

CATHOLIC WORLD LAST WEEK

(CWLW)

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Work ‘with’ as well as ‘for’ those you serve, Pope tells Milan charity

(11-4-22) On April 8, Pope Francis received a delegation from the Fondazione Marcello Candia, a Milan-based charity that assists the poor in Brazil. Venerable Marcello Candia (1916-1983) was an industrialist who became a lay missionary in the Amazon region.

“Avoid any kind of paternalism; don’t impose your ideas on others, even with good intentions,” Pope Francis said in his address. “Don’t make yourself indispensable, but on the contrary, train your co-workers and ensure stability and continuity.”

Papal encouragement to Italian judges to fight corruption

(11-4-22) On April 8, Pope Francis received members of Italy’s High Council of the Judiciary. In his address, the Pope said that “credibility of testimony, love for justice, authority, independence from other constituted powers and a loyal pluralism of positions are the antidotes to prevent political influences, inefficiencies and various dishonesty from prevailing.”



Cardinal Parolin hopes to improve secret Vatican-China deal

(11-4-22) Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Vatican Secretary of State, said that he hoped that a diplomatic accord between the Holy See and Beijing can be amended when the current agreement expires in October.

“We are trying to resume the dialogue concretely, with meetings that we hope will occur soon,” the cardinal said. He acknowledged the need to “make clarifications or review some points.”

Cardinal Parolin did not reveal the terms of the secret agreement.

Vatican Stations of the Cross to highlight problems of families

(11-4-22) The Vatican has released the text for the Stations of the Cross at which Pope Francis will preside on Good Friday at the Roman Coliseum.

The text calls attention to the suffering of families, with a series of meditations on struggles of families coping with poverty, illness, disabilities, death, aging, migration, and war. The meditation for the 13th Station will feature thoughts of two families—one from Ukraine, another from Russia—afflicted by war. The meditations were written with the help of lay Catholics, and lay Catholics will carry the cross as the Pope reads the meditations.

Pontifical academy warns of ‘grave threat’ of nuclear war

(11-4-22) On April 8, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences issued a statement, “Preventing Nuclear War and War Against Civilian Populations: Also a Task for the Sciences.” The academy, established in 1936, is an advisory body whose members include non-Catholics.

“Humankind is again confronted with a grave threat, arising from armed conflicts and the acute war that Russia has inflicted on Ukraine,” the statement begins. “The possibility of nuclear war has been raised by the aggressors.”

‘Sharing joys and sorrows’: theme of Vatican’s message for Ramadan

(11-4-22) The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue devoted its annual message for Ramadan to “Christians and Muslims: Sharing joys and sorrows.”

“Our hope, dear Muslim brothers and sisters, is that we continue sharing the joys and sorrows of all

our neighbors and friends, because God's love embraces every person and the entire universe," the Pontifical Council stated in its message, dated February 18 and released April 8. "As a sign of our shared humanity and the fraternity that flows from it, we wish you a peaceful and fruitful Ramadan and a joyful celebration of 'Id al-Fitr."

European human rights commissioner meets Pontiff

(11-4-22) Dunja Mijatovic, the Commission of Human Rights for the Council of Europe, met Pope Francis and other Vatican officials on April 9.

The parties discussed the human rights of migrants and the humanitarian consequences of the war in Ukraine. "I appreciate the Holy Father's relentless engagement to promote and defend these universal human values," said Mijatovic. "His role is crucial to advance human rights protection."

Ecumenical Patriarch calls for dialogue as the only way to stop the war in Ukraine



(11-4-22) Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, who holds a primacy of honor among the Orthodox churches, has renewed his condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine. He lamented the killing of civilians and criticized Patriarch Kirill of Moscow for referring to the invasion as a "holy war."

During his April 7 talk, the Ecumenical Patriarch expressed outrage at a statement that the war broke out because he granted autocephalous status to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine in 2019.

