

CATHOLIC WORLD LAST WEEK

(CWLW)

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1-8-22

Biden administration would force health care workers to perform gender transition procedures; bishops object

(1-8-22) Under the guise of “strengthening nondiscrimination in health care,” US President Biden administration has announced a proposed rule that “would force health care workers to perform gender transition procedures, require health insurance issuers to cover them, and entertain a mandate to perform elective abortions,” the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) warned. In their statement against the proposed rule, the bishops who chair four of the conference’s committees emphasized that “excellent care will be provided in a Catholic hospital to all patients, including patients who identify as transgender, whether it be for a broken bone or for cancer, but we cannot do what our faith forbids. We object to harmful procedures, not to patients.”

The proposed regulations “threaten our ability to carry out our healing ministries, and others’ to practice medicine,” the bishops added. “They mandate health care workers to perform life-altering surgeries to remove perfectly healthy body parts ... This is a violation of religious freedom and bad medicine.”

The bishops also warned that “the proposed regulations announce that HHS is also considering whether to force health care workers to perform abortions against their will or lose their jobs. We call on HHS to explicitly disavow any such intent.”

Pope to visit Kazakhstan in September

(1-8-22) Pope Francis will travel to Kazakhstan in September, to participate in the VII Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

The Vatican announced on August 1 that Pope Francis would make the trip, to join in a conference dedicated to how religious leaders can help “the socio-spiritual development of humanity after the pandemic.” The Pope will travel to Nur-Sultan, the capital of Kazakhstan, from September 13 to 15. The Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, which takes place every three years, is an initiative begun by former Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev, who said that he was inspired by the example set by Pope John Paul I in the 1986 World Day of Prayer at Assisi.

(5-8-22) Pope Francis met on August 5 Metropolitan Anthony, the chief external-affairs officer of the Russian Orthodox Church—thereby fuelling speculation that the Pontiff might be scheduling a “summit meeting” in September with the Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill who too will be attending the Congress.

Salvadoran archbishop welcomes crackdown on street gangs



(1-8-22) Archbishop José Luis Escobar has welcomed the extension of a government emergency decree allowing for a crackdown on violent street gangs.

Although some human-rights activists have criticized the government’s campaign, charging that innocent people are being arrested and denied due process, the archbishop said that the extension of a 30-day emergency is warranted. “People are afraid of returning to the way it was before, now that they have begun to live without this scourge,” he said.

Ukrainian Catholic leader deplors Russian troops’ ‘inadmissible savagery and cruelty’

(1-8-22) Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, called on religious leaders and the international community to condemn recent Russian atrocities in

Ukraine.

"Mykolayiv was shelled with cluster bombs, where at a bus stop people who were waiting for public transit were killed in a very cynical way," the archbishop said on July 30. "This morning, the enemy again hit the most populated parts of the city of Kharkiv with rockets."

The Major Archbishop emphasized that "what happened July 29 with the Ukrainian prisoners of war, well, the world must condemn it as a special manifestation of inadmissible savagery and cruelty. Footage of the horrific torture of a Ukrainian soldier was made public ... We received news that more than 50 Ukrainian prisoners of war were mass-murdered in the town of Olenivka in the Donbas."

(1-8-22) **Pope Francis met on August 1 President Ratu Willieme Maivalili Katonivere of Fiji.** A brief Vatican statement released after the meeting indicated that the conversation had centred on the issue of climate change.

Ghana - Bishops' appeal: "Do your utmost to end insecurity on the African continent"

(1-8-22) "Do your utmost to end insecurity on the African continent", is the appeal launched by the African Bishops at the end of the 19th Plenary Assembly of the Symposium of the Bishops' Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) which ended on Sunday, July 31 in Accra, the capital of Ghana. "Several regions of our continent are experiencing great insecurity due to socio-political instability, violence, economic poverty, weak health structures, insurgency, terrorism, exploitation of religion for political purposes and lack of respect for the environment and good governance", states the Assembly's concluding message. "The social and political stakeholders and decision-makers have a heavy responsibility in the management of our countries", the African Bishops urge them "to continue to do their utmost to fight against insecurity for our peoples and our countries".

SECAM also appeals "to foreign forces to get involved in building peace and security on the African continent" and to the faithful "to be alert to the situations of insecurity and collectively seek solutions to the problem".

Central Africa - Ready, set, go! The missionaries create the Grest in Monassao: a small ray of sunshine in this endless poverty

(1-8-22) Very encouraging is the experience of a seminarian, Anselmo Fabiano belonging to Society of African Missions (SMA) after his month-long work among pygmies in Monassao, who saw, to his pleasant surprise, 200 participants, besides 600 spectators, when he had informed only two about the games for children.



"And so, from nothing, the Grest in Monassao was born with the theme: Walking in the footsteps of Mary. Intense, tiring, but unique days. Full of life, encounters, smiles and suffering to cherish. It was a real adventure. Already being understood and being able to speak the same language was a real challenge. But it was so good! The smiles and laughter of children are priceless - adds Anselmo enthusiastically -. It was a small ray of sunshine in this endless poverty". There were also Muslim children, he notes.

Egypt - Young Egyptians on pilgrimage to Mount Sinai for the 29th "Franciscan March"

(1-8-22) Keeping up a tradition that goes back to the fourth century, a five-day pilgrimage, along paths travelled by saints, prophets and penitents since time immemorial, to ask for the gift of interior reconciliation and discover God's loving plan for one's life. It is the intense, evocative experience shared by friars, nuns and hundreds of boys and girls who took part in the 29th Franciscan March, the traditional pilgrimage organized in Egypt by the Friars Minor, which this year took place around the destination of Mount Sinai, to then conclude with a divine liturgy celebrated by Coptic Catholic Bishop Hani Bakoum in Quesna, in the Cathedral dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

Vietnam - The Catholic community celebrates the National Day of Catechists on the feast of Blessed Andrew Phu Yen

(1-8-22) Gatherings of catechists, holy masses and celebrations in various dioceses of Vietnam marked the traditional Day dedicated to catechists, which in Vietnam coincides with the feast of Blessed Andrew Phu Yen (1625-1644).

The National Day reaffirmed the importance of the mission of lay catechists in the pastoral care of the Vietnamese Church.

Argentina - The Bishops: " The bread that is asked for all, achieved through their own labour, is a cry for justice"

(1-8-22) "To ask for work is to ask that all workers have the right to live with dignity from the fruit of their daily efforts and to deploy their potential and talents to contribute to the growth of our country". This was stated in the message of the Executive Commission of the Argentine Episcopal Conference, published in view of the feast of St. Cajetan, on 7 August, one of the most heartfelt by the Argentines, in which they ask the Saint for "peace, bread and work".

