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a new phase of joy & gladness*

*With the light of Christ filling your lives
and wiping away any darkness.*

***Wishing you a happy CHRISTMAS &
a healthy NEW YEAR 2021***

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**"Glory to God in the highest; peace on earth for
God is blessing humankind." - Luke 2:14**

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Carlo Acutis: Eucharistic God-with-us

Covid -19 has raised serious concerns among the faithful about the presence of *Emmanuel* - 'God with us.' It is often the case that the death of our dear and loved ones raises doubts about the omnipresence and goodness of God. But shockingly this pandemic has been instrumental in making us reflect over the notion of death throughout this year which has, in turn, amplified our doubts about the presence of God.

On the one hand, suffering as caused by the pandemic raises doubts about God as *Emmanuel* - God with us. On the other hand, it also brings us to the greater awareness of God's presence amidst suffering. We need to understand that God is *always* with us, all the more during the moments of our suffering.



One young boy sets a great model for us to become conscious of *God with us* in the Eucharist both when life is magnificently good and when life is thoroughly in distress. You must have guessed it. Yes, I am speaking of Carlos Acutis, a young Italian who died in 2006, and was recently beatified in Assisi this year. He received his First Holy Communion when he was only seven years old. Though his parents had him baptized, they did not bring him up in the Catholic faith. It was his curiosity that led him to develop a deep desire for the Eucharistic Lord. He had never missed Mass since the day he had received his First Holy Communion.

Having himself experienced *God with us* in the Eucharist, he wanted to bring back people to experience the living God and he thought that the Eucharistic miracles would do that.

With his persistence, he dragged his parents to all the places where the Eucharistic miracles took place and took photographs for his website that he himself had designed and also had learnt to operate on his own. He brought back his parents and thousands more to have God experience.

Sadly, when he was fifteen, he was diagnosed with Leukaemia and died within a week. He had suffered and yet he never murmured about his short life or suffering. Fr Sandro Villa, who administered the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick says that he received the communion as though he had been waiting for it with great devotion and composure. In fact Carlos would say, "The Eucharist is my highway to heaven." The boy was buried in Assisi according to his desire, where he was also beatified.

Blessed Carlos Acutis is an inspiration for us to see that God is with us in the Eucharist. The Eucharist itself is the gift of God who had decided to send his Son to partake in the suffering of humanity. God never abandons his people when they suffer.

Covid-19 has shown us very clearly how we have messed up things in life. God cannot be actually blamed for our misapprehension and our wrong doings. However, God cannot be silent when we have been messing things around us. Recall the incarnation of Christ. We were sinners and we had forgotten God and had deviated from Him. God out of his goodness, even without our asking, had longed to send his Son and did send Him to save us.

In the Christmas Mass 2019 Pope Francis said: "Christmas reminds us that God continues to love us all, even the worst of us. To me, to you, to each of us, he says today: I love you and I will always love you, for you are precious in my eyes. God does not love you because you think and act the right way. He loves you, plain and simple. His love is unconditional; it does not depend on you. You may have mistaken ideas, you may have made a complete mess of things, but the Lord continues to love you."

A Hopeful Christmas and A Healthy New Year 2021.

Fr Dr Ambrose Pitchaimuthu
National Director (PMO-India)

Carlo Acutis

A computer geek on his way to sainthood



Carlo Acutis, a Catholic Italian teenager who died in 2006, was beatified on October 10 in Assisi. Acutis, a gamer and computer programmer, loved soccer and the Eucharist, has become the subject of interest around the world.

In his homily, Cardinal Vallini, the pontifical legate for the Basilica of St Francis, hailed Carlo Acutis as a model of how young people can use technology at the service of the Gospel to “reach as many people as possible and help them know the beauty of friendship with the Lord.”

For Carlo, Jesus was “the strength of his life and the purpose of everything he did,” the cardinal said. “He was convinced that to love people and do them good you need to draw energy from the Lord. In this spirit he was very devoted to Our Lady,” he added.

“His ardent desire was also that of attracting as many people to Jesus, making himself herald of the Gospel above all with the example of life.”

At a young age, Carlo taught himself how to program and went on to create websites cataloguing the world's Eucharistic miracles and Marian apparitions. “The Church rejoices, because in this very young Blessed the Lord's words are fulfilled: ‘I have chosen you and appointed you to go and bear much fruit.’ And Carlo ‘went’ and brought the fruit of holiness, showing it as a goal reachable by all and not as something abstract and reserved for a few,” the cardinal said.

“He was an ordinary boy, simple, spontaneous, likeable ... he loved nature and animals, he played football, he had many friends of his age, he was attracted by modern means of social communication, passionate about computer science and, self-taught, he built websites to transmit the Gospel, to communicate values and beauty,” he said.

Carlo Acutis was born May 3, 1991, to Andrea Acutis and Antonia Salzano in London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Greater London, England, where his parents were working. Just a few months later, his parents moved to Milan, Italy.

As a teenager, Carlo was diagnosed with leukaemia. He offered his sufferings for Pope Benedict XVI and for the Church, saying “I offer all the suffering I will have to suffer for the Lord, for the Pope, and the Church.” Carlo Acutis died at the age of 15 on October 12, 2006, of a galloping leukaemia, leaving in the memory of all those who knew him a great feeling of emptiness and great admiration for his brief but intense testimony of authentic Christian life.

From the day he received his First Communion at the age of 7 he never missed an appointment with daily Holy Mass. He always tried,

either before or after the Eucharistic celebration, to pause before the Tabernacle to adore the Lord, always truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. Our Lady was his great confidant and he never failed to honour her by reciting the Holy Rosary every day. Carlo's modern and up-to-date ways combined perfectly with his profound Eucharistic life and Marian devotion, which helped to make him that





very special boy who everyone admires and loves.

To quote Carlo's own words: "Our goal must be the infinite and not the finite. The Infinity is our homeland. We are always expected in Heaven". Another phrase of his was: "*All people are born as originals but many die as photocopies*". To move towards this goal and not "die as photocopies" Carlo said that our compass must be the Word of God that we have to measure up to constantly. But to reach such a lofty goal very special measures are necessary: the Sacraments and prayer. In particular, Carlo placed the Sacrament of the Eucharist at the centre of his life and he called it "my highway to Heaven".

From a young age, Carlo seemed to have a special love for God, even though his parents weren't especially devout. His mom said that before Carlo, she went to Mass only for her First Communion, her confirmation, and her wedding. But as a young child, Carlo loved to pray the rosary. After he made his First Communion, he went to Mass as often as he could, and he made Holy Hours before or after Mass. He went to confession weekly.

'There was fruit of Carlos devotion in his life. His witness of faith led to a deep conversion in his mom, because, according to the priest promoting his cause for sainthood, he "managed to drag his

relatives, his parents to Mass every day. It was not the other way around; it was not his parents bringing the little boy to Mass, but it was he who managed to get himself to Mass and to convince others to receive Communion daily."

As a teenager, he was known for defending kids at school who got picked on, especially disabled kids. When a friend's parents were getting a divorce, Carlo made a special effort to include his friend in the Acutis family life.

He had a great devotion to the Holy Eucharist. He promoted Eucharistic miracles, especially through the website he built to promote them. On the site, he told people that "the more often we receive the Eucharist, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven."