Brazilian archdiocese defends politician who disrupted service

(11-4-22) The Archdiocese of Curitiba, Brazil, has issued a statement in defense of Renato Freitas, a left-wing politician who may lose his city-council seat after he joined activists in a February a noisy February demonstration inside a Catholic church.

Although the archdiocese had earlier decried the anti-racism protest as "invasive, disrespectful, and grotesque," the new statement lauded Freitas for "the desire of justice for the ones who have historically suffered discrimination in our country."

Freitas had backed a "noble cause," the archdiocese said, and had apologized for the excesses of the demonstration.

As 3 feasts converge, Holy Land Christians hope for peace, tourism

(11-4-22) "With pandemic restrictions almost fully lifted, churches and shopkeepers alike are hopeful that the streets of Jerusalem will fill up once again as Easter, Passover and Ramadan converge," the report begins.

Sami El-Yousef, a lay official of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, expressed hope "that we will all rise above the current cycle [of violence] and strengthen our faith and that special relationship with our one God in the coming weeks."

Orthodox Priest dies from stabbing on seaside promenade in Egypt

(11-4-22) Father Arsanious Wadid, a 56-year-old Coptic Orthodox priest, was stabbed to death in Alexandria, Egypt.

The Grand Imam of Al-Azhar (located in Cairo), recognized by some Sunni Muslims as the highest Muslim authority, decried the attack and said that "homicide is a major sin that arouses God's wrath and is punishable in the afterlife."

Priest sends open letter to German cardinal begging him to uphold Catholic teaching on homosexuality

(11-4-22) The priest is Father Philip Bochanski, executive director of Courage International, an

apostolate that ministers to persons with same-sex attractions in a manner that is faithful to Catholic teaching.

Nigeria - Father Leo Raphael Ozigi's release confirmed; two priests still in the hands of the kidnappers

(11-4-22) The release of Father Leo Raphael Ozigi, parish priest of St. Mary's Church, Sarkin Pawa Village, Munya Local Government Area, Niger State, kidnapped on Sunday, March 27, has been confirmed. The diocese of Minna confirms the release of the priest on the night of April 8 on the Kaduna-Zaria road, specifying that no ransom was paid by the Church.



According to sources in the Diocese of Minna, "a member of the priest's family was directly involved in the negotiations and the subsequent release". The kidnappers did not know that Father Leo Raphael was a Catholic priest". According to media sources, the priest was being held captive in a hideout in a forest in Kaduna state, where he was transferred after his abduction. Besides Father Ozigi, two other priests, Father Joseph Akete Bako and Fr. Felix Zakari Fidson, were abducted in Nigeria in March (on 8th and 24th respectively), both from the northern state of Kaduna: as of now, there is no news about them.

Myanmar - The Sisters of Reparation: "We walk alongside the people, asking for peace and justice"

(11-4-22) "When the coup took place (February 1, 2021, ed.), I was in the Burmese state of Kayah. I also took part in the peaceful demonstrations of the Burmese people, sharing the feelings of the people, especially young people, who fear losing their freedom and democracy. In the months of March and April, our congregation in Myanmar, in collaboration with the local church, began to make its facilities available to displaced people fleeing the bombings. In our convent of Doungankha, in the diocese of Loikaw, where there is a rest house for the elderly nuns, a formation house for the young nuns and a Centre for spiritual exercises, about 150 people from neighboring villages found refuge: women (some pregnant), children, the elderly". Sister Regina Khuan Num Sang, a Burmese nun from the Congregation of the Sisters of Reparation, says. She arrived in Italy in April 2015 and in February 2020 Regina returned to Myanmar to visit her family.

Uzbekistan - An "international Easter Triduum" for the small Catholic community

(11-4-22) At Easter 2022, liturgical and pastoral activities will resume, without restrictions, for the community of the Uzbek faithful. This is what Fr. Jerzy Maculewicz, OFM Conv., Apostolic Administrator of Uzbekistan says: "Here in the 'Sacred Heart of Jesus' parish in Tashkent, we organize the Stations of the Cross every Friday with children and adults, while in other Uzbek parishes, there are also spiritual exercises. We are happy that the cases of Covid-19 have decreased dramatically in this country. And so, we will be able to live Holy Week with all the liturgical celebrations in attendance after two years of Easter celebrations from a distance". The liturgical readings will be in four languages: Russian, English, Korean and Polish. Currently, the small Uzbek Catholic community of approximately 3,000 baptized members has five parishes spread across the country. There are approximately 700 faithful in Tashkent.

