

CATHOLIC WORLD LAST WEEK

(CWLW)

31 Oct-6 Nov 2022

31-10-22

Pope emphasizes ‘human maturity’ in address to soccer players

(31-10-22) Pope Francis received Argentine soccer players who are taking part in a tournament of athletes with dwarfism.

“In life, one can look at things in two ways: upwards or downwards,” the Pope said. “There are the usual pessimists and whatever happens to them, they look down: Oh, that’s too bad. And they get depressed, and the only thing these people do is build bitter horizons.”

“And then there are the optimists, like yourselves, who look upwards at any difficulty: forward, to progress, to walk, to walk as we are now with what I have,” he continued. “In other words, capitalize on everything, even capitalize on what seems negative. And that is human maturity.”

Abortions down in US after Dobbs decision

(31-10-22) The number of abortions in the US fell by 6% in the first two months after the *Dobbs* decision, according to a survey by the Society for Family Planning.

Because of state restrictions on abortion, which took effect when the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, the survey estimates that 10,000 unborn children were spared. Liberal commentators see this as a tragedy.



Italian cardinal leads traditionalist pilgrimage

(31-10-22) Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, the president of the Italian bishops' conference, presided at Vespers in the Pantheon on October 28 as the hundreds of traditionalist Catholics gathered in Rome for the Summorum Pontificum pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage continued with a traditional Mass in St. Peter's basilica on Saturday, followed by a High Mass for the feast of Christ the King on October 30, with different celebrants.

Cardinal Zuppi has allowed the continued use of the traditional liturgy in his Bologna archdiocese.

Pontifical commission starts planning global report on child protection efforts

(31-10-22) Father Andrew Small, OMI, secretary of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, said that the commission is preparing a report on child protection efforts, including the extent to which episcopal conferences have implemented the Pope's 2019 apostolic letter *Vos estis lux mundi*.

According to CNS, Father Small revealed that “70 to 80 of the 114 bishops' conferences in the world do not have stable, publicly accessible reporting mechanisms called for in *Vos Estis*, mainly because they do not have the resources.”

Digital technology must serve the common good, Vatican officials say at UN conference

(31-10-22) Sister Raffaella Petrini, FSE (Secretary General of the Governorate of Vatican City State) led the Holy See's delegation to a recent UN conference on telecommunications.

Sister Petrini spoke of the importance of “promoting the growth of global communication platforms that are effective instruments of social cohesion and solidarity, as Pope Francis has repeatedly reiterated. We must aim to develop instruments of integration that are accessible to all segments of the population while respecting human rights, cultural sensitivities and traditions, with particular attention to women, young people, and people with disabilities.”

Vatican presents overview of Church in Bahrain ahead of papal visit

(31-10-22) Pope Francis's four-day apostolic journey to Bahrain begins on November 3. According to the Vatican's statistical overview, there are 161,000 Catholics in the nation of 1,472,000. Twenty priests and 89 catechists serve in two parishes and three schools. The Catholics in Bahrain are primarily migrant workers from other countries; they are granted a measure of religious freedom not found in several other Arab nations.

Christmas 2022: Vatican to display hand-carved wooden nativity scene

(31-10-22) The Vatican's 2022 outdoor Nativity scene was carved last year in the northeastern Italian region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia. It will be unveiled on December 3. The Guatemalan government has donated an additional Nativity scene, which will be put on display in Paul VI Audience Hall.

Indian bridge collapses, killing at least 130

(31-10-22) At least 130 people were killed in India after a colonial-era pedestrian bridge collapsed, sending scores of people tumbling into the river below, police said on 31 October. Authorities said nearly 500 people, including women and children, were celebrating a religious festival on and around the nearly 150-year-old suspension bridge in Morbi in western India when cables supporting it snapped soon after dark on 30 Oct. Sunday. Broadcaster NDTV reported that it reopened on Wednesday after seven months of repairs despite not having a safety certificate and that video footage from 29 Oct. showed it swaying wildly.

Unvaxxed Filipinos banned from entering cemeteries

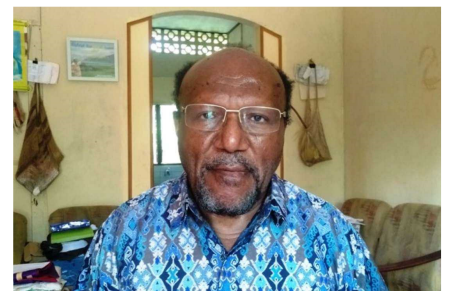
(31-10-22) The government and authorities in the Philippines have prohibited unvaccinated people from entering several cemeteries during the observance of All Souls Day to prevent the spread of Covid-19. The Santo Tomas cemetery in Daet province, southern Luzon, and the Holy Redeemer cemetery in Benguet province, northern Luzon, have made it mandatory for visitors to carry vaccine cards to enter and pay tributes to their loved ones. Two municipalities in Batangas province, south of Manila, have already banned minors from entering the cemetery on Nov. 1-2. The Department of Health has recorded 20,824 active Covid cases with 1,297 new cases as of Oct. 29. Around 71.5 million out of 111 million population were fully vaccinated. Meanwhile, Caritas Executive Director Father Antonio Labiao has advised parishioners to "just stay at home" given the weather and pandemic conditions.

