thereby ethically acceptable'"

We must also acknowledge with deep satisfaction the great strides made by scientific research in discovering and making available new cures, especially those related to the delicate problem of rare, autoimmune and neurodegenerative diseases, as well as of many others. In recent years, advances in cellular research and in the field of regenerative medicine have opened new horizons in the areas of tissue repair

and experimental therapies; this significant chapter in scientific and human progress is alluded to in the theme of your meeting by the terms: *repair* and *cure*. The more you are committed to research, the more relevant and effective these aspects will become, thus enabling an increasingly adequate, incisive and even personalized response to the needs of the sick.

Science is a powerful means for better understanding the natural world and human health. It has opened up new possibilities and provided refined technologies that enable us not only to examine the deepest structure of living organisms, including man, but also to intervene in ways so profound and precise as to make it possible even to modify our DNA. Here we see the need for an increased awareness of our ethical responsibility towards humanity and the environment in which we live. While the Church applauds every effort in research and application directed to the care of our suffering brothers and sisters, she is also mindful of the basic principle that "not everything technically possible or doable is thereby ethically acceptable". Science, like all other human activities, is conscious that certain limits must be respected for the good of humanity itself, and that a sense of ethical responsibility is needed. The true measure of progress, as Blessed Paul VI recalled, is that it is directed to the good of every man and the whole man (cf. *Populorum Progressio*, 14).

If we wish to prepare for the future and to ensure the well-being of each human person, we must grow in sensitivity as the means at our disposal become all the more po-

tent. This is our responsibility to one another and to all living creatures. For human health needs to be considered in a broader context, not only in relation to scientific research but also to our ability to preserve and protect the natural environment. There is also a need to take into consideration every member of our human family, especially those experiencing social and cultural hardships that endanger both their health and their access to adequate care.

Thinking of the future thus means setting out on a twofold path. The first, anchored in an open interdisciplinary approach that engages multiple experts and institutions, can lead to a reciprocal exchange of knowledge. The second is made up of concrete actions on behalf of those who suffer. Both these directions call for a convergence of efforts and ideas that engage various communities: scientists and physicians, patients, families, ethicists, cultural and religious leaders, philanthropists, and representatives of governments and business. I am particularly happy that this process is already underway, and that this Conference has, in a symbolic way, brought many of you together for the benefit of all.

I encourage you, then, to pursue with boldness and determination the ideals that have brought you together and that are already a part of your academic and cultural itinerary. I accompany you and give you my blessing; and I ask you please to pray for me.

Thank you!

Heinrich Stegemann, "The Good Samaritan"



To an association for research into rare diseases

Every life is unique

Emphasizing that "every human life is unique", Pope Francis addressed members of the "Una Vita Rara" ["A Rare Life"] Association, an organization which supports research into rare diseases. He received the group in an audience on Monday morning, 30 April, in the Clementine Hall. The following is a translation of the remarks which the Pontiff delivered in Italian.

Dear Friends,

Thank you for coming! Thanks to the President, Davide's father, who presented your story and also this initiative that you have brought here to Rome in the sign of hope.

I am always pleased to meet associations for research and support concerning rare diseases. Of

course there is heartache for the suffering and the struggles, but I am always struck by – and admire – the will of families to join together in order to face this reality and do something to improve it. You, Giorgio and Rosita, have felt within you the drive to do something for him and for the people stricken by an extremely rare disease, and for their families.

The name you have given your Association, "A Rare Life", says a great deal, because it expresses Davide's reality, but also your reality with him, in a positive, not negative way. The negative side is there; we know that. It is an everyday reality. But, this name says that you know how to look at the positive side: that every human life is unique, and that if the disease is rare or extremely rare, it is life, first and foremost, to be so.

This positive view is a typical "miracle" of love. It is love that does this: it is able to see the good even in a negative situation; it is able to protect the tiny flame in the midst of a dark night.

And love creates another miracle: it helps us to remain open to others, able to share, to be supportive even when one suffers from a disease or a burdensome, exhausting condition in later life.

I think that this very attitude, for which I thank God, also generated the 700-kilometre race which began 10 days ago from your home and arrived today in Rome: a race for life and for hope. I congratulate all those who have given life to this "Rare Words Run" and those who have collaborated.