Venezuela - Twelve university students, missionaries among the indigenous people of the Vicariate of Caroni

(11-4-22) There are 12 young missionaries who from April 9 to 20, will dedicate the Easter period to evangelization among the peoples and indigenous communities of the Apostolic Vicariate of Caroni. The celebration for the missionary sending took place in the Cathedral of the Diocese of San Cristóbal and was presided over by the Auxiliary Bishop Juan Alberto Ayala, in the presence of relatives and friends, as well as members of the diocesan secretariat of the University pastoral and diocesan Caritas.



The Apostolic Vicariate of Caroni, which includes the Venezuelan state of Bolívar, was erected on March 4, 1922. It has a population of 91,100, of whom 57,700 are Catholic.

Bishop Juan Alberto Ayala stressed that the evangelizing commitment of each of the envoys "is to do good".

"Remember, dear brothers, that you were sent to do

good, the Church of San Cristóbal is present in the Apostolic Vicariate of Caroní with Bishop Gonzalo Ontiveros, with priests and seminarians, and now with you. Have courage and go forward, be courageous, because the one who called you to this mission is God".

Pakistan Church hails apex court ruling against Imran Khan

(9-4-22) Church leaders and rights activists welcomed the Supreme Court ruling declaring Prime Minister Imran Khan's move to dissolve Pakistan's parliament to avoid a no-confidence vote as unconstitutional.

"The verdict has restored our faith in rule of law, a democratic state and voting for the right representatives. The past three years have been the worst regime in terms of human development, minority legislation and economic growth," said Kashif Aslam, national project coordinator at the Catholic bishops' National Commission for Justice and Peace. The government dissolved parliament and called early elections.

Vietnam's new deacons told to be devoted servants

(11-4-22) Transitional deacons in Vietnam's northern diocese have been urged to preach God's word and work as faithful servants all their lives.

On April 7, Archbishop Joseph Nguyen Nang, apostolic administrator of Phat Diem, ordained 11 transitional deacons at Phat Diem Cathedral in Kim Son district of Ninh Binh province.

Archbishop Nang said the most important thing for deacons is to preach what they are absolutely convinced of and practise in their daily life. "Preachers are not advertisers who sell products but do not use them. God's word is not a product," he underlined.

He said that receiving a diaconate means becoming a servant as Jesus came to serve people as a servant. Deacons serve as devoted servants who work without receiving gifts and money and give out what they have. They should not wish and require people to show gratitude to them.

Church leaders join calls for Sri Lankan govt to quit

(11-4-22) Thousands of Christians took to the streets in cities across Sri Lanka calling for the government to resign as the country faces its worst economic crisis since independence in 1948. Protesters including priests and nuns marched with posters, banners and flags calling on President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his government to quit as the crisis worsens, but the president has remained steadfast in refusing to step down.

Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, the outspoken archbishop of Colombo, and interfaith leaders joined protesters in Negombo on April 9 and said the country needs a fresh start with major changes.

"Hand over the country to someone who can govern it and people should have the courage to take action to eradicate the corrupt system," the cardinal said. "Some of the Rajapaksa family members who stole money from the country have already fled Sri Lanka."

Cardinal urges Filipinos to cry out for truth, justice

(11-4-22) The archbishop of Manila has urged Filipino Catholics to profess their faith by shouting for truth and justice instead of seeking money and fame.

Modern Catholics are crying for wealth and power instead of for Christ, truth and justice, Cardinal Jose Advincula said during a Mass in Manila to mark Palm Sunday on April 10. “When for money, wealth, position, power and popularity, the cry of Hosanna is very loud,” he said. “Why when for God, when for our faith, when for truth and justice, why do we seem to be just whispering or silencing our cries?”