Vatican appoints first native bishop in Indonesia's Papua

(31-10-22) Catholics in Indonesia's Papua have hailed the appointment of the first native bishop more than a century after Catholicism found its roots in the easternmost region. Pope Francis appointed Father Yanuarius Theofilus Matopai You as the new bishop of Jayapura Diocese on Oct. 29, 2022.

A member of the indigenous Mee tribe in Papua, Bishop-elect You, 61, succeeds retired Franciscan Bishop Leo Laba Ladjar. During the announcement at the Christ the King Cathedral in Jayapura, Bishop Ladjar urged local Catholics to pray for the first native Papuan bishop. Bishop-elect You will lead the Catholic Church in the conflict-torn region, which has one archdiocese and four suffragan dioceses.

The appointment comes as indigenous Papuan priests have repeatedly called on bishops since 2020 to be vocal about human rights violations in the region amid an escalation of conflict between Indonesian security forces and pro-independence rebels in recent years.



Born in 1961, You was ordained a priest in 1991. He looked after various parishes before working in the education sector. In 2002, he became the parish priest of the Cathedral Church in Jayapura and served as the Vicar General of the diocese until 2007.

Papua is a former Dutch colony that declared independence in 1961. However, Indonesia annexed the territory soon with a referendum widely considered a sham. A separatist movement for independence bubbled up, prompting Indonesia to maintain a heavy military presence in the resource-rich but underdeveloped. The conflict claimed thousands of lives.

1-11-22

Saints are true revolutionaries, says Pope

(1-11-22) Speaking to pilgrims gathered in St Peter's Square at noon on the solemnity of All Saints, Pope Francis dislodged the common people's thinking that the saints were the most perfect beings. He said: "Today, we celebrate all the saints, and we might have a misleading impression: we might think we are celebrating those sisters and brothers who in life were perfect, always straight, precise, or rather "starched". Instead, today's Gospel belies this stereotypical view, this "picture-perfect holiness". In fact, the Beatitudes of Jesus (cf. *Mt* 5:1-12), which are the identity card of saints, show the complete opposite: they speak of a countercultural life, a revolutionary life! The saints are the true revolutionaries."



Request for success of Pope's visit to Bahrain

(1-11-22) After the Angelus, Pope Francis informed the faithful that he would go to Bahrain on Thursday 3 Nov. on an apostolic journey. He said, "It will be a journey dedicated to dialogue: indeed, I will participate in a *Forum* on the theme of the indispensable need for the East and West to move closer together for the good of human coexistence; I will have the opportunity to talk with religious representatives, particularly Islamic." He called for prayer-accompaniment "so that every

meeting and event may be a fruitful occasion to support, in God's name, the cause of fraternity and peace, for which our times are in extreme and urgent need." He will complete his visit on Sunday 6 November.

UN condemns 'heinous attacks' in Somalia

(1-11-22) The United Nations has condemned attacks in Somalia's capital which killed at least 100 people and injured hundreds more.

António Guterres, the Secretary General of the United Nations, extended his heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims, as well as to the Government and people of Somalia.

Guterres said he strongly condemned the heinous attacks and reiterated that the United Nations stood in solidarity with Somalia against violent extremism.

In addition to those killed, the twin explosions outside Somalia's Education Ministry building in Mogadishu injured more than 300 others. The al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab extremist group claimed responsibility for the outrage, which killed women, children, and several pensioners.

Police said a vehicle loaded with explosives drove into the education ministry building - another explosion occurred later in the same area.

Brazil's bishops call for "reconciliation" after Lula's victory

(1-11-22) The presidential campaign in Brazil featured an extreme instrumentalization of religious rhetoric; the country's Catholic bishops say it's now time for healing.

The month-long campaign period between Brazil's two rounds of voting for the nation's president was marked by nasty "exchanges" aimed at attracting votes from Evangelicals and Roman Catholics. It became a virtual petri dish of insults, one-upmanship and the spread of fake news on social media.

The Catholic bishops' conference (CNBB) is now urging all Brazilians to work for "reconciliation". The bishops made their appeal in a statement posted on the conference website on Oct. 31, the day after Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the icon of South America's political left won the elections. "The conclusion of these 2022 elections calls us even more to reconciliation, essential to the new page that is opening. The exercise of citizenship does not end at the end of the electoral process," says the bishops' statement.

Free, discounted funerals on the anvil for poor Filipinos

(1-11-22) A bloc of opposition political parties has endorsed a bill in the Philippine parliament that seeks to offer free and state-subsidized funeral services to poor citizens. The bill aims to make it mandatory for the state to give "immediate relief to the poor, especially during the loss of their loved ones."

Once the bill is passed into law, mortuaries would receive discounts to be paid by the local government depending on the social class of the family of the deceased. Extremely poor families would receive free funeral and burial costs while others would be given a 50 percent discount by mortuaries and funeral parlors.