I thank you again. I will pray for you and for your Association. And you too, please, pray for me. Thank you.

For Davide

Giorgio Boniotto was speaking for many children stricken with rare diseases on Monday morning, when he introduced himself to the Pope as "Davide's father", explaining that his son was adopted in 2003 when he was only 26 days old. Giorgio indicated that the "A Rare Life" Association was established "to raise funds for scientific research on Allan Herndon Dudley Syndrome, the genetic and hereditary disease that struck Davide", a disease so rare that it took 12 years to diagnose. Giorgio also presented the "Rare Words Run" initiative, and explained that Davide was unable to attend the audience: "he had to stay home along with so many kids like Denis, Marco and Sandro". Lorenzo, Mirco and Manuel, however, were able to come and embrace Francis.

The Holy Father's prayer at the death of little Alfie Evans



(Peter Byrne/via AP)

"I am deeply moved by the death of little Alfie. Today I pray especially for his parents, as God the Father receives him in his tender embrace".

With this tweet from his @Pontifex account on Saturday, 28 April, Pope Francis sadly acknowledged the death that morning of Alfie, the 23-month-old British toddler suffering from a severe and unknown neurological disorder that had left him in a vegetative state at a Liverpool hospital. Alfie was at the centre of a widely publicized court battle in which judges ruled against his parents' wishes to keep him on life support.

The same day, the Pontiff addressed the issue of science and ethics at the audience for participants of the international "Unite to Cure" conference in the Vatican. Speaking to the international group of scientists, researchers, medical experts and social workers, the Pope observed that Science "is conscious that certain limits must be respected for the good of humanity itself", and this requires "a sense of eth-

ical responsibility" toward the suffering person. "Not everything technically possible or doable is thereby ethically acceptable", he recalled.

Pope Francis had followed little Alfie's story with particular attention in the weeks before the child's death. He met with Thomas Evans, the toddler's father, on 18 April, and made several appeals on Alfie's behalf, including this tweet: "Moved by the prayers and immense solidarity shown little Alfie Evans, I renew my appeal that the suffering of his parents may be heard and that their desire to seek new forms of treatment may be granted". The Vatican-owned pediatric hospital, Bambino Gesù, had offered to care for Alfie, and the Italian government had bestowed Italian citizenship on the child to facilitate his transfer to Rome, but to no avail.

At the General Audience on Wednesday, 18 April, the Holy Father had appealed for respect for Alfie's life, confirming "that the one Master of life, from the beginning to the natural end, is God!".



the Pontifical Council for Culture and related institutions: the Vatican Science and Faith Foundation (STOQ), the Cura Foundation and the Stem for Life Foundation. In a special way, I thank the various dicasteries of the Holy See that have cooperated in this undertaking: the Secretariat of State – Section for Relations with States, the Pontifical Academy for Life, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Secretariat for Communication.

The work of this Conference is summed up in four verbs: *Prevent, Repair, Cure and Prepare for the Future*. I would like to offer a brief reflection on each of these.

at risk because of illnesses linked to the radical changes of modern culture. We need but reflect on the impact on health caused by smoking, alcohol consumption, and toxins released in the air, in the water and in the soil (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 20). A number of tumors and other health problems in adults could be avoided by adopting preventive measures during childhood. Yet this would require constant global action; this cannot be delegated to social and governmental institutions, but demands commitment on the part of all. It is urgent to foster everywhere a culture of prevention as the first step in health care.

Mass for national reconciliation in Seoul's Myeong-dong Cathedral

May the Summit bear fruit

In the crowded Cathedral Church of the Virgin Mary of the Immaculate Conception, informally known as the Myeong-dong Cathedral, the National Cathedral of the Archdiocese of Seoul, Cardinal Andrew Yeom Soo-jung, Archbishop of Seoul and Apostolic Administrator of Pyongyang, presided at a Mass for national reconciliation on Tuesday, 24 April, in view of the Peace Summit in Panmunjom (held on Friday, 27 April). He was joined by Msgr Marco Sprizzi, head of Nunciature affairs; three Auxiliaries: Bishop Benedict Son Hee-Song, Vicar General, Bishop Timothy Yu Gyoung-chon and Bishop Job Koo Yobi; and Fr Achille Chung, Chair of the Archdiocese's Committee for National Reconciliation. Thomas Han offers the following translation of the Cardinal's homily.