Vietnam Catholics help the needy during Lent

(11-4-22) Caritas Hanoi is supporting impoverished families in northern Vietnam’s mountainous province of Hoa Binh irrespective of their religious beliefs.

Caritas workers visited four families in three parishes under Hanoi Archdiocese on April 9 and handed over 20-70 million dong (US\$870 to \$3,000) each to repair their old houses or build new ones if required. Led by Father John Baptist Nguyen Van Quang, head of Caritas Hanoi, the group also extended livelihood assistance of 3 million dong each to 30 households in the five parishes of Go Mu, Dong Gianh, Muong Tre, Muong Riec and Vu Ban, and Doi Ca Subparish, to help plant crops and rear poultry.

Caritas Hanoi said it hoped the assistance, enabled by donations from Catholics in the archdiocese during Lent, will bring renewed hope to people who could not even afford subsistence living.



Archbishop asks Timor-Leste poll candidates to respect Holy Week

(11-4-22) Timor-Leste’s top churchman has asked presidential candidates running for the second round of elections to respect the sacredness of Holy Week, which started on Sunday.

Archbishop Dom Virgilio do Carmo da Silva of Dili, vice president of the Episcopal Conference of Timor (CET), said on 9 April it was important that candidates and their supporters respect - create a healthy and respectful environment - Holy Week in the Catholic-majority nation.

12-4-22

70 bishops caution German episcopate on Synodal Path

(12-4-22) More than 70 bishops from around the world—most of them from the US—have signed an open letter to the Catholic bishops of Germany, warning of “our growing concern about the nature of the entire German ‘Synodal Path.’”

The letter argues that the German bishops’ plans for radical changes in Church teaching and discipline will create confusion and could cause schism. They argue that the initiative appears to be “largely inspired not by Scripture and Tradition — which, for the Second Vatican Council, are ‘a single sacred deposit of the Word of God’ — but by sociological analysis and contemporary political, including gender, ideologies.”

The letter strongly criticizes the approach taken by the German bishops in their Synodal Path, saying that it is “the work of experts and committees: bureaucracy-heavy, obsessively critical, and inward-looking. It thus itself reflects a widespread form of Church sclerosis and, ironically, becomes anti-evangelical in tone.”

The letter is signed by four members of the College of Cardinals: Cardinals Francis Arinze, Raymond Burke, Wilfred Napier, and George Pell. Also signing are fifteen archbishops and dozens of bishops.

Pope plans September visit to Kazakhstan for world religious congress

(12-4-22) Pope Francis plans to visit Kazakhstan in September, to take part in the 7th Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

The congress, which takes place every three years, was begun by Kazakhstan’s former President Nursultan Nazarbaev in 2003. Past meetings have been devoted to interfaith cooperation to promote peace and fight terrorism. The 2022 event is devoted to the role of religious leaders in leading

recovery from the pandemic.

Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev reported that the Pontiff indicated that he hopes to make the trip, during a video conversation on April 11

Pope advances sainthood causes, including Salesian brother

(12-4-22) 10 sainthood and beatification causes advanced during an April 9 meeting between Pope Francis and Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. In approving a miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Artémides Zatti (1880-1951), Pope Francis paved the way for the Salesian brother's canonization.

Pope Francis also approved the decree on the martyrdom of Fathers Giuseppe Bernardi and Mario Ghibaud, who were slain by Nazi forces in 1943—thus paving the way for their beatification.

Finally, the Pope approved seven decrees of heroic virtue; the seven Servants of God may now be honoured as venerable.

Protesting priests mull quitting Syro-Malabar Church

(The Hindu 12-4-22) Pope Francis recently exhorted the faithful of the Eastern-rite Syro-Malabar Church to obey the Syro-Malabar hierarchy's decision on a uniform method of celebrating the liturgy in all of the church's eparchies (dioceses).