Many families hold wakes at home that sometimes last for weeks or even months because they do not have enough donations to cover funeral and burial expenses, according to lawmaker France Castro.

Meanwhile, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines said the Catholic Church had already removed the arancel system – the practice of giving a fixed stipend to priests for church services.

India's anti-port protestors deny foreign funds accusation

(1-11-22) A Catholic archdiocese leading fishermen's protest against an under-construction international seaport in the southern Indian state of Kerala has dismissed allegations that it has received foreign funding to destabilize the nation and its development projects.

Several television channels and a newspaper known as the mouthpiece of the state's ruling Communist Party of India (Marxist) have alleged that the protestors have received between 110-250 million rupees (US\$1.3-3.1 million) to join hands with foreign powers to destabilize the government. "Our hands are clean, and our protest is transparent. Any agency can probe into the allegations," says Father Theodacious D'Cruz, a priest from the Archdiocese of Trivandrum and convenor of the protest against the multi-billion-dollar Adani international seaport in Vizhinjam that has been on for more than 100 days. Father D'Cruz challenged a television channel that alleged he took the money to prove its claim. The bishops and priests in the Archdiocese of Trivandrum are leading this protest since July 20.

Politicizing the cross is a thorny issue in Pakistan

(1-11-22) Pakistani politician Shunila Ruth and her band of supporters waved the cross as they welcomed Imran Khan, the ousted prime minister who recently launched a long march to the national capital in a bid to regain power.

The video clip of Ruth and her supporters evoked strong reactions on social media with many Christians criticizing her for disrespecting the cross.

Father Morris Jalal, founder and executive director of Lahore-based Catholic TV, called it "a misplaced show of Christian identity." He was clearly against mixing faith with politics and wanted politicians to avoid the use of a symbol of the Christian religion for political purposes.



Cambodia puts Ukraine on ASEAN's agenda

(1-11-22) United States President Joe Biden has confirmed he will attend the ASEAN and East Asian summits to be held in Phnom Penh in mid-November, where Prime Minister Hun Sen says he is prepared to mediate talks with Russia over the invasion of Ukraine.

However, Russian President Vladimir Putin has yet to confirm whether he will attend the summits, which will also serve as a prelude to the Group of 20 (G20) meeting in Bali and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Bangkok.



Pope Francis' visit to Bahrain to cement ties with Islam

(1-11-22) Pope Francis becomes the first pontiff in history by visiting Bahrain, in a trip this week that is hoped to cement ties with Islam, but is also marked by accusations of human rights abuses in the Gulf state.

The Thursday-to-Sunday visit -- the 39th international trip of Francis' papacy -- comes three years after his historic trip to the United Arab Emirates in 2019, where he signed a Muslim-Christian manifesto for peace.

But some human rights groups now hope Francis will press

Bahrain's Sunni leader, King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, to halt repression against Shiite Muslims in the country, even as the rights record of neighbour Qatar has drawn more attention in recent months ahead of the World Cup.

St. Francis inspires church, pope says

(1-11-22) St. Francis of Assisi is known for loving and celebrating creation and for being a man of peace and poverty, Pope Francis said.

"When I chose to call myself Francis, I knew I was referring to a saint who is very popular, but also very misunderstood," he told members of the Coordinating Committee for the Franciscan Eighth Centenary. Very often people do not understand the "root" and "source" of everything the saint loved and did, which was Jesus Christ, the pope said. St. Francis "is one in love with Jesus Christ and, who in order to follow him, is not afraid to make a fool of himself but goes forward. The source of his whole experience is faith."

Pope Francis spoke about the saint on Oct. 31 during an audience at the Vatican with members of the committee in charge of coordinating the preparation and celebration of a series of anniversaries of important events in the final years of St. Francis' life. The events commemorate the 800th anniversaries of: the Rule of St. Francis and Christmas at Greccio (2023); the stigmata (2024); the "Canticle of the Creatures" (2025); and "the Easter of Francis" (2026), according to a press release from the ministers general of the different men's orders within the "Franciscan Family."

2-11-22

Tokyo recognizes same-sex relationships

(2-11-22) Tokyo began issuing partnership certificates to same-sex couples who live and work in the capital on 1 Nov., a long-awaited move in a country without marriage equality.

The certificates allow LGBTQ partners to be treated as married couples for a range of public services in areas such as housing, medicine and welfare. However, the status does not carry the same legal rights as marriage.

Bangladesh grapples with deadly dengue outbreak

(2-11-22) Bangladesh is grappling with a fatal outbreak of dengue with hundreds of daily infections while people and experts blame the government for a lack of action and priorities to contain the menace. As of Nov. 1, total of 150 people had died and some 39,000 have been infected, according

to data from the state-run Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). Some 86 people died in October alone.

3-10-22

Pope arrives in Bahrain, speaks against death penalty

(3-11-22) Pope Francis arrived on November 3, becoming the Pontiff to visit that country. In his first public address in Bahrain, he spoke out against the death penalty, which is still allowed there. In speaking of human rights, he said: "I think in the end, it is the right to life, of the need to respect that right always, including for those who are punished, whose lives should not be taken."