"Pilgrims of St. Cajetan, we too implore daily bread, as Jesus taught us", the Bishops continue, pointing out that bread "becomes more unattainable every day due to the suffocating inflation that we suffer and that generates misery". They therefore invite us to think of "the growing number of brothers and sisters who come to the soup kitchens every day, of the elderly who cannot buy their medicines, of the families whose income is becoming increasingly insignificant". "The bread that is asked for all, achieved through their own labor, is a cry for justice", they say.



Sri Lankan Church concerned over crackdown on dissent

(1-8-22) Catholic priests and religious in Sri Lanka have expressed serious concerns over the arrests of prominent anti-government protesters since Ranil Wickremesinghe took charge as president. "We demand the government to stop the repression of those involved and supporting the *Aragalaya* (protest) and focus on listening to grievances and aspirations of people and take action to address both immediate and long-term problems," said July 31 statement signed by more than 1,600 Catholic priests, nuns and

brothers from 23 congregations,

Several prominent activists have been arrested and police were obstructing lawyers from meeting them, the statement pointed out. Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith of Colombo has urged the government to stop suppressing the peaceful protests of the people.

Indian archbishop backs top court in media, judiciary spat

(1-8-22) A Catholic archbishop has condemned media reports saying India's top court was delaying the hearing of a case seeking an end to violence against Christians.

"I am extremely distressed about articles in newspapers that the honourable Supreme Court, India's top court, is not taking up the matter of attacks against Christians. There is no merit in the allegation. I strongly condemn it," said Archbishop Peter Machado of Bangalore in southern Karnataka province, on July 30.

The archbishop's statement came a couple of days after Supreme Court Justice D Y Chandrachud criticized a section of the media for carrying news items hinting that the top court was not very keen on hearing the petition. "You get it published in newspapers that the Supreme Court is delaying the hearing. Look, there is a limit to which you can target the judges. Who supplies all this news," asked Justice Chandrachud on July 27 while clarifying the last hearing was postponed as he was down with Covid.

Affirming his complete faith in the judiciary, Archbishop Machado in his statement said: “The Christian community wishes to place on record its immense faith in the judiciary. We would never imagine or doubt that the Supreme Court would delay or hesitate to take up important issues that affect human rights or religious freedom.”

(1-8-22) **Sri Lanka's** new president Ranil Wickremesinghe has formally invited MPs to join an **all-party unity government** to revive the bankrupt economy by undertaking painful reforms, his office said on Sunday.

Myanmar's junta extends state of emergency

(1-8-22) Myanmar's military government has extended a state of emergency by six months, state media said on Aug.1 Monday, with the junta chief Min Aung Hlaing saying elections could only take place when the conflict-wracked country was "stable and peaceful".

Myanmar's Catholic villagers live in mortal fear

(1-8-22) On the sunny Sunday morning of July 17, Catholics attended Mass and returned home peacefully only to hear news of military raids at a nearby Buddhist village in the afternoon.

All hell broke loose in Mon Hla, a historic Catholic village in Myanmar's embattled Sagaing region, as the residents rushed to pack whatever food, clothes and other essentials they could gather and fled on motorcycles, tricycles, light trucks and bullock-pulled carts.

The young and able-bodied ensured the elderly, women and children left the village before they followed them to hide in the nearby paddy fields to the east of the village praying for safety.

On the morning of July 18, they heard fighter jets and helicopters approaching the fields and starting to shoot indiscriminately.

“We were trembling with fear as some of us lay flat on the ground. Others hid under the big trees. We dared not speak a word and prayed in silence,” said Martha Tin. Tin said like many of the villagers she had never witnessed a military airstrike before and the experience left them traumatized.

2-8-22

Chinese bishop demands priests, laity accept role of Patriotic Association

(2-8-22) Chinese Bishop Francis Shuxin of Baoding has instructed his priests to register with the Patriotic Association, noting that Vatican instructions have encouraged registration. Priests who do not register will be in violation of Chinese law, the bishop warned. Catholics who object will be barred from sacraments.

Priests who served in the “underground” Chinese Church are now under mounting pressure to join the Patriotic Association—an organization whose purposes Pope Benedict XVI condemned as incompatible with the Catholic faith.

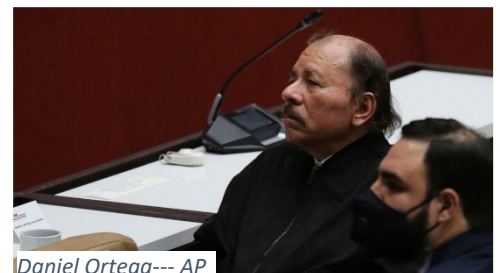
Nicaragua shuts down Catholic radio stations

(2-8-22) Nicaragua's government shut down six Catholic radio stations on August 1, as church-state tensions continued to mount. Bishop Rolando Alvarez of Matagalpa, a leading critic of the Ortega regime, denounced the closures as “an injustice.”

‘Do your utmost to end insecurity on the African continent,’ continent's bishops urge leaders

(2-8-22) The Symposium of the Bishops' Conferences of Africa and Madagascar called on the continent's political leaders to “do their utmost to fight against insecurity for our peoples and our countries.”

“Several regions of our continent are experiencing great insecurity due to socio-political instability,



Daniel Ortega--- AP

violence, economic poverty, weak health structures, insurgency, terrorism, exploitation of religion for political purposes and lack of respect for the environment and good governance,” the bishops added.

Canadian bishops see papal visit as ‘significant milestone on the path of healing and reconciliation’

(2-8-22) At the conclusion of Pope Francis’s apostolic journey to Canada, the Canadian Catholic of Catholic Bishops thanked Pope Francis for his visit.

The bishops also pledged to be guided by five requests made by members of indigenous communities, including greater transparency with residential school records, support in addressing “the issue of Indigenous artifacts housed at the Vatican Museum,” and affirmation of the rights of indigenous peoples.

Papal encouragement for Medjugorje youth rally

(2-8-22) Pope Francis has sent a message to the Mladifest Youth Festival, being held this week at Medjugorje. The Pope’s message—read to the participants by Archbishop Aldo Cavalli, the apostolic visitor for Medjugorje—urged young people to imitate the Virgin Mary in dedication to Christ.

Cardinal Ranjith sees ‘no justice’ in Sri Lanka

(2-8-22) Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith of Colombo has said that the country’s current crisis was caused by “people greedy for power and wealth who have betrayed the policies agreed upon by all.”