The uniform method envisions the celebrant turning towards the faithful in the initial rites but then turning towards the altar during the Eucharistic sacrifice. In some eparchies, however, including the Major Archeparchy of Ernakulam–Angamaly, the entire liturgy has been offered facing the people in recent decades.

The Hindu reports that 450 of the Major Archeparchy's 465 priests wish to celebrate Mass facing the people. Some of them are considering leaving the Syro-Malabar rite while remaining in the Catholic Church.

Ukrainian Catholic leader prays at mass grave in Bucha

(12-4-22) Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, visited the site of the Bucha massacre.

Describing his visit to the "tragically infamous town of Bucha, which is an open wound on the body of Ukraine," he said, "And there, above the open mass grave, seeing the mutilated, breathless bodies, we prayed for their eternal rest."

"Every Christian, no matter where they live on earth, whether they are Italian or German or Australian, seeing the atrocities of the occupiers in Bucha, says today: 'I am Ukrainian,'" he added. "To love one's enemy means to stop his murderous hand, to take away his weapon, not to give him the opportunity to kill."

Bishops offer to mediate crisis in Peru after PM praises Hitler

(12-4-22) Prime Minister Aníbal Torres's praise of Hitler's economic policies "were another drop of water in an already overflowing bucket that has led to hundreds of thousands of Peruvians taking to the streets since the beginning of the month," according to the report.

French bishops urge integral ecology in response to climate change

(12-4-22) Ecology was a major theme of the French bishops' April 5-8 meeting at Lourdes.

"Our Western societies are aware their remarkable development has taken place at the cost of other world regions — that their race forward in growth has been possible only by polluting or destroying other spaces," said Archbishop Éric de Moulins-Beaufort of Reims, president of the bishops' conference. "We must dare to denounce the structures of sin, and proclaim that other ways of human living are possible."

Former Anglican bishop named monsignor

(12-4-22) Pope Francis has conferred the title of “Monsignor” on the Anglican bishop who was welcomed into the Catholic Church last year.

Msgr. Michael Nazir-Ali had been Anglican Bishop of Rochester from 1994 to 2009, and was once seen as a leading candidate to become Archbishop of Canterbury. He entered the Catholic Church after retiring from ministry in the Church of England, and was ordained as a priest for the Anglican Ordinariate.

Cardinal says Curia reform requires a change of attitude at the Vatican

(12-4-22) “The reform needs a change of mental attitude: an attitude of service is needed on the part of all members of the curia,” said Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai (Bombay), a member of the Pope’s advisory Council of Cardinals, “A key principle is that the Curia should not be a body between the Holy Father and bishops of the world, but be at the service of both the Holy Father and the local churches.”



Ukraine - The president of Caritas Ukraine asks for solidarity and prayers for the families of the victims

(12-4-22) "This dramatic news leaves the Caritas family horrified and shocked. We join in the pain and solidarity with the suffering of the families and our colleagues of Caritas Ukraine who are experiencing this tragedy". With these words, the secretary-general of Caritas Internationalis, Aloysius John, expresses the Confederation's pain at the news of the death of two collaborators of Caritas Ukraine Mariupol. The tragic attack probably occurred on March 15, when shots were fired from a

tank against the building of the Caritas centre in Mariupol, which killed the two collaborators and five members of their families. Presumably, Caritas workers and their families had taken refuge in the center during the bombing of the city.

The president of Caritas Ukraine, Tetiana Stawnychy, calls for special attention in memory of the victims. "We need your solidarity and your prayers for the families of the victims, for the community of Caritas Mariupol and the community of Caritas Ukraine".

Meanwhile, (13-4-22) Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, president of Caritas Internationalis (the Church’s federation of relief and development agencies), lamented an attack on the Caritas centre in Mariupol. “To the women and men risking their lives, we extend a word of sincere gratitude,” said Cardinal Tagle, who is also Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. “You are doing a holy action, holy work.”