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He also spoke against warfare,

"the worst side of man emerges," and called for an end to "the rationale of weapons." He lamented both the high rate of unemployment and the dangers to the environment caused, he said, by unchecked economic ambitions.

On November 4, Pope Francis is due to attend the final session of the Bahrain Forum for Dialogue, and to meet the Muslim Council of Elders. He made inter-religious dialogue a theme of his remarks on the first day of his visit, saying: "May we never allow opportunities for encounter between civilizations, religions and cultures to evaporate, or the roots of our humanity to become desiccated and lifeless!" The visit to Bahrain is the Pope's second trip to a country on the Persian Gulf; in 2019 he traveled to nearby Abu Dhabi. There, too, he put dialogue with other faiths—particularly with Islam—at the top of his agenda, signing a Document on Human Fraternity along with the Grand Imam of the Al-Azhar University, Sheik Ahmed al Tayeb.

'Courageous discontinuity': leading Latin American bishops present document to Pope

(3-11-22) Last November, CELAM (the Episcopal Conference of Latin America) held the First Ecclesial Assembly of Latin America and the Caribbean.

It was one of the six most significant gatherings in CELAM's history, following the five general conferences in Rio de Janeiro (1955), Medellín (1968), Puebla (1979), Santo Domingo (1992), and Aparecida (2007), where the future Pope Francis chaired the committee that drafted the final document.

CELAM's leaders have presented to the Pontiff the 2021 assembly's 144-page final document, *Toward a Synodal Church Going Forth into the Periphery*.

"The unprecedented aspect of the first Ecclesial Assembly lies in having courageously and prophetically marked a point of discontinuity, because from now on, it will no longer be possible to avoid the participation of the people of God in the various decisions of the Church," said CELAM's president, Archbishop Miguel Cabrejos Vidarte, OFM, of Trujillo (Peru).

Pope encourages Catholic Action youth to become leaven in society

(3-11-22) "This is very important," the Pope said in an Italian-language address to the youth of the Italian Catholic Action lay apostolate: "to learn through experience that in the Church we are all brothers and sisters by Baptism; that we are all protagonists and responsible; that we have different gifts and all for the good of the community; that life is vocation, following Jesus; that faith is a gift to be given, to witness."

"Fraternity in the Church is founded in Christ, in His presence in us and among us," the Pope

continued. "Thanks to Him we welcome each other, bear each other, forgive each other." Referring to the Rosary, he added, "Mirror yourself every day in the joyful, luminous, sorrowful and glorious events of [Christ's] life, and they will enable you to live the ordinary in an extraordinary way, that is, with the newness of the Spirit, the newness of the Gospel."

4 months after cancelled trip, DR Congo still waits for the Pope, ambassador says

(3-11-22) "The Congolese continue to wait for the arrival of the Pope," said Déogratias Ndagano Mangokube, the Democratic Republic of the Congo's new ambassador to the Holy See. The Pope was scheduled to make an apostolic journey to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan from July 2-7, but postponed the trip for health reasons. The trip has not been rescheduled, despite the Pope's subsequent travels to Canada (July 24-30), L'Aquila (August 28), Kazakhstan (September 13-15), Assisi (September 24), Matera (September 25), and now Bahrain (November 3-6).

Luxembourg's PM meets Pontiff

(3-11-22) Pope Francis recently received Xavier Bettel, Luxembourg's prime minister since 2013. The Western European nation of 640,000 is 74% Christian (72% Catholic) and 3% Muslim. Bettel also met other Holy See officials. The parties discussed Church-state relations, the war in Ukraine, and assistance to migrants and refugees.



Ethiopia - Orderly, regular and coordinated disarmament: peace agreement signed between the warring parties

(3-11-22) On the night of November 3-4, 2020, hostilities began between the Ethiopian Federal Army and the Tigray militias of the TPLF. On November 2, 2022, afternoon, after several days of intense negotiations led by the African Union in Pretoria, South Africa, a historic peace agreement was reached between the warring parties.

"Ethiopia is a great nation and must continue to be, it is the pride of Africa," said the African Union High Representative for the Horn of Africa, Nigerian Olusegun Obasanjo, stressing

that with this agreement, the parties commit to "a permanent cessation of hostilities, an orderly, regular and coordinated disarmament, as well as the restoration of public order and services, in addition to unhindered access to humanitarian aid and the protection of women and children". Prime Minister Abiy expressed his gratitude to Obasanjo and the entire commission for this important outcome, a solution that saw "Africans solving Africans' problems". In recent days, Abiy had repeatedly denounced foreign interference in the peace talks. Despite the continued Eritrean bombardments, particularly in the town of Adigrat, the peace agreement opens a new chapter in the history of Ethiopia and great hope for the resumption of normal life in the northern regions of Ethiopia.

Filipino farmers call for aid after devastating typhoon

(3-11-22) Filipino farmers have appealed for aid after their crops were destroyed by Tropical Storm Nalgae which made landfall in the southern Philippines on Oct 29.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) reported the tropical storm affected over 24,000 farmers, mostly rice farmers, in the Philippines. Farmers from southern Luzon have also called on President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. to ask Congress to pass a bill that would allow farmers to get subsidized fertilizers and gasoline vouchers for the production and transportation of rice.