This evening we are celebrating Holy Mass for the reconciliation of our people divided between the South and the North. The faithful of our Diocese have never failed to gather together in this Cathedral of Myeong-dong to celebrate this Holy Mass regularly at 7 o'clock every Tuesday evening over the past 23 years. Especially in recent years we have celebrated this Holy Mass also with the additional intention to keep in our heart and pray for those 57 parishes which had been active in the North before the country was divided.

In our Gospel reading today Jesus declares: "The Father and I are one" (Jn 10:30). These words make us clearly aware of the reason why we have celebrated so ardently the Holy Mass for national reconciliation. It intends to carry out the Church's mission to work so that all of us may be one (cf. Jn 17:21), just as the Father and the Son, our Lord, are one, that is to say, the mission of the Church to realize the reconciliation and unity of our people and their reconciliation and union with God (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 1), just as the Father and the Son are one. This becomes clearer in the light of the Lord's words pronounced at yesterday's Holy Mass: "A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly" (Jn 10:10).

Yes, indeed, my dear Brothers and Sisters, the purpose of celebrating Holy Mass for national reconciliation is thus none other than to accomplish with ardent zeal the mission we have inherited from the Lord as His faithful disciples to work hard so that each and every one of our people in the Korean Peninsula might "have life and have it abundantly".

In observing the wind of peace rise high recently in the Korean Peninsula, I, Archbishop of Seoul and Apostolic Administrator of Pyongyang, cannot but express deep gratitude to God for such Providence that has made it possible, while reflecting upon the fact that God always remembers the fervent petitions we have offered Him through Holy Masses, Rosaries and other prayers.

Particularly in view of the recent fact that dark clouds of tension and unrest are hanging over the Korean Peninsula even with the

risk of war due to the threat of nuclear arms, I believe that the South-North Summit to be held in three days is a very precious opportunity of grace with which God provides our people who are yearning so deeply for true peace. It owes also to the intercession of Holy Mary who takes care of our people with a particular love. I sincerely thank her. And I sincerely thank the recent Popes for having urged the Authorities responsible for building peace in the Korean Peninsula to properly solve the current issues through dialogue, asking all people of good will in the world to pray for this intention, whenever the occasion arose. In particular, Pope Francis said during the homily of the Holy Mass for peace and reconciliation he presided over at this Cathedral of Myeong-dong to conclude his visit to Korea in 2014: "Let us pray, then, for the emergence of new opportunities for dialogue, encounter and the resolution of differences, for continued generosity in providing humanitarian assistance to those in need, and for an ever greater recognition that all Koreans are brothers and sisters, members of one family, one people. They speak the same language" (18 August 2014).

These were indeed prophetic words which still resound in my heart.

At the beginning of this year, too, on the occasion of the exchange of New Year greetings with ambassadors accredited to the Holy See, Pope Francis emphasized: "It is of paramount importance that the effort at dialogue on the Korean peninsula be resumed, in order to find new ways of overcoming the current disputes" (8 January 2018). I heartily thank our Holy Father.

Now, the forthcoming South-North Summit to be held in three days must be a historic opportunity on which the fate of our nation is at stake. The Authorities should focus on nothing other than coming to an agreement to promote

together the common good of our people, and on putting it into practice, disregarding their own political and party interests. They should above all bear in mind that peace, so desired by the entire people, "is not merely the absence of war; nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 78). Therefore, peace in the Korean Peninsula cannot be maintained by nuclear armament at all. It can only be realized by assuring that all people live a life truly worthy of a human being, trusting one another, on the basis of love and justice.

Through this South-North Summit, to be held as the third of its kind since the nation was divided 73 years ago, directly responsible Authorities must act

In this undertaking, before anyone else, we, Christians, each and every one of us, should be an instrument of peace, which brings love, where there is hatred; pardon, where there is offense; union, where there is discord; truth, where there is error; faith, where there is doubt; hope, where there is despair; light, where there is darkness; joy, where there is sadness (*Prayer of Saint Francis*). Peace is, above anything else, a gift of God. Let us assure our Lord that we first will be "the peacemakers" (Mt 5:9) and together implore God through this Holy Mass so that this South-North summit may bring forth real and permanent fruits for true peace and authentic development of our people.