China - Prayer, relationship with Christ, new ways of evangelizing: the Beijing Seminary continues its synodal journey in the spirituality of Lent

(12-4-22) The life of prayer, the consolidation of the relationship with Christ in order to help the faithful who are facing a crisis of faith, the new ways of evangelizing in the midst of a pandemic: these are some crucial points that emerged during the monthly meeting of the Seminary Family of the Archdiocese of Beijing, which was held on March 24. The intense synodal journey of spirituality of Lent, preceded by a long meditation before the Blessed Sacrament and the Crucifix, marked the usual sharing of the seminarians, guided by the formators and the spiritual assistant.

Pakistan - New Prime Minister elected, Christians: "The Constitution is always the point of reference"

(12-4-22) "We hope that the tense political situation in the country is over, given that the new Prime Minister has taken office. We wish the new Prime Minister, Mohammad Shehbaz Sharif and the political parties united in supporting him the best. At the same time, it should be stressed that former Prime Minister Imran Khan was unable to increase employment, curb inflation. The members of his own party called for a vote of no confidence in Parliament": is the comment by Fr. James Channan

OP, Dominican priest responsible for the "Peace Centre" in Lahore, after the new Prime Minister took office.

Holy Land - Father Romanelli: 722 permits for Christians in Gaza to celebrate Easter in Jerusalem

(12-4-22) This year 722 Palestinian Christians living in the Gaza Strip will be able to celebrate Easter in Jerusalem, in the places that witnessed the passion, death and resurrection of Christ. This was reported by Father Gabriel Romanelli, parish priest of the Holy Family Catholic parish, who expressed his appreciation for the high number of passes to the Holy City granted this year by the Israeli authorities to the baptized from the Gaza Strip on the occasion of the solemnity of Holy Week festivities.

In the Gaza Strip, where more than 1.8 million Palestinians live, there are currently just over 1,070 Christians, most of whom belong to the Greek Orthodox Church. There are 133 Catholics. Many people from our Latin parish have received the permit. Some are already leaving.

Sri Lankan Buddhist monks criticize lawmakers

(12-4-22) Sri Lankan Buddhist monks have criticized elected representatives for failing to provide relief to people suffering due to the ongoing economic crisis.

"Although we expected to see the three-day debate in parliament to come up with clear solutions to the existing social, economic and political crises, we regret how the people's representatives acted irresponsibly," said the monks in a statement on April 11.

They said they were looking to hold discussions with the leadership of all political parties represented in parliament to defuse the crisis and provide relief to the people.

Search for survivors in Philippine villages hit by landslides

(12-4-22) Rescuers hampered by mud and rain are searching for survivors of landslides that smashed into villages in the central Philippines as the death toll from tropical storm Megi rose to 28. More than 17,000 people fled their homes as the storm pummelled the disaster-prone region in recent days, flooding houses, severing roads and knocking out power. At least 22 people were dead and 27 missing after landslides slammed into multiple villages in Leyte province, one of the hardest hit by the storm, local authorities said. Just over 100 people were injured.



Three people were also killed in the central province of Negros Oriental and three on the main southern island of Mindanao. Rescue efforts were also focused on the nearby village of Kantagnos, which an official said had been hit by two landslides. Some residents managed to escape or were pulled out of the mud alive, but many are still feared trapped. Five people have been confirmed dead in Kantagnos, but it is not clear how many are still missing.

Actress to promote Korean diocese's overseas missions

(12-4-22) Suwon Diocese in South Korea has appointed a prominent actress as a public relations ambassador to revitalize its overseas mission activities.

Bishop Matthias Ri long-hoon of Suwon appointed actress Theresa Shim Shye-jin for the role and presented the appointment letter at the end of March, *Catholic Times of Korea* reported on April 10. This is the first time the Korean Church has officially appointed an ambassador for overseas missions. "I am sure that priests in Africa, South America and other places will receive great strength. It will make overseas missionary work of the diocese lively," Bishop Ri said. After signing the letter of acceptance, actress Shim said she is proud to be a part of the diocese's overseas missionary work. Shim (56) was a leading actress in drama, film and television in the 1990s.