Just like any other young teenager, Carlo loved playing video games. His console of choice was a PlayStation or possibly a PS2, which was released in 2000, when Carlo was nine. We know he only allowed himself to play games for an hour a week, as a penance and a spiritual discipline, but he wanted to play much more.

Carlo was very gifted with everything related to the world of computers so that both his friends and adults with computer engineering degrees considered him a genius. Everyone was amazed at his ability to understand the secrets of computers that are normally only accessible to those who

have specialized university degrees. Carlo's interests involved computer programming, film editing, website creation, editing and laying out small publications, to helping those most in need especially children and the elderly.

Even with such a short life, Carlo has come to be known for his prowess in computer programming and his identity as a "computer geek." He took on his most exhaustive work when he was just 11 years old. At that time, he decided he would digitally catalogue every miracle



Fratelli tutti

A short summary of Pope Francis's social encyclical

*By Isabella Piro**

Fraternity and social friendship are the ways the Pontiff indicates to build a better, more just and peaceful world, with the contribution of all: people and institutions. With an emphatic confirmation of a 'no' to war and to globalized indifference.

What are the great ideals but also the tangible ways to advance for those who wish to build a more just and fraternal world in their ordinary relationships, in social life, politics and institutions?

This is mainly the question that *Fratelli tutti* is intended to answer: the Pope describes it as a “Social Encyclical” (6) which borrows the title of the “Admonitions” of Saint Francis of Assisi, who used these words to “address his brothers and sisters and proposed to them a way of life marked by the flavour of the Gospel” (Par 1). The Encyclical aims to promote a universal aspiration toward fraternity and social friendship. In the background of the Encyclical is the Covid-19 pandemic which, Francis reveals, “unexpectedly erupted” as he “was writing this letter”. But the global health emergency has helped demonstrate that “no one can face life in isolation” and that the time has truly come to “dream, then, as a single human family” in which we are “brothers and sisters all” (Par 8).

Chapter One: dark clouds cover the world

In the first of eight chapters, which is entitled “Dark Clouds over a Closed World”, the document reflects on the many distortions of the



contemporary era: the manipulation and deformation of concepts such as democracy, freedom, justice; the loss of the meaning of the social community and history; selfishness and indifference toward the common good; the prevalence of a market

logic based on profit and the culture of waste; unemployment, racism, poverty; the disparity of rights and its aberrations such as slavery, trafficking, women subjugated and then forced to abort, organ trafficking (see Par 10-24). It deals with global problems that call for global actions, emphasizes the Pope, also sounding the alarm against a “culture of walls” that favours the proliferation of organized crime, fuelled by fear and loneliness (see Par 27-28).

Chapter Two: strangers on the road

To many shadows, however, the Encyclical responds with a luminous example, a herald of hope: the Good Samaritan. The second chapter, “A stranger on the road”, is dedicated to this figure. In it, the Pope emphasizes that, in an unhealthy society that turns its back on suffering and that is “illiterate” in caring

for the frail and vulnerable (see Par 64-65), we are all called – just like the Good Samaritan – to become neighbours to others (see Par 81), overcoming prejudices, personal interests, historic and cultural barriers. We all, in fact, are co-responsible in creating a society that is able to include, integrate and lift up those who have fallen or are suffering (see Par 77). Love builds bridges





and “we were made for love” (Par 88), the Pope adds, particularly exhorting Christians to recognize Christ in the face of every excluded person (see Par 85).

Chapter Three: vision of an open world

The principle of the capacity to love according to “a universal dimension” (see Par 83) is also resumed in the third chapter, “Envisaging and engendering an open world”. In this chapter Francis exhorts us to go “‘outside’ the self” in order to find “a fuller existence in another” (Par 88), opening ourselves up to the other according to the dynamism of charity which makes us tend toward “universal fulfilment” (Par 95). In the background – the Encyclical recalls – the spiritual stature of a person's life is measured by love, which always “takes first place” and leads us to seek better for the life of the other, far from all selfishness (Par 92-93). The sense of solidarity and of fraternity begin within the family, which are to be safeguarded and respected in their “primary and vital mission of education” (Par 114).

The right to live with dignity cannot be denied to anyone, the Pope again affirms, and since rights have no borders, no one can remain excluded, regardless of where they are born (see Par 121) In this perspective the Pontiff also calls us to consider “an ethics of international relations” (see Par 126), because every country also belongs to foreigners and the goods of the territory cannot be denied to those who are in need and come from another place. Thus, the natural right to private property will be secondary to the principal of the universal destination of created

goods (see Par 120). The Encyclical also places specific emphasis on the issue of foreign debt: subject to the principal that it must be paid, it is hoped nonetheless that this does not compromise the growth and subsistence of the poorest countries (see Par 126).

Chapter Four: heart open to the world

To the theme of migration, the latter, entitled “A heart open to the whole world”. With their lives “at stake” (Par 37), fleeing from war, persecution, natural catastrophes, unscrupulous trafficking, ripped from their communities of origin, migrants are to be welcomed, protected, supported and integrated. Unnecessary migration needs to be avoided, the Pontiff affirms, by creating concrete opportunities to live with dignity in the countries of origin. But at the same time, we need to respect the right to seek a better life elsewhere. In receiving countries, the right balance will be between the protection of citizens' rights and the guarantee of welcome and assistance for migrants (see Par 38-40). Specifically, the Pope points to several “indispensable steps, especially in response to those who are fleeing grave humanitarian crises”: to increase and simplify the granting of visas; to open humanitarian corridors; to assure lodging, security and essential services; to offer opportunities for employment and training; to favour family reunification; to protect



minors; to guarantee religious freedom. What is needed above all – the document reads – is global governance, an international collaboration for migration which implements long-term planning,

going beyond single emergencies, on behalf of the supportive development of all peoples (see Par 129-132).

Chapter Five: better politics

The theme of the fifth chapter is “A better kind of politics”, which represents one of the most valuable forms of charity because it is placed at the service of the common good (see Par 180) and recognizes the importance of people, understood as an open category, available for discussion and dialogue (see Par 160). This is the populism indicated by Francis, which counters that “populism” which ignores the legitimacy of the notion of “people”, by attracting consensuses in order to exploit them for its own service and fomenting selfishness in order to increase its own popularity (see Par 159). But a better politics is also one that protects work, an “essential dimension of social life”. The best strategy against poverty, the Pontiff explains, does not simply aim to contain or render indigents inoffensive, but to promote them in the perspective of solidarity and subsidiarity (see Par 187).

The task of politics, moreover, is to find a solution to all that attacks fundamental human rights, such as social exclusion; the marketing of organs, tissues, weapons and drugs; sexual exploitation; slave labour; terrorism and organized crime. The Pope makes an emphatic appeal to definitively eliminate human trafficking, a “source of shame for humanity”, and hunger, which is “criminal” because food is “an inalienable right” (Par 188-189).

The politics we need, Francis also underscores, is a politics centred on human dignity and not subjected to finance because “the marketplace, by itself, cannot resolve every problem”: the “havoc” wreaked by financial speculation has demonstrated this (see Par 168).