Meanwhile, a Catholic group composed of businessmen called Business Traders for Christ has pledged to lend capital to farmers with a minimum interest rate. The group is engaged in

microfinancing to empower Philippine laborers in their field of work by providing them with “ample” capital. The group’s interest rate would not be higher than 3 percent interest annually, according to the group’s president Francis Gusman.

Ghana - Bishops back bill to abolish death penalty

(3-11-22) "God created the human person in his image and likeness and therefore only he can take back human life. It is therefore the obligation of every possessor of life to strive at all times to preserve the sanctity of human life", the Ghana Bishops' Conference says in a statement of support for the two bills to abolish the death penalty. The Bishops call on Ghanaians to "work with determination to abolish the death penalty from our legal system".

Other reasons why the Bishops' Conference says the death penalty is unacceptable include the fact that it "does not give the condemned person the opportunity to repent and ask for forgiveness". In addition, there are cases in which innocent people are put to death for a judicial error.

Malaysian Christians urged to vote responsibly

(3-11-22) An ecumenical forum in Malaysia has asked Christians to take an informed decision while casting their votes to choose their leaders in the upcoming general election.

“To vote means to stand up and be counted. God has entrusted to us this stewardship to work for the common good of everyone,” reads a pastoral letter from Archbishop Simon Poh, chairman of the Association of Churches in Sarawak (ACS) issued on Oct. 31.

The ACS covers Sarawak, the largest state in Malaysia in the northern part of Borneo Island and the only Christian-majority state of the Muslim-majority country. Sarawak’s date of election is different from that of the rest of the country.

Archbishop Poh, head of Kuching Catholic Archdiocese, said that the 15th general election on Nov. 19 is a time to properly exercise their voting rights as responsible citizens of the country. He said the ACS does not endorse any politicians or party.



Half a million children displaced in Myanmar conflict

(3-11-22) The number of children in Myanmar forced to flee their homes to escape violence has surpassed half a million with a rapid escalation in displacements (63% of the total) in the last 9 months, according to Save the Children. Pope Francis has urged the world to pray for the child victims of war, hundreds of thousands of children in Myanmar.

Archbishop says Nigeria must limit damage from floods

(3-11-22) Nigeria's bishops urged the federal government to come up with a plan to fight flooding that affects Nigerians each year. This year the flooding has affected about 1.4 million people in 27 states, with thousands of homes destroyed

In a Nov. 1 pastoral letter, the president of the bishops' conference, Archbishop Lucius Iwejuru Ugorji of Owerri, said that often in Nigeria when tragic events occurred, people expressed sorrow, then moved on as if nothing had happened. He advised the government and the citizens to learn from other countries prone to natural disasters about the need for investment, planning and efficiency in the management of such tragedies to reduce their negative effects.

Earlier in October, Bishop Hyacinth Orok Egbobo of Bomadi in the Niger Delta region raised similar concerns in a pastoral letter to the faithful of his diocese.

Pakistani Christians reject Christmas Eve elections

(3-11-22) Christian members of federal statutory bodies are calling for the rescheduling of local elections in Pakistan’s capital, Islamabad, slated for Dec 24 citing Christmas festivities.

Concerns have been expressed since the Election Commission scheduled the local polls for 101 union councils in the federal capital last month. Around one million voters, including more than 50,000 Christians, will elect their representatives. Each union council has four reserved seats for women, the underprivileged, youths and minorities.

In his Nov. 1 letter, Manzoor Masih, a member of the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) urged the Chief Election Commissioner to reschedule the elections. "The day of polling is not suitable for the Christian residents of Islamabad. It would infringe on the constitutional rights of the Christian community. The Constitution of Pakistan provides equal rights to minorities to celebrate their religious events and to take part in the process of election by voting or by contesting them," he said. The letter was approved by the NCHR chairperson, he said. Albert David, a member of the National Commission for Minorities, is still waiting for a reply to a similar letter sent to the Chief Election Commissioner last month. He plans to file a lawsuit to address the issue.

Despite being an Islamic republic, Dec. 25 is a national holiday in Pakistan to celebrate the birthday of the country's founding father Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Schools and colleges also get a longer winter break from Dec 23-24 to Jan. 2-3 nationwide.



Indian Christians seek an end to abuse by Hindu radicals

(3-11-22) Christians in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh have sought action against pro-Hindu groups misusing the state's recently enacted anti-conversion law to harass and persecute minority communities.

A group of 125 people, who called themselves *Khrist Bhakts* (devotees of Christ) called on the chief of police and administration in Varanasi, a prominent Hindu pilgrimage center on the banks of the Hindu holy river Ganges, to ensure Christians'

freedom of faith. A memorandum they submitted to the police commissioner and district collector highlighted false cases registered against Christians and those who follow Christ but have not yet converted to Christianity. The clauses of the anti-conversion law are misused to fabricate cases against Christians, they said.