Among her first responsibilities as ambassador for Suwon Diocese will be her performance in a promotional video that will feature the diocese's overseas missions to encourage fundraising and sponsorship.

Myanmar junta raids cathedral complex in Mandalay

(12-4-22) Nearly 100 soldiers stormed the Sacred Heart Cathedral compound in Mandalay, Myanmar, and forcibly entered the cathedral, archbishop's house, parish priest's residence and clergy centre on April 8.

Archbishop Marco Tin Win, some priests and staff were present during the raid but all were safe and none were detained, said church sources. Soldiers arrived around 2.30pm and some stood guard outside the compound of the cathedral, the second largest in Myanmar, while others with guns carried out a search of all the buildings inside the compound.

"They claimed to have been tipped off about weapons being hidden in the clergy centre," revealed one of the sources. The soldiers left after nearly three hours as they didn't find any weapons.

Archbishop Tin Win has designated Saturday evenings for one-hour adoration and the first Sundays of every month for Eucharistic celebration seeking peace in the conflict-torn nation.

13-4-22

Pope reflects on 'peace of Easter' at Wednesday audience



(13-4-22) At his weekly public audience on April 13, Pope Francis spoke of "the peace of Easter," reminding listeners that the peace of Jesus Christ is not that of this world. Here is the summary of his talk:

During this Holy Week, the Church celebrates the mystery of Our Lord's Passion, Death and Resurrection. Last Sunday we recalled the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem. The crowds acclaimed him as the Messiah who would bring about a glorious peace by freeing Jerusalem from Roman occupation. Yet the peace Jesus brought did not

employ the strategies of the world. Rather than recourse to violence, it comes through the humility and meekness that led him to the Cross. By dying for our sins, Christ has set us free. In Dostoyevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, the Grand Inquisitor accuses Jesus of not using his power to establish peace, but rather respecting the freedom of individual men and women. Indeed, the peace that Jesus brings does not employ force, but only the "weapons" of the Gospel: prayer, forgiveness and compassion for all our neighbours. This, not the blasphemous violence of war, is the peace of Easter; the peace that changes history and the hearts of all who accept it. This week, let us draw near to Christ, crucified and risen, and implore his gift of peace in our hearts and in the world.

Vatican representative denies Holy See is against sending weapons to Ukraine, 'Do not outlaw Russian Orthodox in Ukraine'

(13-4-22) The Apostolic Nunciature in Ukraine has denied that the Holy See opposes sending weapons to Ukraine.

"According to the Catholic theology, every country, and in this case Ukraine, has the right to defend itself," according to the nunciature. "It is well known that the international community does not want to be directly involved in the war, but some countries are sending weapons."

The nunciature also denied a report that Vladimir Putin has an account with the Vatican bank.

Meanwhile, the office of Archbishop Visvaldas Kulbokas, the apostolic nuncio in Ukraine, has issued a statement opposing legislation that would ban the Russian Orthodox Church from the country.

The proposed legislation would nationalize all Orthodox churches in Ukraine affiliated with the

Moscow patriarchate. The nuncio's office said that "the Holy See is opposed to any restrictive action taken against any church or religious organization."

Pope Francis visits Benedict XVI to offer birthday greetings

(13-4-22) Pope Francis visited Pope-emeritus Benedict XVI on Wednesday evening, April 13, to offer the retired Pontiff his birthday greetings.

The former Pope will celebrate his 95th birthday on April 16, which is Holy Saturday. He was also born on Holy Saturday, and baptized at the Easter Vigil that same day.

Benedict XVI has lived longer than any other man who served as Roman Pontiff (although he was only 85 when he resigned). Pope Leo XIII remains the oldest man to hold the Petrine office; he was 93 when he died in 1903.

Cardinal Burke: Synod official should not have addressed New Ways Ministry conference

(13-4-22) Cardinal Raymond Burke told the *National Catholic Register* that it was "not proper" for Sister Nathalie Becquart, the undersecretary of the Synod of Bishops, to give a keynote address to a video conference hosted by New Ways Ministry.