Hence, popular movements have taken on particular relevance: as true “torrents of moral energy”, they must be engaged in society with greater coordination. In this way – the Pope states – it will be possible to go beyond a Policy “with” and “of” the poor (see Par 169).

Another hope present in the Encyclical regards the reform of the UN: in the face of the predominance of the economic dimension, a task of the United Nations will be to give substance to the concept of a “family of nations” working for the common good, the eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights. Tireless recourse “to negotiation, mediation and arbitration” – the Papal Document states – the UN must promote the force of law rather than the law of force (see Par 173-175).

Chapter Six: dialogue and friendship

From the sixth chapter, “Dialogue and friendship in society”, further emerges the concept of life as the “art of encounter” with everyone, even with the world's peripheries and with original peoples, because “each of us can learn something from others. No one is useless and no one is expendable” (see Par

215). Then, of particular note, is the Pope's reference to the miracle of “kindness”, an attitude to be recovered because it is a star “shining in the midst of darkness” and “frees us from the cruelty ... the anxiety ... the frantic flurry of activity” that prevail in the contemporary era (see Par 222-224).

Chapter Seven: renewed encounter

The value and promotion of peace is reflected on in the seventh chapter, “Paths of renewed encounter”, in which the Pope underlines that peace is connected to truth, justice and mercy. Far from the desire for vengeance, it is “proactive” and aims at forming a society based on service to others and on the pursuit of reconciliation and mutual development (see Par 227-229). Thus, peace is an “art” that involves and regards everyone and in



which each one must do his or her part in “a never-ending task” (see Par 227-232).

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is linked to peace: we must love everyone, without exception – the Encyclical reads – but loving an oppressor means helping him to change and not allowing him to continue oppressing his neighbour (see Par 241-242).

Forgiveness does not mean impunity, but rather, justice and remembrance, because to forgive does not mean to forget, but to renounce the destructive power of evil and the desire for revenge. Never forget “horrors” like the Shoah, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, persecutions and ethnic massacres – exhorts the Pope. They must be remembered always, anew, so



as not be become anaesthetized and to keep the flame of collective conscience alive. It is just as important to remember the good (see Par 246-252).

Just War

Part of the seventh chapter, then, focuses on war: “a constant threat”, that represents “the negation of all rights”, “a failure of politics and of humanity”, and “a stinging defeat before the forces of evil”. Moreover, due to nuclear chemical and biological weapons that strike many innocent civilians, today we can no longer think, as in the past, of the possibility of a “just war”, but we must vehemently reaffirm: “Never again war!” The total elimination of nuclear arms is “a moral and humanitarian imperative”. With the money invested in weapons, the Pope suggests instead the establishment of a global fund for the elimination of hunger (see Par 255-262).

Death penalty

Francis expresses just as clearly a position with regard to the death penalty: it is inadmissible and must be abolished worldwide. Not even a murderer loses his personal dignity” – the Pope writes – “and God himself pledges to guarantee this” (Par 263-269). There is emphasis on the necessity to respect “the sacredness of life” (Par 283) where today “some parts of our human family, it appears, can be readily sacrificed”, such as the unborn, the poor, the disabled and the elderly (Par 18).

Chapter Eight: religion and fraternity

In the eighth and final chapter, the Pontiff focuses on “Religions at the service of fraternity in our world” and emphasizes that terrorism is not due to religion but to erroneous interpretations of religious texts, as well as “policies linked to hunger, poverty, injustice, oppression” (Par 282-283). a journey of peace among religions is possible and that it is therefore necessary to guarantee religious freedom, a fundamental human right for all believers (see Par 279).

The Encyclical reflects, in particular, on the role of the Church: she does not “restrict her mission to the private sphere”, it states. While not engaging in politics she does not, however, renounce the political dimension of life itself, attention to the common good and concern for integral human development, according to evangelical principals (see Par 276-278)

Lastly, Francis quotes the “Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together”, which he signed on 4 February 2019 in Abu Dhabi, along with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyib: from that milestone of interreligious dialogue, the Pontiff returns to the appeal that, in the name of human fraternity, dialogue be adopted as the way, common cooperation as conduct, and mutual knowledge as method and standard (see Par 285).

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10 Things to know about Fratelli Tutti

Fr. Patrick Briscoe, OP



This third encyclical from Pope Francis is inspired by St. Francis.

Today, October 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the Holy Father has released a new encyclical letter, addressed to all men and women of good will. Here are 10 things you need to know about that letter.

01. The name of the letter, *Fratelli Tutti*, means “All brothers,” and is a direct quotation from the Admonitions of St. Francis. The admonition reads, “Let us all, brothers, consider the Good Shepherd who to save His sheep bore the suffering of the Cross” (Admonitions, 6.1).

02. The letter is about fraternity and social friendship. Pope Francis writes, “It is my desire that, in this our time, by acknowledging the dignity of each human person, we can contribute to the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity. Fraternity between all men and women” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 9).

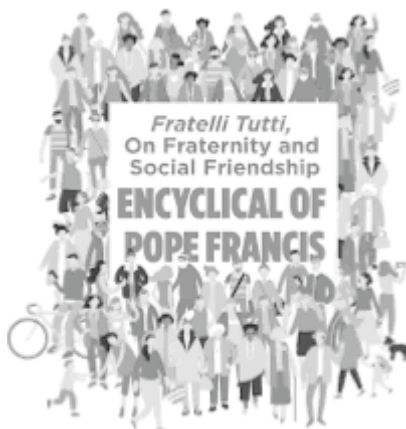
03. St. Francis, the inspiration for the Pope's encyclical letter on the environment, *Laudato Si'*, also inspired *Fratelli Tutti*. The Holy Father attests, “Francis was able to welcome true peace into his heart and free himself of the desire to wield power over others. He became one of the poor and sought to live in harmony with all. Francis has inspired these pages” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 4).

04. The Holy Father states that the possibility for human fraternity is grounded in the inalienable dignity of every human being. He writes, “Social friendship and universal fraternity necessarily call for an acknowledgement of the worth of every human person, always and everywhere” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 108). If the dignity of persons with disabilities, those experiencing poverty or those who lack access to education is threatened, “fraternity will remain just another vague ideal” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 109).

05. The Holy Father, without intending an exhaustive analysis, proposes a list of “dark clouds” that inhibit the cultivation of human fraternity. Among these are: the rise of “throw-away” culture, threats to the dignity of migrants, the COVID-19 pandemic, aggression fueled by digital communication, and a loss of the love of wisdom. (*Fratelli Tutti*, 9-55).

06. The theological heart of the letter is a meditation on the parable of the Good Samaritan. Pope Francis teaches, “The parable eloquently presents the basic decision we need to make in order to rebuild our wounded world. In the face of so much pain and suffering, our only course is to imitate the Good Samaritan” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 66). The Holy Father urges us to not be among the robbers nor to be among those who abandon the weak, but to “be Good Samaritans who bear the pain of other people's troubles rather than fomenting greater hatred and resentment” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 77).

07. Human fraternity will be nourished by a re-discovery of love. Love, which unites by drawing a person out of his/her own self, allows us to experience the depths and fullness of life. Pope Francis writes, “Love, then, is more than just a series of benevolent actions. Those actions have their source in a union increasingly directed



Time to rethink our life and systems: Pope

By Fr Benedict Mayaki, SJ



the Holy See's desire that the organization serves “as a sign of unity between States and an instrument of service to the entire human family.”