4-11-22

Ethiopia - Silent Proclamation: "There are no professional missionaries at work here"

(4-11-22) A capuchin missionary Fr Angelo Antonini, the apostolic Prefect of Robe, writes from Gode in Somali desert that his missionary work is much done by laypeople and particularly by Bethleem an AIDS patient and an orphan. She grew up earlier with the Missionaries of Charity in Addis Ababa and now "helps us with so much zeal and simplicity."

Fr Antonini says, "She teaches the children and I have entrusted her with full responsibility for the house, which she runs with seriousness and discretion. She is assisted by my three missionaries... who are happy to be on the front lines of the gospel here. They do not receive aid, but a salary for their work. But they are not professional missionaries at work." The missionary concludes: "I too have to imagine the mission differently, not so much with priests, religious, congregations, but with lay people: the simple believers, unprepared, without much study, but rooted in the culture because they are children of this land"

Bahrain - Pope Francis: may humanity be saved from the tragic infantilism of those who play with bombs

(4-11-22) The times we are living in, East and West resemble «two opposing seas», which spread conflicts throughout the world to assert their hegemony. In this scenario dominated by dark omens, religious men and above all the leaders of the various faith communities can attract the «blessing of the Most High» on the world only if they intend to «set sail on the same waters, choosing the route of encounter rather than that of confrontation».



This is the appeal launched by Pope Francis in his speech in Awali at the end of the Bahrain Forum for Dialogue: «East and West for Human Coexistence», on the morning of the second day of his apostolic journey to the Kingdom of Bahrain. In the concluding session of the forum for dialogue, hosted at the Sakhir Royal Palace and organized under the patronage of the King of Bahrain, Hamad Bin Isa al Khalifa, the Pope's speech was preceded by those of the Sovereign himself and Sheikh Ahmed al Tayyeb, Grand Imam by Al-Azhar.

In the first part of his speech, the Pontiff drew a realistic picture of the global evils and threats that mark the present time. After «two terrible world wars» and «a cold war that for decades kept the world in suspense», humanity seems to be experiencing a new tragic paradox: while «the majority of the world's population is united in facing the same difficulties, suffering from grave food, ecological and pandemic crises, as well as an increasingly scandalous global injustice», a few potentates are caught up in «a resolute struggle for partisan interests, reviving obsolete rhetoric, redesigning spheres of influence and opposing blocs». A «dramatic and childlike» scenario, in which «in the garden of humanity», people play with fire, «with missiles and bombs, with weapons that bring sorrow and death».

Faced with the «world war in pieces» scenarios looming over the world, the possible ways out were outlined by Pope Francis using extensive quotations from the "Charter of Bahrain and above all from the Document on Human Fraternity signed by the Pope himself and by the Great Imam al Tayyeb in Abu Dhabi on February 4, 2019. The Document, calls for a «fruitful encounter between West and East, to help cure their respective maladies», while the Bishop of Rome in his speech at the forum feared that the new conflicts on the east-west axis may also distract attention «from another divergence that is constantly and dramatically increasing: the gap between the North and the South of the world».

Pope Francis dwelt above all on the responsibilities of religious leaders, called to «encourage and assist our human family, interdependent yet at the same time disconnected». A responsibility that the Bishop of Rome proposed three challenges: «prayer», «education» and «action».

Those who pray - the Pope said in reference to the prayer - also help «their fellow men not to fall prey to a paganism that reduces human beings to what they sell, buy or are entertained by». The followers of the religions are men and women of peace who, «as they journey alongside others on this earth, invite them, with gentleness and respect, to lift their gaze to Heaven». For this reason too - the Pope



remarked - it is «essential» to guarantee religious freedom. Quoting the Kingdom of Bahrain Declaration, the Pontiff remarked that «God instructs us to exercise the divine gift of freedom of choice». Regarding the urgency of promoting education, the Bishop of Rome acknowledged that «where opportunities for education are lacking, extremism increases and forms of fundamentalism take root», while the acquisition of a critical spirit through adequate educational paths helps to «enter into the heart of problems without claiming to have easy answers to resolve complex issues». Among the educational urgencies, the Pope recalled first of all the «recognition of women in the public

sphere», together with the protection of the fundamental rights of children and the promotion of an authentic «education for citizenship» to overcome also «the discriminatory use of the term minorities which engenders feelings of isolation and inferiority» and «paves the way for hostility and discord». Then dwelling on the urgency of the common action of believers and religious leaders, the Pontiff repeated that it is not enough to abstractly affirm the "peaceful" nature of religions. Religious men and women, as people of peace, are «likewise opposed to the race to rearmament, to the commerce of war, to the market of death». He does not support «alliances against some», but means of encounter with all: Without yielding to forms of relativism or syncretism of any sort, he pursues a single path, which is that of fraternity, dialogue and peace». And the Creator «invites us to act, especially on behalf all those many creatures of his who do not yet find a sufficient place on the agenda of the powerful: the poor, the unborn, the elderly, the infirm, migrants».(Fides)

Pope in Bahrain: Prayer and fraternity are our modest but effective weapons

(4-11-22) Pope Francis met the members of the Muslim Council of Elders, in the presence of the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayyeb in the mosque of the Sakhir Royal Palace on Friday 4 Nov. afternoon.