“There is no law in the country,” the cardinal said. “There is no place for justice. There is only illegality and the law of the powerful.”

Cardinal Ranjith renewed his demand for a serious investigation of the Easter Sunday bombings of Catholic churches, while also calling for effective action to end an economic crisis brought on by the government’s strict curbs on agriculture.

Archbishop of Canterbury pleads for unity at Lambeth Conference

(2-8-22) Anglican bishops from around the world, gathered for the Lambeth Conference, heard a plea for unity from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Justin Welby, as they prepared for a potentially divisive debate on human sexuality. “We are divided by many things,” Dr. Welby acknowledged. “How do we come together as God’s holy people, as one in Christ?” He applauded calls for spiritual growth, but warned against a tendency to “weaponize” the call to holiness.

The Lambeth Conference will take up a rewritten draft of a statement on sexuality, seeking to avoid a confrontation on same-sex marriage and gender ideology. Many African bishops are boycotting the conference, refusing to participate alongside those who accept homosexual partnerships.

Jesuits conclude Ignatian Year

(2-8-22) On July 31, the memorial of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Society of Jesus concluded the Ignatian Year, which commemorated the 500th anniversary of the saint’s conversion.

“Falling in love with Jesus, building fraternity and accompanying Jesus carrying the cross are three accents that the readings of today’s liturgy help us to recognize in the life of Saint Ignatius,” Father Arturo Sosa, the 31st Superior General of the Society of Jesus, preached at Mass in the Basilica-Sanctuary of Loyola (Spain). “Today’s world needs people who give themselves totally to loving and serving others.”

Following Mass, Father Sosa consecrated the largest male religious institute to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.



Kenya - Appeal to Catholic women: take a lead on assisting the Church in her noble pastoral mission

(2-8-22) "As part of the wider church congregation, you must not sit on the wall. On the contrary, you must participate in the Church's ministry", said Archbishop Philip Anyolo of Nairobi, addressing hundreds of Catholic women. The occasion was the blessing of the Chapel of the Memorial Adoration of Saint Monica during the recent feast of the Saint in the church of All Saints Komothai, County of Kiambu. Archbishop Anyolo told the women of the local Catholic Women Association (CWA) to take a leading role in

assisting the Church in her noble pastoral mission and of the centrality of families in a strong, united and reliable Church in addition to the various roles that women played in the Bible.

DR Congo - Bishops after the serious incidents with the UN peacekeepers: "Anger is understandable, but violence is never tolerable"

(2-8-22) Tensions continue in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo between the local population and the UN Blue Helmets of the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), after the assaults that began on July 25, against United Nations bases in Goma and in others city of North Kivu, with a toll of at least 15 dead: 3 UN peacekeepers and 12 demonstrators.

The Congolese Episcopal Conference (CENCO) in a statement signed by its President, Archbishop Marcel Utembi Tapa of Kisangani, affirms that he "understands the anger of the Congolese" due to the limits imposed by the Congolese army and MONUSCO in the face of the insecurity that has plagued the east of the DRC for over 20 years. However, "the use of violence or looting constitutes an act that can only amplify or perpetuate evil as well as the suffering of the populations", say the bishops who are calling for an investigation into the incidents.

Iraq - Political stalemate and Parliament occupied. Patriarch Sako: The sectarian quota system has failed

(2-8-22) The Iraqi political blocs must start a national consultation table to end the institutional stalemate that is paralyzing the country, before "a Tsunami wipes us all away". Cardinal Louis Raphael Sako, Patriarch of the Chaldean Church, uses an extreme and disturbing image to sound the alarm regarding the new phase of political chaos that surrounds his nation. On Sunday, July 31, the militants of the political coalition led by the Shiite leader Moqtada al Sadr occupied Parliament, where the parliamentarians elected in the elections on October 10 have not yet reached an agreement for the election of the new President and the formation of the new government.

Pakistan - Proclaiming the Gospel in the media: communicators on mission

(2-8-22) "Catholic professional communicators are evangelizers in the media: it is their vocation and responsibility. We want to train our Catholic media professionals and help them improve their work in reaching others through communication channels and social media. I encourage everyone to advance and grow in this profession, in techniques and skills, in light of the teachings of the Gospel and the values of the Church. It is necessary to live the profession as a mission to always proclaim the truth, to transmit and spread messages of joy, hope, peace and unity": said the Archbishop of Islamabad-Rawalpindi, Joseph Arshad, President of the Commission for Social Communications (NCSC) in the Pakistan Bishops' Conference (PCBC). The occasion was a recent four-day training seminar organized by the Commission in collaboration with SIGNIS Pakistan, for Catholic media professionals from the dioceses of Karachi and Lahore, Islamabad-Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Multan and the Apostolic Vicariate of Quetta.



Guatemala- For the Bishops "freedom of expression and of the press are the fundamental principles of a democratic system"

(2-8-22) The concern of the Bishops of Guatemala for the attack on freedom of the press in the country was expressed in a statement from the Bishops' Conference of Guatemala, signed by the President and the Secretary General, referring to the arrest of Rubén Zamora, director of the newspaper "El Periódico".

Colombia - Faced with the escalation of violence in Apartadó: prayers for peace and reconciliation, symbolic acts of rejection

(2-8-22) "No reason justifies violence and its consequences on peoples, institutions and families": is reiterated in the "communiqué to public opinion and men of good will" of the Diocese of Apartadó, in the northwest of Antioquia, in union with the other Christian Churches and the living forces of the civil society of Urabá Darién: the organizations of merchants, businessmen, unions and carriers, among others. In the declaration signed by Bishop Hugo Alberto Torres Marín of Apartadó, "the murder of defenceless young people who spent days of rest with their families, attacks on police stations, the consequent closure of schools and public services are rejected". The bishop asks that, before the new president takes office, prayers for peace and reconciliation are prayed for in all the churches of the region, and a symbolic act of rejection of armed violence is carried out, of solidarity with the families who have lost their children and "as an expression of the Colombia that we want to build together".

Hundreds jump to raise funds for Hong Kong Church

(2-8-22) Bishop Stephen Chow Sau-yan of Hong Kong presided over a rope-skipping (jump rope) charity event in which hundreds of Catholics took part to raise funds for the construction and maintenance of Church-run buildings and cemeteries in the city. The Hong Kong Diocesan Fundraising Commission for Church Building and Development organized the "725 Rope Skipping Fun Day" charity event at St Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School on July 25, the diocesan paper *Sunday Examiner* reported. About 200 children, parents, teachers, staff of Caritas Hong Kong, and other members of participating religious institutions were there.