Choose what matters

As the world continues to face challenges stemming from the deadly coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis highlights that the ongoing crisis has exposed our human fragility and has called into question our economic,

Highlights of Pope Francis' video message to the 75th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on 25 September 2020, calling for reforms, multilateralism, cooperation and respect for human dignity in his video message to the 75th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

health and social systems. More so, it has brought to the fore the need to realize the right of every person to basic health care.

Reiterating his reflections during the Extraordinary Moment of Prayer on 27 March, Pope Francis said the pandemic calls us to seize this time of trial to “choose what matters and what passes away,” and “separate what is necessary from what is not.” He urged that we choose the path that leads to the consolidation of multilateralism, global responsibility, peace and inclusion of the poor.

True solidarity

The current crisis, the Pope notes, shows us that solidarity cannot be “an empty word or promise.” It also shows us “the importance of avoiding every temptation to exceed our natural limits.” In this regard, the Pope considers the effect of the pandemic on the labour market driven by an increasing robotization and artificial intelligence

This year marks a special anniversary for the UN—it is the seventy-fifth year from the signing of the UN Charter in San Francisco in 1945. On Monday, representatives of the Member States gathered in a high-level event to commemorate the anniversary, with other activities scheduled throughout the week.

With the Covid-19 health crisis still limiting global movement, participation at the event was mostly virtual as world leaders sent in pre-recorded video messages. The Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin also addressed the General Assembly via a video message on Monday.

Commitment towards a better future

Pope Francis, on Friday addressed the representatives of the 193-member world body. In a video message, the Pope appealed for a joint commitment towards a better future through multilateralism and collaboration among states.

He also noted that this 75th anniversary is a fitting occasion to express



(AI), and stressed the need for “new forms of work that are truly capable of satisfying human potential while affirming our dignity.”

To ensure this, the Pope proposes “a change of direction” that involves a more robust ethical framework capable of overcoming “today’s widespread and quietly growing culture of waste.” He called for a change in the dominant economic paradigm which aims only to expand profit. At the same time, he urged businesses to make offering jobs to more people one of their main objectives.

The culture of waste

Pope Francis points out that at the origin of the culture of waste, there is a “gross lack of respect for human dignity, the promotion of ideologies with reductive understandings of the human person, a denial of the universality of fundamental human rights and a craving for absolute power and control.” These, he states, are “an attack against humanity itself.”

The Pope laments the many violations of fundamental human rights that “offer us a frightening picture of a humanity abused, wounded, deprived of dignity, freedom and hope for the future.” The Pope characterises as “intolerable, yet intentionally ignored by many”, the instances of religious persecution, humanitarian crises, the use of weapons of mass destruction, internal displacement, human trafficking and forced labor, and the “great numbers of people being forced to leave their homes”.

Humanitarian responses

The Pope notes that international efforts to respond to crises begin with great promise but many subsequently fail due to a lack of the political support necessary to succeed or “because individual states shirk their responsibilities and commitments.” To combat this, he is appealing to the international community to ensure that institutions are truly effective in the struggle against these challenges and reiterated the Holy

See’s commitment to playing its part to help the situation.

In responding to the inequalities between the rich and the poor, Pope Francis proposes a reconsideration of the role of economic and financial institutions. He recommends an economic model that “encourages subsidiarity, supports economic development at the local level,



and invests in education and infrastructure benefitting local communities.” He also calls on the international community to put an end to economic injustices through greater fiscal responsibility among nations and “an effective promotion of the poorest” including offering assistance to poorer and highly-indebted nations.

Children particularly affected by Covid-19

The Pope goes on to highlight the devastating effects of the Covid-19 crisis on children, including unaccompanied migrants and refugees, pointing out that instances of child abuse and violence have seen an increase. Calling on civil authorities, Pope Francis urges them to be “especially attentive to children who are denied their fundamental rights and dignity, particularly their right to life and to schooling.”

Turning his thoughts toward the family, he laments the weakening of the “natural and fundamental group unit of society” by ideological colonialism which produces a feeling of “lacking roots” in its members. He also spoke for the advancement of women, pointing out that at every level of society, women now play an important role and offer their contribution towards the promotion of the common good.

Peace, not warfare

Pope Francis talks of the "need to break with the present climate of distrust" marked by the



erosion of multilateralism and the development of new forms of military technology which irreversibly alter the nature of warfare. In

particular, he singles out nuclear deterrence which "creates an ethos of fear based on the threat of mutual annihilation" and calls for dismantling the perverse logic that links security to the possession of weaponry while generating profit for the arms industry. On this front, he calls for increased support for the principal international and legal

instruments on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and prohibition.

Post-pandemic society

"We never emerge from a crisis just as we were. We come out either better or worse," Pope Francis affirmed.

He also adds that the present crisis has demonstrated the limits of our self-sufficiency as well as our common vulnerability. It has also shown that "we cannot live without one another, or worse still, pitted against one another." Therefore, at this critical juncture, "it is our duty to rethink the future of our common home and our common project" by strengthening multilateralism and cooperation between states.

Concluding, Pope Francis emphasizes that the UN was established to bring nations together. Therefore, the institution should be used to "transform the challenge that lies before us into an opportunity to build together, once more, the future we all desire." ♦

Continued from Page 4: Carlo Acutis

in the world that had to do with the bread and wine that is transformed in the Catholic Mass.

The project started when he asked his parents to travel with him to all the places where Eucharistic miracles took place — where the bread and wine of the Eucharist physically turned into flesh and blood, or where the Eucharist was preserved beyond natural means.

The Church recognized 136 of these miracles across five continents, which made the prospect of visiting each one rather slim. So Carlo did the next best thing: he took his technological skills and built a digital museum of these Eucharistic miracles.

"To be always united with Jesus, this is my plan of life". These few words Carlo Acutis, the boy who died of leukaemia, said outline the distinctive feature of his short life: living with Jesus, for Jesus, in Jesus. (...) "I am happy to die because I lived my life without wasting even a minute of it on anything displeasing to God". And Carlo asks of us the same thing: he asks us to

spread the Gospel through our lives, so that each of us can be a beacon to light the journey of others.



This teenager sociologically similar to his schoolmates was an authentic witness that the Gospel can be lived fully even by a teenager. In his short life, oriented to that encounter with Jesus, was like a light not only to shine on the path of those who knew him, but also of those who will come to know his story.

Source: *catholicnewsagency.com*;
www.synod.va/content/synod2018;
grottonetwork.com ♦

Parables: How to read and pray on them - 1

Vatican's new directory for catechesis

By Fr Ralph DCosta



Everyone likes to read or hear a good story, by a storyteller that can keep his audience attentive, tell a good story where the characters are few and well defined, the plot not too intricate but ending in a surprise so that the hearer goes home with something to remember beyond the ordinary.

Jesus was such a story teller, using stories from daily life but which led one to enter into and build up the Kingdom of God. He really was a master story teller. Go through the Gospels and you will find these stories used by Jesus in his teachings. We call them Parables.