And let us entrust this desire we have long cherished in our hearts



Banner at Seoul City Hall: Korean Peninsula united in a handshake (Getty Images)

with wisdom and discernment to plant the roots of true peace deeply in the Korean Peninsula. This amounts to building relationships of trust for our nation within the international community (cf. Pope Francis, 'Urbi et Orbi' Message, Easter, 1 April 2018) and promoting peace in Asia and in the world. Undoubtedly we do not expect that this will be realized in a day. It is necessary to keep the dialogue going with patience.

I sincerely thank all those authorities who have made painstaking efforts to realize this historic meeting and dialogue of the top leaders of the South and the North. In addition, I wish that God may bless and guide all those who will be engaged in eliminating nuclear weapons and establishing true peace in this land, thereby promoting peace in the world.

to Holy Mary Immaculate, Patron of our Diocese, Mother of God, Mother of the Church, our benevolent Mother who loves our people. As Pope Francis said last 28 January in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major: "How often our heart is a stormy sea, where the waves of our problems pile up and the winds of our troubles do not stop blowing! Mary is our secure ark in the midst of the flood. It will not be ideas or technology that will give us comfort and hope, but our Mother's face, her hands that caress our life, her mantle that gives us shelter. Let us learn how to find refuge, going each day to our Mother".

Beneath your protection, we seek refuge, O Holy Mother of God; do not despise our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.

The holiness of little everyday gestures

With the faithful of Bologna and Cesena-Sarsina

The holiness of "little everyday gestures", which are "like heaven" and "do so much good", was emphasized by Pope Francis in his remarks to the thousands of faithful from the Dioceses of Bologna and Cesena-Sarsina who came to take part in the audience on Saturday morning, 21 April, in Saint Peter's Square, reciprocating the visit Pope Francis made to them last year on 1 October. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's address, which he delivered in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I greet you all with affection. Thank you for your very festive presence! With this visit to the Tomb of Peter you reciprocate the one that I made to your Diocesan Communities last October first. I am very grateful to you for this.

I greet Archbishop Matteo Zuppi of Bologna and Bishop Douglas Regattieri of Cesena-Sarsina. I thank you, dear brothers, for your words which rekindle my memories of that day. I offer my welcome to the civil authorities present here, as well as to the priests, to consecrated people and to the lay faithful, with a special thought for all those who join spiritually in this pilgrimage, in particular the sick and the suffering.

I cherish vivid memories of the encounters that I experienced in your cities. I have not forgotten the welcome that you gave me and the moments of faith and of



prayer that we shared, in which the faithful from every part of your respective Dioceses took part. It was a gift of Providence in order to confirm and strengthen the sense of faith and belonging to the Church, which necessarily seeks to be translated into attitudes and gestures of charity, especially toward the most fragile people. Your Bishops have emphasized how my pastoral visit was a reason for renewed commitment on the part of all the members of your Communities. I thank God for this and I encourage you to continue with courage on this journey you have undertaken.

In the city of Cesena we commemorated the third centenary of the birth of Pope Pius VI, with a thought for Pius VII as well. The memory of these two Bishops of Rome, both from Cesena, constituted for you who belong to that Diocesan Community a propitious occasion to reflect on the journey of evangelization undertaken up to today and on the new missionary aims that await you. As heirs to these and other important figures of pastors and evangelizers, you are called to continue on this path, generously committing yourselves to proclaiming the Gospel to your compatriots and witnessing to it with works, which do not necessarily have to be grand. Christians are a leaven of love, of fraternity, of hope through many little everyday gestures. Little; they are small like leaven, little, but they do so much good.

The occasion of my visit to Bologna was offered, as you well know, by the conclusion of the Diocesan Eucharistic Congress. May the fervour that arose from that ecclesial event, which gathered numerous people around the Eucharistic Jesus, endure over time; may it not abate but grow and bear fruit, leaving an indelible imprint on the journey of faith of your Christian Community. As I recalled in my recent Apostolic Exhortation

Gaudete et Exsultate, "sharing the word and celebrating the Eucharist together fosters fraternity and makes us a holy and missionary community" (n. 142). Indeed, the Eucharist makes up the Church, joins her and unites her in the bond of love and hope. The Lord Jesus established her so that we may abide in him and that we may form one body: from foreign and indifferent that we may become united to one another as brothers and sisters.