As of July 26, the commission has raised US\$2.6 million and public donations are open until mid-August through the fund-raising website of the commission. Earlier the diocese revealed via a video communique that it needs to raise a total of US\$1 billion for development activities.



Filipino nuns blast Marcos film for 'historic inaccuracy'

(2-8-22) A group of nuns in the Philippines has condemned a controversial film about the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos for "a manipulated portrayal" of their congregation with former president, Corazon Aquino.

Members of the Order of the Carmelites in Cebu City in the Visayas region criticized the upcoming film "Maid in Malacañang" after its trailer was released on Aug. 1. It portrayed the late president Corazon

Aquino playing mahjong, a Chinese solitaire game associated with gambling, with Carmelite nuns. The film depicted the last 74 hours of Marcos, the father of the current president, and his family in the Malacanang Palace, the official residence of the Philippine president. The nuns said there was no historical basis in the portrayal of Aquino playing mahjong with their sisters.

Meanwhile (4-8-22) Catholic bishops have called for a boycott of a recently released film accused of whitewashing the Marcos family and wrongly portraying a group of nuns.

Report details Myanmar's torture of detainees

(2-8-22) Myanmar's military junta has inflicted torture and other cruel or degrading treatment on detainees to crush opposition to its rule, according to a new report by a rights organization.

Amnesty International (AI) released a new briefing on Aug 1 which reviewed over 100 news reports and interviewed 15 people, including former detainees, lawyers of prisoners, experts and students. The briefing — "15 Days Felt Like 15 Years" — documents the horrific experiences of individuals from the moment they are arrested, through their interrogation and imprisonment, and after their release. The report said military authorities flout the law at every stage of the arrest and detention process from showing up without an arrest warrant and forcing confessions through torture or other ill-treatment, to enforced disappearances, reprisals against relatives, and holding detainees incommunicado from family and legal counsel.

It revealed how prison officials kicked and slapped detainees, and also beat them with rifle butts, electrical cables and branches of a palm tree. Detainees allege they were psychologically tortured with death and rape threats to force confessions or extract information about anti-coup activities. "When they [the police] found us sleeping, they beat us. When they caught us sitting, they beat us. They pointed G3 rifles at our foreheads and threatened that they could kill us any time," one student arrested in the central Magwe region told AI.

The junta has ignored repeated calls by regional and international groups to end the violence. The reign of terror has targeted ethnic areas with a majority of Christians or Bamar Buddhists.

Nearly 2,200 people have lost their lives in the brutal crackdown by the military and over 14,500 have been detained since the coup in February last year.

Faith groups praised for response during Covid pandemic

(2-8-22) Leaders of the global response to HIV and AIDS who gathered in Montreal for the International AIDS Conference praised faith leaders for their contribution to fighting the four decade-old pandemic.

"Faith leaders have helped to keep us on track. You have provided hope to millions of people living with HIV and HIV activists with the power of prayer and faith when we needed it the most," Vinay Saldanha, director of the U.S. liaison office for the Joint United Nations Program on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), told a pre-conference gathering of interfaith religious leaders July 27.

3-8-22

Papal praise for work of Father Martin

Pope Francis praised Father James Martin for promoting "the culture of encounter," in a message to the controversial American Jesuit.

The papal message encouraged Father Martin to continue his work with and for homosexuals, asking him to "continue in this way, being close, compassionate, and full tenderness."

"The Church is a mother and calls together all her children," the Pope said, adding that a "selective" Church would be nothing more than a sect.

Pope offers plea for Lebanon

(3-8-22) Pope Francis renewed his call for "justice and truth" in Lebanon during his weekly public audience on August 3.

Noting the 2nd anniversary of a catastrophic warehouse explosion in Beirut, the Pope asked for prayers for the country, which has been suffering from unrest for years.

The Pope was holding his first Wednesday audience of August, having suspended the weekly public audiences during the month of July. He made his appearance walking with the help of a cane, rather than in the wheelchair that he had used for several weeks as he recovered from a painful knee condition.

Pope, at audience, recaps trip to Canada

(3-8-22) Pope Francis devoted his public audience on Wednesday, August 2, to a report on his trip to Canada, saying that it was



“unlike the other journeys” because it was intended as a penitential act. His goal in traveling to Canada, the Pope explained, was “to to meet the indigenous peoples to express to them my closeness and my sorrow, and to ask for forgiveness— to ask for forgiveness— for the harm done to them by those Christians, including many Catholics, who in the past collaborated in the forced assimilation and enfranchisement policies of the governments of the time.” The Pope expressed regret that many Catholics had “participated in programs that today we understand are unacceptable and also contrary to the Gospel.”

Synodal Path was always doomed, says Cardinal Müller

(3-8-22) The German bishops’ Synodal Path was “doomed from the start,” according to the former prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Cardinal Gerhard Müller told an EWTN audience that the Synodal Path suffered from a “birth defect,” because it was driven by a desire to change the Church. He ridiculed the idea that “this virtually randomly assembled body somehow has the right and authority to override the Church’s sacramental constitution and reinterpret Revelation according to its meaning.” The results of the Synodal Path are sure to cause division within the Church, the German cardinal said, because the approach constitutes “reform with a crowbar.”

‘The scenario is frightening,’ Cardinal Sako says after protestors storm Iraq’s parliament

(3-8-22) “The scenario is frightening,” Cardinal Louis Raphaël I Sako, the Patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church, said after protestors stormed the parliament in Baghdad. “Political leaders and also religious authorities must remedy the situation before a tsunami is unleashed that can overwhelm us all.”

Colombian bishop laments rising violence

(3-8-22) Bishop Hugo Alberto Torres Marín of Apartadó, a city of 200,000, decried “the murder of defenceless young people ... attacks on police stations, [and] the consequent closure of schools and public services.”



DR Congo - Tensions with the blue helmets continue; Kinshasa expels UN mission spokes-person

(3-8-22) The government of Kinshasa has asked the UN Mission in Congo (MONUSCO) to remove its spokesman Mathias Gillmann. "In relation to the recent escalation of tensions between MONUSCO and the population, in particular that of North Kivu, tensions resulting mainly from indelicate and inappropriate statements by MONUSCO spokesman Mathias Gillmann, the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo considers

that the presence of this official on its territory does not favour the climate of mutual trust and serenity that is so essential between the Congolese institutions and MONUSCO", reads the statement from the Kinshasa Ministry of Foreign Affairs, announcing the expulsion "as soon as possible" of the UN official.