Addressing the members, the Holy Father wished the peace of God upon them, who desire to foster reconciliation in order to avoid divisions and conflicts in Muslim communities, who see in extremism, a danger that corrodes genuine religion and who are committed to dispelling erroneous interpretations that do a disservice to religious belief.



He upheld the spread of a culture of peace based on justice as one of the objectives of the Council and stressed that it is the only path, inasmuch as “peace is the effect of righteousness.”

“Peace is born of fraternity; it grows through the struggle against injustice and inequality; it is built by holding out a hand to others.”

He insisted that peace cannot simply be proclaimed, but it must be helped to take root, and this is only possible by eliminating the forms of inequality and discrimination that give rise to instability and hostility.

The Pope noted that in these lands, it is customary to shake hands of guest and place one’s own hand on one’s chest as a sign of affection, as if to say, “you do not remain distant from me, but you enter into my heart, into my life. “I also place my hand on my heart with respect and affection, as I look out at each of you and bless the Most High for making it possible for us to encounter one another,” he said.

Pope Francis added that we “need to put a future of fraternity ahead of a past of antagonism, overcoming historical prejudices and misunderstandings in the name of the One who is the source of peace.”

“These are duties incumbent upon us as religious leaders: in a world that is increasingly wounded and divided, that beneath the surface of globalization senses anxiety and fear, the great religious traditions must be the heart that unites the members of the body, the soul that gives hope and life to its highest aspirations.”

Pope Francis upheld the power of life, which survives the driest deserts by “drawing upon the waters of encounter and peaceful coexistence.”

“Ours is a unique and inescapable duty: to help humanity to rediscover the forgotten sources of life, to lead men and women to drink from the wellsprings of ancient wisdom, and to bring the faithful closer to worship of the God of heaven and closer to our brothers and sisters for whom he created the earth.”

Pope Francis went on to recommend prayer and fraternity as our weapons, modest but effective, to achieve this duty of helping humanity rediscover the forgotten sources of life. He warned against other

means and shortcuts unworthy of the Most high “whose name of Peace is dishonoured by those who put their trust in power and nurture violence, war and the arms trade, the “commerce of death” that, through ever increasing outlays, is turning our common home into one great arsenal.”

In this regard, the Pope thought of the people who are forced to migrate from their lands due to conflicts “subsidized by the purchase of outdated weapons at affordable prices, only to be then identified and turned away at other borders through increasingly sophisticated military equipment.”

Amid these tragic scenarios, he added, we are called to “proclaim, with the wisdom of our elders and fathers, that God and neighbour come before all else, that transcendence and fraternity alone will save us.”

Our responsibility before God and humanity is great, he added, urging everyone to be exemplary models of what we preach, not only in our communities and homes, but in the world.

“Let us support one another in this regard; let us follow up on our meeting today; let us journey together!” Pope Francis urged. “We will be blessed by the Most High and by the smallest and vulnerable creatures for whom he has a preferential love: the poor, children and the young, who after so many dark nights await the rising of a dawn of light and peace.”



Pope in Bahrain: Dear young people, we need you!

(4-11-22) During a meeting with young people at Sacred Heart School in Awali, Pope Francis told them, “We need your creativity, your dreams and your courage, your charm and your smiles, your contagious joy and that touch of craziness that you can bring to every situation, which helps to break us out of our stale habits and ways of looking at things.” He encouraged young people to “Never lose the courage to dream big and to live life to the full,”

The Pope invited young people to “embrace a culture of care,” that is an attitude of empathy that concerns for other people and their interests. He told them that first they must listen to the movements of the heart and to speak with God, sharing the joys and sorrows of their everyday life.

Pope in Bahrain: Unity and witness are essential for ecumenism

(4-11-22) At the end of his second day in Bahrain, Pope Francis joined the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople as well as other Christian leaders from the region for an Ecumenical Meeting and Prayer for Peace at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Arabia in Awali.

In his address, the Pope lamented divisions among Christians, which “have wounded the Lord’s holy body.” However, he said, “the Holy Spirit, who joins all the members together, is greater than our divisions according to the flesh”; and so, the Pope continued, “it is right to say that what unites us far exceeds what divides us.”

The Holy Father noted Pentecost, the Holy Spirit when they were gathered he said, the smallness of “helps us feel the need for grow through praise of stirs up in everyone.”

At the same time, he again that unity does not embraces diversity,

with our differences. That, the Pope said, “is the spirit of our ecumenical journey.”



that, at that first came to the disciples together. In Bahrain, the Christian flock unity” – a unity that can God, “which the Spirit

emphasized once mean uniformity, but accepting one another

5-11-22

Paraguay - Educational pact, lands, indigenous peoples, elections and commitment of the laity to transform the Church and society

(5-11-22) The "critical state" of the national education system, the situation of the land and territories of indigenous peoples, the next general elections in April where it is necessary to choose honest people, suitable for the task they undertake and with proven honesty: these are the main issues that the Bishops of Paraguay addressed in the Plenary Assembly of the Episcopal Conference, which ended on November 4. The Assembly, which was chaired by the first Cardinal in the history of the country, Adalberto Martínez Flores, Archbishop of Asuncion, took place "on the path towards a new normal in the post-pandemic". The Bishops thank "for the life of families who cultivate love, dialogue and solidarity", important values for society, note "inflation and the difficulty of finding a decent and safe job", ask for a commitment to education of the new generations. The synodal journey is defined as "an immense grace of God", which "shows an image of our Church in full life, with its joys and sorrows, which shares dreams and hopes".