We use them even today, and they have hardly lost their appeal or their efficacy. Perhaps, at times, we fail to discover their charm and appeal, and hence their efficacy, because we fail to discover in them the real life story, taken up as we are with moralizing their teachings or hunting for doctrinal conclusions from what Jesus was trying to teach his hearers to bring them into the Kingdom of God. Perhaps we make too much of an effort to spiritualize every detail of the story, make it otherworldly and forget to understand that Jesus was primarily challenging his hearers with a story from their daily life that carried a deeper meaning that they were to discover

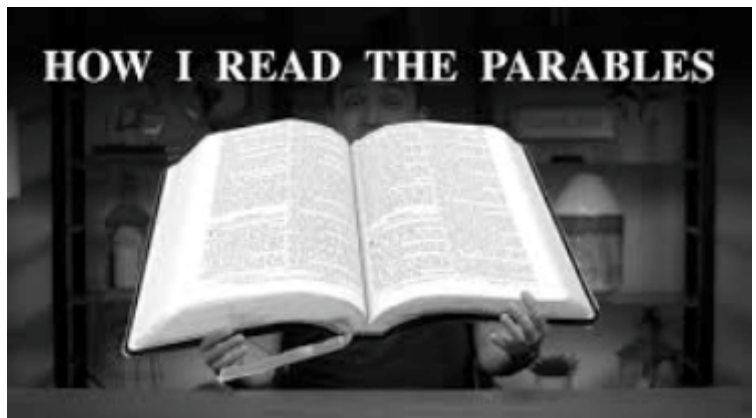
and put into practice as they went about in their human situation.

Could we get back to these earthly teachings of Jesus and ponder them to find the heavenly treasure hidden in them before we spiritualize the very mundane things that Jesus is using to bring us to the divine. His hearers often understood the earthly meaning but stopped at it, and failed to follow up on Jesus introduction to his story: The Kingdom of God is like..." We jump to the

spiritualizing of the message before grasping the message.

The parables that Jesus recounts to us are a personal sharing of his finding God present and active in his own creatures of our daily reality to share his love, his goodness, his wisdom, his qualities and his gifts with us as we go about our daily existence in our quest for Him and the Kingdom of God in our life.

Jesus speaks his parables in a historical context to specific groups of people using their life situation with which they are quite familiar so as to challenge them to find the meaning God gives to that situation, accept it and live it in their present situation. Hence it is a part of his initial message on beginning his mission of announcing the Good



SAINT OF THE MONTH - I

St Godfrey of Amiens

1066 – 1115

Feast Day: November 8

Godfrey was born in the territory of Soissons, of noble and pious parents: his father, Fulco, was no sooner a widower than he consecrated himself to God in the monastic habit. Godfrey was educated from five years of age, when he was weaned, in the Benedictine monastery of mount St Quintin's, under the care of the holy abbot Godefroid, who was his godfather, and uncle to b. Ida, countess of Boulogne and Namur, and mother to Godfrey and Baldwin, the kings and conquerors of Jerusalem. The saint, in his youth always gave the better part of his meals to the poor, and sometimes did not make his appearance at all in the refectory, spending his time in some private oratory; and he often watched great part of the night in prayer. The streams of tears which frequently watered his cheeks at his prayers were proofs of the tender compunction and devotion of his soul. At twenty-five years of age, having made good proficiency in the sacred studies, he was ordained priest by the bishop of Noyon, though only obedience could overcome his fears of approaching the holy altar.

In 1096 he was made the abbot of Nugent-sous-coucy, a dilapidated abbey in the province of champagne, where the community numbered a mere half a dozen monks who had become very lax in their discipline. He rebuilt, restored and revitalized the abbey, bringing people to the order



of St. Benedict, and order to the people. Under Godfrey's direction, monastic discipline and order were restored and the community began to flourish.

News of his success spread and Godfrey was urged to accept the position of superior of the renowned abbey of Saint-Remi. This he refused, saying "God forbid I should ever desert a poor bride by preferring a rich one!" Soon after, he was chosen abbot of Nogent in champagne. Under his direction this house flourished in such regularity of discipline, that two abbots resigned their dignities to learn to serve god there more perfectly. He was also offered the bishopric of

Reims in 1097. When he was offered the bishopric of Amiens in 1104, he still considered himself unworthy of the trust. However, King Philip and the council of Troyes each ordered him to take it, which he did.

Godfrey was noted for his rigid austerity with himself, those around him and in his approach to his mission as bishop. He was an enforcer of clerical celibacy. He was also a fierce lifelong opponent of drunkenness and simony, which led to an attempt on his life. For most of his time as bishop, he wished to resign and retire as a Carthusian monk. In 1114 he moved to a monastery, but a few months later his people

SAINT OF THE MONTH - II

St Edmund Campion

25.01.1540 – 01-12.1581

Feast Day: 01 December

Edmund was born in London, the son of a bookseller. He was raised a Catholic, given a scholarship to St. John's College, Oxford, when fifteen, and became a fellow when only seventeen. His brilliance attracted the attention of such leading personages as the Earl of Leicester, Robert Cecil, and even Queen Elizabeth. He took the Oath of Supremacy acknowledging Elizabeth head of the church in England and became an Anglican deacon in 1564.

He grew up amid the religious upheavals of the sixteenth century following the break between Henry VIII and Rome. Campion went to the local grammar school and then, age 12, to the new Christ's Hospital school for orphans and the poor. In August 1553, he was chosen to make a ceremonial address to Queen Mary as she passed through London. Campion was able academically and went to St John's College, Oxford, at the age of 15 (which was not unusual in those days). He was awarded his degree in 1564 and became a Fellow of the University. In 1566, he was again chosen to make a formal speech of welcome before the new Queen, Elizabeth I, when she visited Oxford in 1569. Much impressed with Campion, Elizabeth ensured he had friends and patrons at Court. Under her promised patronage his path to power and prestige was assured.

Campion first thought to follow that path, being ordained originally as an Anglican deacon in 1568. But his heart was rooted in the Catholic faith.



In 1571 Campion travelled to Douai, France, to study in the Catholic seminary. Several years later he walked to Rome, where he was accepted by the Jesuits. The next years Campion taught in Vienna and Prague.

On 16th June 1580, Fr Robert Parsons SJ landed at Dover, the Superior of the new mission. At this time, they were strictly forbidden to practice their religion. On 24th June, Campion followed, disguised as a jewel merchant.

He could only do this travelling in disguise, celebrating the sacraments

in secret, and avoiding the many spies who sought him out. Unlike Robert Parsons, he carefully avoided any political involvement on behalf of his religion. After preaching at secret Catholic meetings in Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, and Lancashire, Campion created a sensation by having 400 copies of his *Decem rationes* ("Ten Reasons"), a pamphlet denouncing Anglicanism, distributed before a service in St Mary's, Oxford (June 27, 1581) Campion moved between the houses of Catholics (the Recusants) who practised their religion in secret. At one such house, Lyford Grange in Oxfordshire, he was betrayed and arrested on 17th July 1581, barely a year after he had set foot in England.).

He was imprisoned and tortured in the Tower of London and tried at Westminster Hall in November 1581. Condemned for

treason, he was dragged on a hurdle to Tyburn where he was martyred. He was hanged and then, before he was dead, his genitals cut off, his entrails ripped out and burned before him, his head hacked off and his body quartered. Throughout his ordeal Campion exhibited religious zeal and great courage. Campion Hall at Oxford was named for him.