Nigeria - violence ‘getting out of hand,’ cardinal reports

(3-8-22) Cardinal John Onaiyekan of Abuja warns that “Nigeria’s security situation is getting out of hand,” reporting that violence is widespread and the people “don’t know where the security forces are.”

Saying that terrorist violence has become commonplace, the cardinal said: “Nobody is safe, not just Christians. It is as if the government has lost control.”

The situation is not simply a matter of religious conflict, Cardinal Onaiyekan said, citing the fact that terrorists are “more Muslims are dying than Christians because the center of the violence is in the Muslim-dominated northern states.”

Egypt - He mocked Jesus. An Al Azhar professor will be tried for insulting Christianity and Islam

(3-8-22) His name is Mabrouk Attia and he is a professor of Islamic Law at Al Azhar University, the Egyptian professor-preacher who has ended up at the centre of controversy and criminal cases for irreverent expressions reserved for Jesus in a speech filmed and broadcast through social networks. In the speech, Attia made references to the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus, who he referred to as "Mr. Jesus" and assimilated "Mr. Mars" into a joke that was intended to be witty. On the same social networks, the professor was immediately accused of making fun of the name of Jesus. Lawyers and jurists filed complaints against Attia. Accepting these complaints, the Heliopolis court opened a trial against the Al Azhar professor for contempt for Christianity and Islam, setting the first hearing for September 21.

China - A summer of intense pastoral activity for the Catholic community, towards a newfound normality

(3-8-22) The restrictions against covid in China being reduced, the Catholic community throughout the country is experiencing a summer of intense spiritual life and pastoral commitments. The doors of the churches that have finally reopened.

Great feast was held for two ethnic Tibetan deacons who were ordained priests on July 18 in the diocese of Zhaotong. Both will carry out their pastoral service among the populations of minority ethnic groups, which are numerous in the region. The Cathedral of the capital and several parishes have celebrated, in communion with the universal Church, the Second World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly on Sunday, July 24. The Seminary of the Archdiocese of Beijing celebrated the solemn Eucharist with the missionary mandate granted to the seminarians who have completed their studies and will be sent to the different parishes to carry out pastoral training. Also in the archdiocese of Beijing, the cathedral dedicated to the Most Holy Savior, the one in Nantang dedicated to the Immaculate Conception and the one in Xitang dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, as well as many other parishes, have begun registration for the new catechetical course, which begins in August. Among the activities for young people, the parish of Jiujiang, in the province of Jiangxi, held a training course for altar boys on July 17.

Bangladesh - Grandparents and the elderly, precious accompaniment in families

(3-8-22) The presence of elderly is still precious for families in particular in rural areas, families are elderly live with children and progressive urbanization, many to the city or abroad live without the grandparents. On the other hand, unable to adapt to city life and prefer



grandparents and the society in Bangladesh. In still close together and the grandchildren. But, due to families who have moved presence of their many elderly people are to stay in rural villages. In

this state, many of them are left alone in the last years of their life. In this social framework, the Catholic community in Bangladesh recently celebrated the "Day for grandparents and the elderly", with the aim of teaching affection and love for grandparents. On the day celebrated on July 24, many parishes entrusted the elderly with a testimony or a sermon to address to the faithful.

Sri Lankan priest seeks court protection against arrest

(3-8-22) A Sri Lankan Catholic priest has appealed to the Supreme Court to prevent his impending arrest and protect his fundamental rights.

Father Amila Jeewantha Peiris, who has been a key figure during the protracted anti-government protests in the crisis-hit island nation, has expressed apprehension that police may want to arrest him on false charges. The police had visited a church in the southern part of Ratnapura diocese claiming they had orders to arrest Father Jeewantha after a court issued a foreign travel ban on him.

Over 1,600 Catholic priests, nuns and brothers have issued a statement against attempts to pressurize Father Jeewantha and other protesters. Father Jeewantha has said that he actively contributed to the peaceful struggle to fulfill his responsibility as a citizen of the country.

Caritas Vietnam educates teenagers on drug abuse

(3-8-22) Caritas in Vietnam's capital Hanoi has taught basic information on drugs and drug prevention skills to hundreds of teenagers in a bid to address a growing problem of drug abuse.

On July 31, Caritas in Hanoi and the local Institute of Studies and Applications of Drug Prevention conducted a seminar on drug prevention for 200 Catholic teenagers from Thach Bich parish in Thanh Oai district.

Father John Baptist Nguyen Van Quang, head of Caritas in Hanoi, said the first-ever such event aimed at helping youngsters gain practical knowledge of the harmful effects of illegal drugs and learn how to protect themselves and others from drug abuse.

Church calls for safeguarding marriage, family in Singapore

(3-8-22) Singapore Catholic Archdiocese has re-emphasized safeguarding marriage and families as the Singapore government plans to repeal a law that hitherto criminalizes same-sex in the city-state.

"The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore would like to re-emphasize the Church's stand and well-known position, that marriage is between a man and a woman joined in an intimate community of life and love, where both partners complement each other," Archdiocesan Communication Office said in a statement on July 31.

"The fruitfulness of marriage also necessitates that marriage must be open to procreation," it stated. The statement also said that the Archdiocese and its adherents respect the dignity of LGBTQ persons. The archdiocese reminded that LGBTQ persons too should respect "our rights to maintain our position on marriage" and that "the family unit comprises a father, mother, and their children." The archdiocese said that the state might consider repealing Section 377A of the Penal Code that criminalizes same-sex, but the church remains firm in its position to safeguard marriage and family life.

4-8-22

Pope renews criticism of traditionalists

4-8-22) Francis renewed his criticism of traditionalist Catholics, and argued the Church cannot function without synodality, in a session with Jesuits during his visit to Canada.

The Pope also said that his "penitential pilgrimage" to Canada, and apology to the country's indigenous peoples, reflected a judgment that had been made by the country's bishops, acting as a united group. While the papal trip was an important move toward reconciliation, he said, "It is the bishops who have done everything with their unity."

The Pontiff broke from that positive message, however, to say that "there are some who work against healing and reconciliation." He cited a "small traditionalist group" that had protested his public statements. Repeating a theme that he has used frequently in recent months, the Pope said: Someone once said that tradition is the living memory of believers. Traditionalism instead is the dead life of our believers. Tradition is the life of those who have gone before us and who go on. Traditionalism is their dead memory.

Regarding his push for a synodal Church, the Pope said that "the Church is either synodal or it is not Church." He went on to say that a recovery of synodal government was essential. "Certainly, we can say that the Church in the West had lost its synodal tradition," he said.