The Eucharist reconciles and unites us, because it nourishes the community relationship and encourages attitudes of generosity, of forgiveness, of trust in our neighbour, of gratitude. The Eucharist, which means "giving thanks", enables us to perceive the need for thanksgiving: it helps us understand that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35); it teaches us to give primacy to love and to practice justice in its complete form which is mercy; to know how to always thank, even when we receive what is owed us. Eucharistic worship also teaches us the right balance of values: not to put earthly realities in first place but heavenly goods; to hunger not only for material food, but also for that "which endures to eternal life" (Jn 6:27).

Dear brothers and sisters, the men and women of our time need to encounter Jesus Christ: he is the path that leads to the Father; he is the Gospel of the hope and love that enable us to push on, up to the gift of self. Here is our mission, which is at the same time responsibility and joy, legacy of salvation and gift to be shared. It requires generous willingness, self-

sacrifice and trustful abandonment to divine will. It means following a path of holiness in order to respond with courage to Jesus' call, each according to his or her own particular charism. "A Christian cannot think of his or her mission on earth without seeing it as a path of holiness, for 'this is the will of God, your sanctification' (1 Thess 4:3). Each saint is a mission, planned by the Father to reflect and embody, at a specific moment in history, a certain aspect of the Gospel" (*Gaudete et Exsultate*, n. 19).

I encourage you to make resonate in your communities the call to holiness which pertains to every baptized person and all conditions of life. The complete fulfillment of every aspiration of the human heart consists in holiness. It is a journey which begins at the baptismal font and leads to Heaven, and is carried out day by day by accepting the Gospel in concrete life. With this task and with this missionary impulse aimed at restoring new impetus to the evangelization of your Dioceses, you will follow concretely the exhortations that I addressed to you during my visit. Never tire of seeking God and his Kingdom above all things and of committing yourselves to the service of our brothers and sisters, always in a style of simplicity and fraternity. The Virgin Mary, "the saint among the saints" is "blessed above all others. She teaches us the way of holiness and she walks ever at our side" (*ibid.*, n. 176); may she be the sure point of reference along your pastoral and missionary path.

I thank you again for this meeting. I ask you to please continue praying for me, and I impart my heartfelt Apostolic Blessing, which I extend to all those who comprise your Diocesan Communities. Thank you.



Priest shot dead in the Philippines

Expressing shock and horror, the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines have condemned as an "evil act", the killing on Sunday, 29 April, of 37-year-old Fr Mark Venturan, a priest of the Archdiocese of Tuguegarao. Fr Venturan was shot dead by an unidentified gunman after celebrating Sunday Mass in a gymnasium in Peña Weste, a village on the island of Luzon, in the northern Philippines. He had been blessing children and talking with the faithful outside the gymnasium at the time of the attack.

In a statement, Archbishop Romulo Valles, President of the Episcopal Conference of the Philippines, offered prayers for the victim's family and the local faithful, and appealed to authorities "to act swiftly" to arrest "the perpetrators of this crime and to bring them to justice".

During his 7 years of ministry, Fr Ventura had been known for his anti-mining advocacy in the copper and gold rich region and for helping the indigenous peoples. He is the second Filipino priest to be killed in less than six months.



The Pope began the Marian month in Rome "with a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Divine Love", where he recited the Rosary and offered prayers "in particular for peace in Syria and in the entire world". Addressing the faithful who had gathered in Saint Peter's Square to recite the Regina Caeli on Sunday, 29 April, Pope Francis invited everyone "to pray the Rosary for peace throughout the month of May". After commenting on the day's reading for the Fifth Sunday of Easter, the Pope also expressed his hope "for a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons", and his closeness to the "Christian community of Nigeria" which recently suffered the "killing of a group of faithful, including two priests". The following is a translation of the Pontiff's reflection, which he shared in Italian.

At the Regina Caeli Francis recalls the Korean Peninsula and Nigeria

Prayers for Syria

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good morning!