Historians of all schools are agreed that the charges against Campion were wholesale sham. They praise his high intelligence, his beautiful gaiety, his fiery energy, his most chivalrous gentleness. He had renounced all opportunity for a dazzling career in a world of master men. Every tradition of Edmund Campion, every remnant of his written words, and not least his unstudied golden letters, show us that he was nothing less than a man of genius; truly one of the great Elizabethans, but holy as none other of them all.



He was beatified by Pope Leo XIII on 9 December 1886, and canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1970. Relics of him are preserved in Rome and Prague, in London, Oxford, Stony Hurst and Roehampton.

Source: www.britannica.com/biography; www.ignatianspirituality.com; www.catholic.org; jesuitinstitute.org; www.newadvent.org ♦

Continued from Page 14: St Godfrey of Amiens



demanding his return, and he agreed. He also took part in the council of Châlons.

At Amiens, his palace was truly the house of a disciple of Christ. Every day he served at his own table thirteen poor people, and washed their feet. To attend the most loathsome lepers seemed his

greatest pleasure. He exerted an episcopal vigour and firmness in reproving obstinate and powerful sinners, and in reforming his clergy, and especially the monastery of St Valery, though this work cost him a journey to Rheims, and another to Rome. As he was going to Rheims to confer with his metropolitan upon certain matters of importance, he was taken ill of a fever on the road; and, having received the holy sacraments, joyfully departed to our lord on the 8th of November, in 1118, in the abbey of St Crispin at Soissons, and was there

interred. His name is honoured in the roman martyrology.

Source: www.catholicnewsagency.com; www.catholic.net/op/articles; www.catholicreadings.org ♦

towards others, considering them of value, worthy, pleasing and beautiful apart from their physical or moral appearances” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 94).

08. The Holy Father appeals for a new kind of politics, one aimed truly at seeking the common good of all. He writes, “Lack of concern for the vulnerable can hide behind a populism that exploits them demagogically for its own purposes, or a liberalism that serves the economic interests of the powerful” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 155). This new politics must have at its center charity, animated by the willingness to make sacrifices and the openness required to be truly unitive.

09. Pope Francis calls for a total eradication of the death penalty. He writes, “Today we state clearly that ‘the death penalty is inadmissible’ and the Church is firmly committed to calling for its abolition worldwide” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 263). Arguing

that not even murderers surrender their fundamental dignity, Pope Francis sees the death penalty as an offense against the inalienable dignity of the person.



10. The Holy Father argues that religious witness to God contributes to the common good of society. Pope Francis writes, “The effort to seek God with a sincere heart, provided it is never sullied by ideological or self-serving aims, helps us recognize one another as travelling companions, truly brothers and sisters” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 274).

The encyclical letter closes by commending, along with St. Francis, the example of Blessed Charles Foucauld. Pope Francis notes, “Only by identifying with the least did he come at last to be the brother of all.” Such should be the goal of every Christian.

Source: <https://aleteia.org/2020/04/10> ♦



News: repent and believe, the Kingdom of God is at hand!

For us today it is not the Jesus of history who is speaking to us through the pages of the Gospel because our historical situation is different. It is

the Risen Jesus, who, in and through His Church, speaks to us in our contemporary situation and its changes to convert our ways of thinking to His so that it becomes the GOOD NEWS and enables us to witness/share the God News in the daily circumstances of life with those we meet in these current circumstances Mt 3:34.

What was said by the Jesus of history brought about, on one side, conflict and rejection of Him, and, on the other, repentance and belief, thus revealing the worldly kingdom and by contrast the Kingdom of God. The parable then is an essential element of the mission of Jesus, respectful of the individual's liberty and creative of that social order where truth and justice operate through compassion and love. ♦

The story of Christmas Spiders



In a quiet cottage in the woods lived a gentle widow and her eight children. The widow worked very hard to keep her children warm and well-fed, but money was not plentiful.

When the air grew crisp, and the snow began to fall, the widow knew Christmas was coming. But instead of feeling joyful as the holiday approached, she felt sadness and sorrow. She knew that she did not have enough money to buy her children any gifts to open on Christmas morning.

"I cannot afford new toys or books," she thought, walking home through the woods one night. "What will I give my children?"

On Christmas Eve the family ate their simple Christmas dinner together, and the widow tried to conceal her worries. After tucking her excited children snugly into bed, she pulled her chair close to the fire and tried to erase the visions of their little disappointed faces from her mind. After all, what fun is Christmas morning without gifts to open?



"Perhaps a Christmas tree would make my children happy," the widow sighed.

She put on her coat and hat and walked through the woods in search of the right tree. She chose a

small but beautiful evergreen, chopped it down with her husband's axe, and brought it to the cottage.

For hours, the widow carefully decorated the fragrant tree branches with colourful fruits, bits of ribbon, and Christmas cookies. Then she blew out her candle and went to bed, hoping the tree would make her children's empty Christmas a little bit brighter.

While the tired widow slept, tiny spiders crept from the cracks and corners of the cottage. They had watched her hard at work, decorating the tree for her children. Onto the branches they jumped, spinning delicate strands of silky web which gracefully covered the small tree from trunk to top. It was a beautiful sight.



When the family awoke on Christmas morning, they could not believe their eyes. The webs of silk had been turned into pure silver, covering the tree with dazzling brightness!

What had happened was that during the night, Santa Claus had come with gifts for the children and saw the tree covered with spider webs. He smiled as he saw how happy the spiders were, but knew how heartbroken the widow would be if she saw her tree covered with spider webs. So he turned the silky webs into pure, shining silver.

As the widow watched her children sing and dance around the beautiful shining tree, she knew it would be a wonderful Christmas after all!

From that day forward, people have hung strands of shiny silver tinsel on their Christmas trees in honour of the poor widow and her tiny Christmas spiders.

By Stephanie Herbe:

<https://people.howstuffworks.com/culture-traditions> ♦

Prayer inseparable from solidarity with poor

Pope Francis' message for World Day of the Poor

By Lydia O'Kane

In his message for the Fourth World Day of the Poor, observed on 15 November, Pope Francis calls on people to keep their gaze fixed on the poor, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, and warns against succumbing to a “whirlwind of indifference”.



shadows,” he says.

The Pope laments a frenetic pace of life that leads people into a “whirlwind of indifference”. He adds that it is only when something happens that upsets the course of our lives do our eyes become capable of seeing the goodness

of the saints “next door”.

Covid-19 and the Saints next door

Devoting a significant part of his message to the Covid-19 pandemic, Pope Francis draws attention to the many “outstretched hands” in the form of doctors and nurses who have been caring for patients in these difficult months. He also commends the outstretched hands of administrators, pharmacists, priests, volunteers and others who have given of themselves day and night and without fanfare.

“The present experience,” says the Pope, “has challenged many of our assumptions. We feel poorer and less self-sufficient because we have come to sense our limitations and the restriction of our freedom.”

“The loss of employment, and of opportunities to be close to our loved ones and our regular acquaintances, suddenly opened our eyes to horizons that we had long since taken for granted.”