The Pope returned to his criticism of traditionalism when he was questioned about the liturgy. He made the claim: "My action in this field has aimed to follow the line taken by John Paul II and Benedict



XVI, who had allowed the ancient rite and had asked for subsequent verification.” He said that a survey of the world’s bishops demonstrated that the use of the Tridentine rite has harmed the cause of unity.

Vatican names administrator for troubled Syro-Malabar archdiocese

(4-8-22) Pope Francis has named Archbishop Andrews Thazhath of Trichur to serve as apostolic administrator of the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly in India, after Archbishop Antony Kariyil resigned at the Vatican’s request.

Archbishop Thazhath, a leading authority on the Code of Canon Law for the Eastern Catholic churches, will be asked to resolve the heated liturgical dispute that led to the resignation of Archbishop Kariyil, and pits the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church and the Vatican against most of the clergy of the Indian archdiocese.

Pope, in video, pays tribute to small businesses

(4-8-22) The August papal prayer intention is “we pray for small and medium sized businesses; in the midst of economic and social crisis, may they find ways to continue operating, and serving their communities.”

“As a consequence of the pandemic and the wars, the world is facing a grave socio-economic crisis,” Pope Francis commented. “And among those most affected are small and medium-sized businesses ... the ones that don’t appear on the lists of the richest and most powerful, and despite the difficulties, they create jobs, fulfilling their social responsibility.”

Ukrainian priests meet Pope, who blesses crown for Marian image

(4-8-22) On August 3, Pope Francis received two Ukrainian priests sent by Bishop Stanislav Szyrokoradiuk, the Latin-rite Bishop of Odessa-Simferopol in Ukraine.

“Our pastor [i.e., bishop] has always remained close to the population of Odessa,” said one of the priests, Father Daniel Kulakowski. “The territory of our diocese also includes Mykolaiv and Kherson, where missiles hit private homes, hospitals, and even churches: four were attacked and destroyed.” The Pontiff blessed a crown with which a Marian image in Odessa’s cathedral will be crowned on August 15. Under Soviet rule, the cathedral, confiscated by Communist authorities, was used as a club and gymnasium; it was restored to the Church in 1991.

Pope promotes ‘personal health assistant’

(4-8-22) Pope Francis has promoted the nursing coordinator of the Vatican’s small health-care force, Massimiliano Strapetti, giving him the title of the Pontiff’s “personal health assistant.”

Last year Pope Francis said that Strapetti had probably saved his life, by recommending the surgery in which more than a foot of the Pontiff’s colon was removed. The Vatican has not explained why the Pope’s intestinal condition—which has been described as diverticulitis—was life-threatening. Strapetti was in evidence during the Pope’s recent trip to Canada, helping him with his wheelchair. He traveled along with the Pope’s personal physician, Dr. Roberto Bernabei.

Cuban government tightening restrictions on religious leaders

(4-8-22) The Cuban government is mounting a campaign to curb the influence of religious leaders, experts have told the US Commission on International Religious Freedom.

The government last year exiled an influential Protestant pastor, Alain Toledano Valiente, and several other religious leaders have been jailed by authorities after public anti-government protests. The role of religious leaders is an important one, in a country where, despite years of Communist rule, 70% of the people identify themselves as religious.



Primate admits Anglicans remain 'deeply divided' over sexuality

(4-8-22) "For the large majority of the Anglican Communion the traditional understanding of marriage is something that is understood, accepted without question, not only by bishops but their entire church, and the societies in which they live," Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury said during the communion's Lambeth Conference. Proponents of same-sex marriage, he said, "are not careless about Scripture. They do not reject Christ. But they have come to a different view on sexuality after long prayer, deep study and reflection on

understandings of human nature."

"We are deeply divided," he observed. "That will not end soon. We are called by Christ Himself both to truth and unity."

Somalia - The United Nations intervenes: crisis, drought and terrorist attacks

(4-8-22) "The recent attack by Al Shabab in Ethiopia is another demonstration of the will of the terrorist group to become an international structure and not just Somali". This is reported by sources from Somalia speaking about the terrorist attacks recorded in recent weeks.

"Hundreds of well-armed and trained men entered Ethiopia countered by a strong response from the Ethiopian Army (ENDF) - continues the source -. The number of Ethiopian casualties is unknown, while there is talk of a hundred dead in the ranks of Al Shabab, including the Somali-Swedish Islamist militant Fuad 'Shangole' and two other prominent leaders".

Meanwhile, the drought and the very strong internal clashes between the ENDF and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) armed group, are ongoing while the delicate peace process continues with the Tigrays. On the other hand, while the specter of famine has reappeared in the country that is experiencing its worst conditions in forty years, with four consecutive failed rainy seasons, a positive signal comes from the international organizations that are helping Somalia in this dramatic moment. The UN as allocated 9.5 million dollars to intervene in the Bay region, one of the most affected in the country by the phenomenon and the terrorist attacks.

India - The work of the Jesuit Catholic network: Pastoral care and care for migrants

(4-8-22) Priests, nuns and laity of the local Church in the Indian state of Jharkhand are committed to promoting human rights, working as social workers, lawyers and pastoral agents in the care of migrants. Their commitment is carried out in the organization "Migrant Help and Information Network" (MAIN), an initiative launched by the Indian Jesuits and shared with the entire Catholic community, across the nation. "Migration and human trafficking in India are a constant challenge, which has worsened especially during the pandemic", Sister Manjula Bara, a religious of the Handmaids of Mary, says. "On the basis of the evangelical approach of respect for human dignity, we try to give a coordinated, collective and innovative response to reach the people concerned and give them pastoral care from the Church", she says.

Vietnamese devotees urged to bring Mary to others

(4-8-22) Thousands of members of a Marian association based in Vietnam have been called on to promote Marian devotion among followers of other faiths as a way of evangelization at its gathering. Six thousand devotees from the Our Mother of Perpetual Help, a Catholic association led by Redemptorists, attended their national congress on Aug. 3-4 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Hue, capital of Thua Thien Hue province.

Archbishop Joseph Nguyen Chi Linh of Hue and the head of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Vietnam, presiding at the opening Mass of the congress, said Vietnamese people are passionately devoted to Mary who saved their ancestors from religious persecution and still continues to perform miracles for the faithful and followers of other faiths many people of other faiths make pilgrimages to Lourdes in France and many of them also were present at the congress to seek comfort from Mother Mary. They were attracted by good examples from association members. Long Xuyen diocese is home to 400 Our Mother of Perpetual Help members. Many devotees travelled far by bus and arrived at the church the previous days so that they could attend the congress and be appreciative of Mary's graces.