The Word of God, even on this Fifth Sunday of Easter, continues to indicate to us the way and the conditions to be a community of the Risen Lord. Last Sunday the relationship between the believer and Jesus the Good Shepherd was highlighted. Today the Gospel offers us the moment in which Jesus introduces himself as the true vine and invites us to abide in him so as to bear much fruit (cf. Jn 15:1-8). The vine is a plant whose branches form the whole; and the branches are only fruitful insofar as they are joined with the vine. This relationship is the secret of Christian life and John the Evangelist expresses this with the word 'abide', which is repeated seven times in today's passage. "Abide in me", says the Lord; abide in the Lord.

It means abiding in the Lord in order to find the courage to step outside of ourselves, from our comfort zone, from our limited and protected spaces, in order to cast ourselves into the open sea of the needs of others and to give a wide range to our Christian witness in the world. This courage to step outside ourselves and to advance the needs of others is born from faith in the Risen Lord and from the certainty that his Spirit accompanies our history. One of the ripest fruits that springs from communion with Christ is, in fact, the commitment to charity for our neighbour, loving brothers and sisters with self-sacrifice, to the

point of the final consequences, as Jesus loved us. The dynamism of believers' charity is not the result of strategies; it is not born of external stresses, of social or ideological concerns, but rather, it is born from the encounter with Jesus and from abiding in Jesus. For us he is the vine whose sap – that is, 'life' – we absorb, in order to convey into society a different way of living and self-spending which places the least in first place.

When we are intimate with the Lord, as the vine and branches are intimate and joined, we are able to bear the fruits of new life, of mercy, of justice and peace, derived from the Lord's Resurrection. It is what the Saints did, those who lived Christian life in fullness and lived the witness of charity, because they were true branches of the vine of the Lord. But "to be holy does not require being a bishop, a priest or a religious.... We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves" (Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 14). We are all called to be holy; we must be holy with this richness we have received from the Risen Lord. Every activity – work and rest, family and social life, exercising political, cultural and economic responsibilities – every activity, whether small or great, if lived in union with Jesus and with the attitude of love and of service, is an occasion to live Baptism and Gospel holiness to the fullest.

May Mary, Queen of Saints and example of perfect communion with her Divine Son, help us. May she teach us to *abide in Jesus*, as branches in the vine, and to never distance ourselves from his love. Indeed, we can achieve nothing without him, because our life is the living Christ, present in the Church and in the world.

After reciting the Regina Caeli, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, yesterday, in Krakow, Hanna Chrzanowska, a faithful laywoman, was proclaimed Blessed. She dedicated her life to taking care of the sick in whom she saw the suffering face of

Jesus. Let us give thanks to God for the witness of this apostle of the infirm and let us strive to imitate her example.

I accompany with prayers the positive outcome of last Friday's Inter-Korean Summit and the courageous commitment assumed by the Leaders of both Parties to create a path of sincere dialogue for a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons. I pray to the Lord that the hopes for a future of peace and more fraternal friendship may not disappoint, and that cooperation may continue bearing the fruit of goodness for the beloved people of Korea and for the entire world.

Last week the Christian community of Nigeria was again struck by the killing of a group of faithful, including two priests: let us entrust these brothers and sisters to the God of mercy, that he may help those suffering communities to find concord and peace.

I warmly greet the pilgrims present today; there are truly too many to name each group! But at least I greet those from Braga, Portugal, from India and from Pakistan; the faithful of Pavia, Crema and Vignale; the many young people who have received or will receive Confirmation; and the adolescents from Cuneo, Remedello, Arcore, Valle Olona and Modica and Isello.

A special thought goes to the Confraternities of Assisi, accompanied by their Bishop; to the young animators of the Josephite Fathers of Murialdo; and to those taking part in the National Conference of the Catechumate, promoted by the Italian Episcopal Conference.

Dear brothers and sisters, the day after tomorrow, 1 May, in the afternoon I will begin the Marian month with a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Divine Love. We will recite the Rosary, praying in particular for peace in Syria and in the entire world. I invite you to join spiritually and to continue to pray the Rosary for peace throughout the month of May.

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



"Jesus is the vine" (Russian icon)

President of UN General Assembly

On, Monday, 30 April, the Holy Father received in audience H.E. Mr Miroslav Lajčák, President of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly.