However, Pope Francis stresses, “now is a good time to recover the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility



The theme for the 4th World Day of the Poor is “Stretch forth your hand to the poor”, taken from the book of Sirach.

Drawing from this text, Pope Francis observes that “its author presents his advice concerning many concrete situations in life, one of which is poverty. He insists that even amid hardship we must continue to trust in God.”

The Pope points out that from these pages we see, “prayer to God and solidarity with the poor and suffering are inseparable.”

He also notes that “time devoted to prayer can never become an alibi for neglecting our neighbour in need.”

The gift of Generosity

“Generosity that supports the weak, consoles the afflicted, relieves suffering and restores dignity to those stripped of it, is a condition for a fully human life,” Pope Francis says.

“The power of God's grace cannot be restrained by the selfish tendency to put ourselves always first.”

In his message, the Pope acknowledges that “keeping our gaze fixed on the poor is difficult”, but, he underlines, it is “more necessary than ever if we are to give proper direction to our personal life and the life of society.”

Whirlwind of indifference

“We cannot feel 'alright' when any member of the human family is left behind and in the

Scripturae Sacrae affectus

Pope Francis has written an Apostolic Letter for the 1600th anniversary of the death of Saint Jerome the “great doctor and father of the Church, who put the Bible at the centre of his life.”

In the new apostolic letter --- released on 30 September 2020 --- the pope says that St Jerome bequeathed to the Church “devotion to the Sacred Scripture, a 'living and tender love' for the written word of God”.

In *Scripturae Sacrae affectus* (“Devotion to Sacred Scripture”) the Pope praises St Jerome for his “profound knowledge of the Scriptures, his zeal for making their teaching known, his skill as an interpreter of texts, his ardent and at times impetuous defence of Christian truth, his asceticism and harsh eremitical discipline [and] his expertise as a generous and sensitive spiritual guide.”

A life devoted to Christ and his word

Reviewing the life of the fourth century saint, Pope Francis notes that Jerome devoted himself entirely “to Christ and His word,” working unceasingly “to make the divine writings accessible to others.”

Pope Francis dwells on Jerome's love of Scripture, which focused on the “humble character of God's revelation” more than on “the narrative and poetic genius of the Bible.”

Jerome approached the Scriptures in an even “more systematic and distinctive way” than the other early Christian Fathers, emphasising the necessity of knowing the Bible in order to know Christ, the Pope says.

Study steeped in obedience

Jerome's study of the Scripture, the Pope says, was steeped in obedience, both to God himself and “to those in the Church who represent



the living Tradition that interprets the revealed message.”

Pope Francis notes that many people find the Bible difficult to read – not because of illiteracy, but because they have not learned the skills necessary to make the sacred text intelligible.

“This shows the need for an interpreter,” writes Pope Francis, adding, “Jerome can serve as our guide... because he leads every reader to the mystery of Jesus.”

The Vulgate translation

The Pope notes that Jerome's translation of the Scriptures into Latin helped to shape western culture.

The Pope also explains the importance of translation as a form of “hospitality”: a translator, he writes, “is a bridge builder,” helping people of different languages and cultures not only communicate with, but also understand one another.

Devotion to Rome and the Popes

Saint Jerome was also known for his deep devotion to Rome and to the Popes. “At a turbulent time in which the seamless garment of the Church was often torn by divisions among Christians, Jerome looked to the Chair of Peter as a sure



Example of love for the Scriptures

Concluding his letter, Pope Francis appeals to everyone to take Saint Jerome as an example of love for Sacred Scripture and devotion to study.

“I would like to pose a challenge to young people in particular,” he writes: “Begin exploring your heritage.”

Pope Francis expresses his hope that we might “love what Jerome loved,” rediscover his writings, and allow ourselves “to be touched by his robust spirituality.”

Jerome points to the Blessed Virgin Mary as “the model of prayerful reading of the Scriptures,” encouraging us to “entrust ourselves to Our Lady who, more than anyone, can teach us how to read, meditate, contemplate, and pray to God, who tirelessly makes Himself present in our lives,” the Pope closes.

----- novenanews.com ♦

reference point,” Francis recalls.

Jerome himself “was often involved in bitter disputes for the cause of the faith,” which he often carried out with great passion, the Pope notes. Nonetheless, although willing to fight vehemently for the faith, Jerome loved and desired peace.

Continued from Page 19: Prayer inseparable from solidarity with poor

for others and the world'.”

In a word, he continues, “until we revive our sense of responsibility for our neighbour and for every person, grave economic, financial and political crises will continue.”

Outstretched hands of love

Returning to this year's theme, the Pope notes that it is “a summons to responsibility and commitment as men and women who are part of our one human family.”

Even during this pandemic, which has forced people into isolation, the Word of God “constantly impels us to acts of love,” Pope Francis says.

He also describes how the command: 'Stretch forth your hand to the poor' “challenges the attitude of those who prefer to keep their hands in their pockets and to remain unmoved by situations of poverty in which they are often complicit.”

“Some hands are outstretched to accumulate

money by the sale of weapons that others, including those of children, use to sow death and poverty... Others still, parading a sham respectability, lay down laws which they themselves do not observe.”

Our final goal is love



Concluding his message, the Pope recalls that in the book of Sirach it is written, 'In everything you do, remember your end'.

He continues by saying, “the 'end' of all our actions can only be love. This is the ultimate goal of our journey, and nothing should distract us from it.”

Even a smile, remarks Pope Francis, is something we can share with the poor and is a “source of love and a way of spreading love. An outstretched hand, then, can always be enriched by the smile of those who quietly and unassumingly offer to help, inspired only by the joy of living as one of Christ's disciples.” ♦

Vatican issues statement on end-of-life care, condemns euthanasia



The Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) has issued a statement strongly reaffirming the Church's ban on euthanasia as “intrinsically evil.”

The CDF statement, released on September 22, comes in response to a new drive for legal acceptance of physician-assisted suicide, particularly in European nations.

The Vatican statement is addressed not merely to the issue of euthanasia, but to the broader issue of “the care of persons in the critical and terminal phases of life.” The statement itself acknowledges: “It is widely recognized that a moral and practical clarification regarding care of these persons is needed.”

In treating patients, the CDF says, caretakers are called to “reveal the original and unconditional love of God, the source of the meaning of all life.” Loving care for the person, and respect for the person's dignity, are the major imperatives.

In cases of terminal illness, the Vatican

statement says: “The impossibility of a cure where death is imminent does not entail the cessation of medical and nursing activity. Responsible communication with the terminally ill person should make it clear that care will be provided until the very end: “to cure if possible, always to care.”

The CDF argues that the case for acceptance of euthanasia is based on a “false compassion,” reflecting a notion that suffering must be avoided at all costs. “In reality,” the statement insists, “human compassion consists not in causing death, but in embracing the sick, in supporting them in their difficulties, in offering them affection, attention, and the means to alleviate their suffering.”

Palliative care, offered to ease pain, is an important part of the proper treatment, the CDF acknowledges. But “palliative care is not in itself enough unless there is someone who 'remains' at the bedside of the sick to bear witness to their



unique and unrepeatable value.”:

Experience confirms that the pleas of gravely ill people who sometimes ask for death are not to be understood as implying a true desire for

euthanasia; in fact, it is almost always a case of an anguished plea for help and love.