Korean Catholic dental care group faces hard times

(4-8-22) A Catholic volunteer group in South Korea that has been providing free dental care services to disadvantaged people for more than four decades is struggling for survival amid dwindling membership.

The Green Club has served hundreds of poor and marginalized people by offering dental services in the Kkottongnae area in North Chungcheong province since 1977. The group, composed of mainly Catholic dentists, technicians and hygienists, has been facing hard times due to a drop in volunteers and a funding crunch, Catholic Peace Broadcasting Corporation (CPBC) reported.

Italian priest hailed for peace efforts in Papua New Guinea

(4-8-22) Catholics in Papua New Guinea delivered emotional messages as they bid farewell to Father Dario Monegatti, an elderly Italian missionary priest, who served the country for 52 years and was admired for his efforts for peace during the civil war.

Besides his regular pastoral work for people in the country's remote areas, the priest, a member of the Divine Word Missionaries, is credited for his significant role in promoting peace during the Bougainville civil war in 1989-1991. The conflict left an estimated 15,000–20,000 people dead.

Pakistan Church welcomes remission for minority inmates

(4-8-22) The Church in Pakistan has welcomed remission for non-Muslim inmates upon completing the study of their religious books in Punjab prisons.

The response came after the Punjab government announced cutting the sentences of Christian and Hindu prisoners memorizing the Bible and Gita, respectively. A summary has been sent to the Chief Minister to reduce the sentences of such prisoners by between three and six months, not unlike Muslims who can get a remission of 6 months to 2 years if they memorise the Koran.



(4-8-22) Caritas Bangladesh, along with other **Catholic institutions in Bangladesh have appealed for more aid to help rehabilitate flood-affected people** in the northeastern parts of the country devastated by torrential rains and flash floods in June.

5-8-22

Syro-Malabar archbishop says Vatican ordered immediate resignation

(5-8-22) Archbishop Antony Kariyil, who resigned last week, has disclosed, in an open letter, that he received orders from the Vatican to resign within 24 hours and leave the Ernakulam-Angamaly immediately, because of a conflict over liturgical changes in the Syro-Malabar Church. Archbishop Kariyil also says that he had sent several urgent questions and requests to the Vatican, which were unanswered at the time of his forced resignation.

Vatican economic overseer sees progress, warns of future uncertainty

(5-8-22) “We are on the right path,” the prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy said in an interview with Vatican News, discussing the Holy See’s latest financial statement.

The figures show a €3 million (\$3.07 million) deficit for the 2021 fiscal year—a far better result than the €33 million deficit that had been predicted, noted Father Juan Antonio Guerrero Alves. However, he warned that “a very uncertain period lies ahead.” He concluded: “We cannot say that the time for sacrifice is over.”

Father Guerrero expressed satisfaction that this year’s financial statement provides far more information than previous versions, and covers more of the Vatican’s operations. “We have taken many steps in the right direction regarding transparency, economic protection of the Holy See, and sustainability,” he said.

UK transgender clinic to close after damning report: ‘not safe’ for children

(5-8-22) “Many children will be saved from going down the path that I went down,” said Keira Bell, a former patient who, according to a BBC report, “went to court saying she had not been challenged enough about her decision at 16 to take drugs that began her transition from female to male—a decision she later regretted.”

Lebanese Patriarch seeks international probe of Beirut explosion

(5-8-22) On the 2nd anniversary of an explosion that killed 221 people and injured more than 6,000 in Beirut, Maronite Catholic Patriarch Bechara Rai demanded an international probe, saying that Lebanese officials have thwarted investigation.

The Lebanese prelate said that the deliberate sabotage of the investigation is “no less scandalous than the explosion.”



Nigeria - Appeal of the Auxiliary Bishop of Minna: "Jungle justice". The country is on the path of disintegration

(5-8-22) Violence continues to spread across the country, as well as kidnappings, killings, attacks on churches, clashes, and now even death threats against President Muhammadu Buhari.

This is how Bishop Luka Sylvester Gopep, Auxiliary Bishop of Minna, describes the dramatic situation in an interview with Fides. His diocese is located in the Middle Belt, the region of Nigeria that marks the border between the northern and southern parts of the country.

Bishop Gopep continues, “presently many communities are forming local self-defence groups without resort to the state or federal authorities. This is a consequence of the government’s inability to guarantee the safety of citizens and ideally speaking, it is a violation of the law. When local populations form self-defence militias it means that the government is losing legitimacy and control of the monopoly of force. If this continues, the country is on the way to disintegration. But the people in different communities are helpless in the face of increasing violence and destruction of lives and property in their homelands.”

Mozambique - More than 600 hostages of the Islamic State freed in northern Mozambique but attacks continue

(5-8-22) More than 600 hostages have been freed by the Rwandan military contingent together with their Mozambican counterparts and the forces of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in the province of Cabo Delgado, in northern Mozambique.

According to Rwanda Defense Force, the liberation is the result of offensive operations to destroy terrorist bases in the Catupa forest, northeast of the Macomia district based in the Cabo Delgado province. However, rebel formations continue to threaten villages and the main roads of the province. The number of displaced people who fled their homes as a result of the war reached 946,508, an increase of 161,944 since February.



Pakistan - The appeal of civil society to the government: Do not teach hatred towards minorities at school

(5-8-22) "We want a curriculum that is in line with international standards for our country, which focuses on moral and ethical values. The government should not incorporate religious content in compulsory subjects such as Urdu and English, as is provided for in Article 22 of the Constitution of Pakistan" says Catholic leader Peter Jacob, director of the Center for Social Justice (CSJ), an organization which is active in promoting human rights

in Pakistan.

Tauseef Ahmed Khan, member of Pakistan's Human Rights Commission, notes with concern that "our Curriculum includes content that sows hatred towards minority groups and this is becoming a source of hatred in the hearts of students from as early as 2004. We need our students to absorb content that speaks of peace, harmony and justice".

Indian school manager booked under conversion law

(5-8-22) Police in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh has booked the manager of a private school in Kanpur city under the anti-conversion law for hurting religious sentiments.

According to media reports some Hindu parents complained on Aug. 2 about Islamic texts being recited during morning prayers at Florets International School. However, police said no arrests have been made till today (5 Aug.).