Pope at Mass in Bahrain: Love always and love everyone



(5-11-22) Pope Francis started his third day in Bahrain, 5 Nov., by celebrating Holy Mass in the National Stadium. In his homily, the Holy Father said Jesus' words today invite us to *love always*. "He knows that within our relationships there is a daily struggle between love and hatred", and in this way, too, within our hearts "there is a daily clash between light and darkness". With this in mind, the Pope noted that Jesus suffers when He sees, all around the world, "ways of exercising power that feed on oppression and violence, seeking to expand their own space by

restricting that of others, imposing their own domination and restricting basic freedoms, and in this way oppressing the weak".

The Pope went on to say that "the Lord asks of us not to dream idealistically of a world of fraternity, but to choose, starting with ourselves, to practice universal fraternity, concretely and courageously, persevering in good even when evil is done to us, breaking the spiral of vengeance, disarming violence, demilitarizing the heart".

"We need to disarm, to shatter the violence, and put an end to self-pity. We need to keep loving, giving glory to the God of heaven Pope Francis went on, to say that commitment to our close circles.



chains of evil, break the spiral of resentment, complaints, and always. This is Jesus' way of and building peace on earth." it is not enough if we restrict this "If we want to be children of the

Father and build a world of brothers and sisters, the real challenge is to learn how to love everyone, even our enemies." *"To love our enemies is to make this earth a reflection of heaven,"* he said. Bringing his homily to a close, Pope Francis stressed that the power of Jesus is love, and He gives us the power to love in this way, a power which "to us, seems superhuman", he said. The faithful gathered for the Mass were nearly 30,000 in number hailing from 111 countries.

Apostolic Carmelite Sisters grateful to receive Pope's message of unity in Bahrain

(5-11-22) Present in Bahrain to participate in the Papal Mass and to follow the events that makeup Pope Francis' apostolic visit, the Superior General of the Congregation of the Apostolic Carmel, which runs schools and health care clinics in the region, expressed gratitude for the occasion. Sr. Maria Nirmalini's Congregation spoke of *"Pope Francis' powerful message of unity within diversity that includes all people of all faiths is what we need to hear."* Her congregation works in many countries where Catholics are a



minority, including her own country – India – where Apostolic Carmelite Sisters teach in schools and run health services across the sub-continent.

6-11-22

Pope to Bahrain clergy: Never tire of spreading God's joy

(6-11-22) Preserve and spreading it to all around you, God, you can face and Pope Francis offered this speaking to bishops, priests, persons, seminarians and lay Bahrain on Sunday in the Bahrain's capital of Manama. This encounter marks the last



deepen your Christian joy, and remember that with overcome everything. powerful reminder when deacons, consecrated pastoral workers, of Sacred Heart Church in

prior to his departure from the Middle Eastern Gulf nation, for his 39th Apostolic Journey abroad, for the Bahrain Dialogue Forum and to encourage the Muslim-majority nation's small, but fervent Catholic flock.

During his remarks, the Holy Father called for spreading Christian joy, he urged those present to let the Holy Spirit comfort and restore them and he encouraged them to be guardians of unity, who are credible and ready to engage in dialogue. *"It is beautiful to be part of a Church composed of different histories and different faces that find their harmony in the one face of Jesus,"* he said. *"With God, we can face and overcome everything, even the abyss of pain and death."*



The Pope urged them to "preserve this joy," and let it grow ever greater. The best way to do this, he insisted, is to give this joy away.

"Let us seek to be guardians and builders of unity! In order to be credible when we dialogue with others, let us live in fraternity among ourselves," he said.

He urged them to do so in their communities, religious houses, families, in the multi-religious and multi-cultural societies in which we find ourselves.

At the Angelus appeals for Ethiopia and Ukraine

During his Angelus address, the Pope recalled the prayers of the faithful for peace as the world undergoes war, and turned his attention specifically to Ethiopia and Ukraine.

"The agreement that has been signed concerning the situation in Ethiopia is a hope. I encourage everyone to support this endeavour for lasting peace, so that, with God's help, the paths of dialogue may continue and the people may soon find a peaceful and dignified life again."

The Holy Father also prayed for peace in Ukraine. *"I also do not want to forget to pray, and to tell you to pray for, tormented Ukraine, that this war may end."*

Pope Francis bids farewell to Bahrain

Pope Francis boarded the return flight to Rome following his four-day visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain. The main focus of this 39th Apostolic Journey abroad, his second to the Gulf region, was to confirm local Christians in their faith and promote interreligious dialogue.