Euthanasia, the CDF states plainly, “is an act of homicide that no end can justify.” Laws that allow for assisted suicide “strike at the foundation of the legal order,” and cooperation with euthanasia is itself morally unjustifiable.

While deliberately causing the death of an individual is never licit, the Vatican statement also insists that unduly aggressive medical treatments, when they simply prolong the process of death, are also an offense against the dignity of the patient. “Therefore, when death is imminent and inevitable, “it is lawful... to renounce treatments that provide only a precarious or painful extension of life.”

The CDF notes that “do not resuscitate” orders can “cause serious problems” by leading medical personnel to forego necessary treatment.



While useful in avoiding unduly aggressive medical treatment, such orders can conflict with “the duty to protect the life of patients in the most critical stages of sickness.”

In end-of-life situations, the CDF says, the patient must always be provided with food and hydration “as long as the body can benefit from them.” Palliative care — even

if it involves sedation powerful enough to cause a loss of consciousness — is recommended to ease suffering and “to ensure that the end of life arrives with the greatest possible peace and in the best internal conditions.”

Because of the increasing acceptance of euthanasia in the secular world, and pressure for health-care personnel to conform, the Vatican statement encourages Catholic institutions and communities to work for the protection of the conscience rights of health-care workers. ♦

Pope defends family but upholds gay right to civil union

Pope Francis often has expressed openness to the idea of laws recognizing civil unions, including for gay couples, to protect their rights.

The pope's comments in a brief passage in the documentary film, "Francesco," premiered in Rome Oct. 21, are similar to the position he took while archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina, and echo remarks he has made in several interviews during his pontificate: "Marriage" is only between a man and a woman, but civil union laws could provide legal protection for couples in long-term, committed relationships.

Speaking in Spanish in the film, Pope Francis says, "Homosexual people have a right to be in a family. They are children of God and have a right to a family. Nobody should be thrown out or be made miserable over it. What we have to create is a civil union law. That way they are legally covered."

Pope Francis repeatedly has said publicly that parents should not and must not disown a child who is gay, and, on several occasions, he has spoken about the rights all people have to have a family.

News Round-Up

Card Oswald Gracias re-nominated to Council of Cardinals

Pope Francis has re-nominated Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, to the Council of Cardinals that advises him on the reform of the Church's administrative systems.

Pope Francis also re-nominated the 75-year-old Cardinal Gracias to the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts, the highest body in the Church on matters regarding Canon Law, said an Oct 21 official communique from Indian bishops' conference.

The Vatican body for Legislative Texts has the responsibility to propose amendments and changes in the Canon Law and is entrusted with giving authentic interpretations of the Canon Law Code.

Cardinal Gracias has been a member of the Council of Cardinals since Pope Francis announced its formation in April 2013, a month after his election as pope. ♦

Bishops on hunger strike

Three Catholic bishops sat on a day-long hunger strike in front of the state secretariat in Kerala on Oct. 20, accusing the communist-led provincial government of denying the constitutional rights meant for Christian educational institutions.

Bishop Joshua Mar Ignathios of Mavelikkara, the chairman of education commission of Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council (KCBC), its vice-chairman Bishop Paul Antony Mullassery of Kollam and Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Tharayil of Changanassery spent the day without food or water.

The government "curtails our rights as a religious minority to run education institutions through arbitrary orders and amendments to the existing laws," said Archbishop Maria Calist Soosa Pakiam of Trivandrum, who launched the strike.

He complained that more than 3,000 teachers in state-aided schools under Church's management were not paid salaries in the five years. He said denying salaries in the time of the Covid-19 pandemic was an "act of cruelty." The protest aims to seek "no special favors from the state. It is to ensure our constitutional rights," he said. ♦

Catholic cemetery vandalized

Police in Tamil Nadu arrested eight people on Oct 20 on charges of desecrating a Catholic cemetery in Palayamkottai Diocese.

Vandals, suspected to be Hindu activists, used crowbars to damage some 40 graves on Oct. 18 at Sacred Heart Church parish, Bishop Antonysamy Savarimuthu of Palayamkottai told UCA News.

The problem began two years ago, when some outsiders, backed by the BJP and allied Hindu groups, began to oppose the cemetery.

The parish had bought approximately 7,560 square feet of land in 1982 from a Hindu community, who used it as a cremation ground. They still use a small plot beside the Christian cemetery separated by a compound wall, bishop Savarimuthu said.

The bishop said the cemetery had been used without any incident for the last 37 years. "We don't have issues with other faiths in the locality. Some people are trying to create problems," he said. ♦

Holy Father's Prayer Intentions


November 2020: Artificial Intelligence

We pray that the progress of robotics and artificial intelligence may always serve humankind.

December 2020: For a life of prayer

We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

Feel free to share our 2021 calendar with your friends & family...



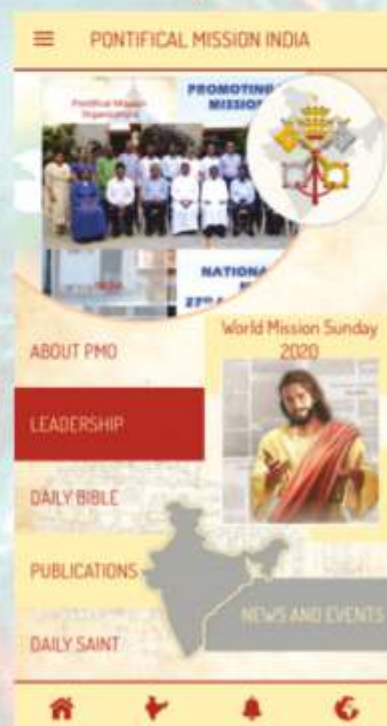
I am the Light of the World

John 8:12

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Our App is in a work-in-progress state. You are most welcome to become part of it!...



JANUARY 2021					FEBRUARY				
31	3	10	17	24	SUN	7	14	21	28
	4	11	18	25	MON	1	8	15	22
	5	12	19	26	TUE	2	9	16	23
	6	13	20	27	WED	3	10	17	24
	7	14	21	28	THU	4	11	18	25
1	8	15	22	29	FRI	5	12	19	26
2	9	16	23	30	SAT	6	13	20	27

Jesus is the Father's Missionary life and ministry reveal his total abandon to the Father's will. - Pope Francis

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"Go out to the whole world and PROCLAIM the GOOD NEWS to all creation" Mark 16:15

Come! Make MISSION a MOVEMENT

ST ANDREW
(Feast Day: 30th November)

© Glorious St. Andrew, you were the first to recognize and follow the Son of God.
With your friend, St. John, you remained with

Jesus, for your entire life,
and now throughout eternity.
Just as you led your brother, St Peter,
to Christ and many others after him,
draw us also to Him.

Teach us how to lead them, solely out of
love for Jesus and dedication to His
service.

Help us to learn the lesson of the Cross
and carry our daily crosses without
complaint, so that they may carry us to
God the Almighty Father. Amen.

World Mission 2020 continues..

World Mission Sunday 2020

"Here am I, send me..." – Isaiah 6:8

For more information contact us at: **PONTIFICAL MISSION ORGANIZATIONS (INDIA)**
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World Mission Sunday 2020

- Isaiah 6:8



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