"I am very surprised that an incident like this has happened as there were no reports of such cases in our localities in the past," said Father Louis Mascarenhas, diocesan administrator of Allahabad. Kanpur assistant commissioner of police Sisamau Nishank Sharma said a case has been lodged against school manager Sumit Makhija after a complaint about Islamic religious texts being recited during morning prayers. The father of a student alleged that the seeds of conversion were being sown through the recital of prayers. The state of Uttar Pradesh is being ruled by pro-Hindu BJP party.

Southeast Asian nations dismiss Myanmar junta's 'peace' promise

(5-8-22) Rights groups and politicians from Southeast Asian nations have dismissed promises from Myanmar's military junta to institute a five-point roadmap for peace in the conflict-ridden nation. As leaders and diplomats from over 40 countries gathered in Cambodian capital Phnom Penh for the 55th ASEAN Regional Forum, rights groups called on the bloc not to waste time and to act against the Myanmar military junta.

The junta leader Min Aung Hlaing made the offer for peace shortly after he announced a six-month extension to the state of emergency after the shocking and much-criticized execution of four political prisoners.

ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights has called for "strong and coordinated measures" against Myanmar's military for ending violence and establishing peace.

Chinese bishop pushing clergy into 'Patriotic Association'

(5-8-22) An international Christian group has condemned Bishop Francis An Shuxin of the Diocese of Baoding in Hebei province in northern China for threatening to withhold the Sacrament of Eucharist for clergy if they do not register with the state-sanctioned Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association (CCPA). He also warned the local Catholics that if they refuse to accept priests who are registered with the CCPA they would face the same fate.

Philippine bishop issues 'gambling pandemic' warning

(5-8-22) A senior Catholic official in the Philippines has expressed alarm over the spread of illegal gambling activities in Kidapawan City in the Mindanao region.

Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo of Kidapawan expressed the fear on Aug. 4 that the rise in the age-old practice of cockfighting for gambling purposes in the province could negatively impact poor youths. Cockfighting is hugely popular in the Philippines where large amounts of money are wagered on battles between roosters.

Hijab rules are raising rights concerns in Indonesia

(5-8-22) A recent case of forcing a student to wear a hijab at a state school has renewed concerns about a "rights violation" in Indonesia, which also targets religious minorities, according to rights activists.

The Muslim-majority country was shocked last week by the case of a Muslim student at a senior high school in Banguntapan, Bantul district, Yogyakarta special region who claimed to be intimidated by teachers into wearing a headscarf.

As a result, the 16-year-old student was reported to have confined herself for an hour in a school toilet. The school later denied any coercion, but the "traumatized" girl reportedly moved to another school.



6-8-22

Uzbekistan - First vocation to female consecrated life in Samarkand

(6-8-22) One of the most beautiful fruits, the work of God's grace is the first religious vocation of an Uzbek girl, who expressed the desire to consecrate herself to God in the Institute of the Incarnate Word: a "little plant of faith" - Fr. Ariel Alvarez Toncovich, priest of the Institute of the Incarnate Word and parish priest of the church of St. John the Baptist in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, says. Currently, there are 3000 Uzbek Catholics.

Kenya - "We are guardians of each other", in the country the expectation is growing for the next elections

(6-8-22) "We share with our neighbours, wherever we are, in the villages, towns or cities the identity of who we are: citizens of our beloved nation, Kenya". The appeals and exhortations of the Kenyan Bishops continue in view of the presidential and parliamentary elections to be held on 9 August. "Not going to vote gives space to less qualified candidates, including corrupt people and people less worthy of winning seats who clearly shouldn't," said the archbishop of Nyeri, Msgr. Anthony Muheria, "Voting is an exercise that distinguishes our civic duty" he reiterated.

Iraq - 8 years after the night of the great escape in the face of the jihadist offensive, **Christians are still leaving the Nineveh Plain.**

(6-8-22) On July 26, the Vice Governor of the Province of Nineveh, Sirwan Ruzbiani, expressed in a note his bitterness "in learning the news that Christians continue to emigrate, despite our efforts to urge them to stay in their homes.

(6-8-22) **Pope Francis sent a video message to participants in a conference in Mexico**, and urged "digital evangelizers" to reach out to people in digital spaces who have not yet encountered Christ.

7-8-22

Pope at Angelus: 'Fear not but be vigilant'

(7-8-22) Greeting pilgrims on a hot and humid August Sunday, Pope Francis spoke about the Gospel reading in today's liturgy that recalls when Jesus reassured His disciples not to be afraid, but also to "be ready" at all times.

"Our lives are firmly in God's hands" – this assurance of Jesus based on the loving and provident care of God, is heartening for us, he continued, as at times we can feel closed in on ourselves with anxieties, worries, distrust, fears of failure or not being loved. This can lead to focusing only on ourselves and a desire to accumulate goods and wealth that give us a false sense of security, he added.

While we can rest assured the Lord always watches over us, that does not entitle us to "fall asleep" or "succumb to laziness," we should be attentive always to the needs and good of others, available to listen and welcome.

"At the end of our life, He will call us to account for the goods He has entrusted to us. Therefore, being vigilant also means being responsible, that is, safeguarding and administering those goods faithfully," Pope Francis said.



Pope applauds Ukrainian grain deal as sign of hope for peace, prays for accident victims among Polish pilgrims

(7-8-22) After the Angelus prayer, Pope Francis expressed his satisfaction that grain ships have been allowed to leave Ukrainian ports, saying the deal offers a sign of hope that a just and lasting peace can be found.

Four bulk carrier ships set sail from Ukrainian Black Sea ports on Sunday, after the first ships left the port city of Odessa early last

week. Turkey and the United Nations brokered a deal in July between Russia and Ukraine to allow the export of Ukrainian foodstuffs through the Black Sea. The Pope said the deal charts the path forward toward peace: "This step shows that it is possible to dialogue and achieve concrete results, which benefit everyone. Therefore, this event can be seen as a sign of hope, and I sincerely hope that, following this path, we can put an end to the fighting and arrive at a just and lasting peace."

Also after the Angelus, Pope Francis offered prayers for Polish travellers who died in a bus crash on Saturday 6 August in Croatia, as they were headed on pilgrimage to Medjugorje.

Nicaraguan police prevent Bishop from leaving home

(7-8-22) Police in Nicaragua are preventing Bishop Rolando Alvarez of Matagalpa and some priests from leaving his home – they were going to the nearby cathedral to say Mass - accusing him of inciting "acts of hatred" against the government of President Daniel Ortega. The bishop had criticized the president for closing five Catholic radio stations. Bishop Alvarez and 12 other people have been stuck in his residence since 4 August.

"They told us that we are under house arrest," said Bishop Alvarez during a Mass on 6 August which he broadcast on social networks from his house in Matagalpa.