Noting that New Ways Ministry has been sanctioned by the Vatican for its misrepresentation of Catholic teachings on homosexuality, Cardinal Burke said that the Vatican official's participation in the conference could convey the message "that somehow the Church can be reconciled with these positions which are contrary to her teaching."

Nicaraguan cardinal warns government 'the kingdoms of this world are fragile'

(13-4-22) Daniel Ortega, a leader of the Marxist Sandinistas who overthrew the authoritarian regime of Gen. Anastasio Somoza Debayle, ruled Nicaragua from the 1979 Sandinista takeover until his loss in the 1990 presidential election. He returned to power in 2007.

Synod of Bishops publishes 'Biblical Resources for Synodality'

(13-4-22) The Biblical Subgroup of the Spirituality Commission of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops has published *Biblical Resources for Synodality*.

The 94-page resource "highlights how Scripture is at the heart of the synodal journey." It "offers examples of lectio divina, along with the search for synodality in Old Testament texts (Psalm 107, Joshua 24, Nehemiah 8:1-12), as well as the figure of Mary, icon of the synodal Church, as she sets out with the disciples or stays in prayer with the Apostles (Acts 1:13-14), bearing witness that she is the way to ecclesial communion (Acts 10:1-11:18)."

Jerusalem's Christian leaders release Easter message

(13-4-22) "We called to be bold witnesses to the transforming grace of God in Christ Jesus to all of God's people, both by word and deed," the Patriarchs and heads of churches in Jerusalem said in their joint Easter message. "This Christian witness is all the more pressing in the face of the lingering effects of the pandemic, the sudden eruption of violence and war, and the increase of injustice and oppression around the world."

UNESCO reports damage to churches, historical sites and museums in Ukraine

(13-4-22) The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization reports that at least 53 cultural sites, including 29 churches, "have been partially or totally damaged since Russia's invasion of Ukraine."

Europe - The peace movement looks to Russia

(13-4-22) "After the peace march in Lviv, where we went to bring aid and families in need back to Italy, we are thinking of Russia. A new entity is being formed, "StoptheWarNow", which intends to gather all the non-violent movement that is not satisfied with demonstrating against the war but thinks of real actions, of 'peaceful invasions' that can respond to the need of those who want to stop the conflict now". This is what Fr. Tonio dell'Olio, historical figure of the peace movement and president of "Pro Civitate Christiana", the Assisi association whose goal is to offer "reception and opportunities, lymph and breath, mission and service", explains.



Ghana - The Bishops: "May Easter be an invitation to conversion to peace"

(13-4-22) "Let us renew our commitment to reject any acts of evil, including acts of war, conflicts and any actions, which will lead to the senseless loss of lives and the creation of needless crises". This is the appeal launched by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Ghana (GCBC) to avoid acts of evil during and after the celebration of the Easter holidays. In the statement "Returning to Galilee, finding the path to peace and hope in a time of crisis", it is recalled that "Easter is significant for us because in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead "all of us are invited to live and share in God's life of glory and find God's path that leads to peace. Unfortunately, this gift of the Prince of Peace is often rejected by acts of conflicts, wars and division."

Kazakhstan - The Bishop of Karaganda "The example of Veronica, icon of Christ, to be reborn to new hope"

(13-4-22) In a message on the occasion of Holy Week and in view of Easter, Bishop Adelio Dell'Oro of the Diocese of Karaganda invites us to take an example from a key figure in Jesus' path to Golgotha: "On the path to Calvary, there is Veronica, who entered history for a linen cloth, with which she wiped the face of Christ, drenched in tears and blood. This woman does not have a face, she does not have a history, and yet a station on the Way of the Cross was dedicated to her. She was an anonymous woman, but that day she was born into the world and was given the name 'Veronica', a true icon of Christ, as Karol Wojtyla wrote in one of his poems: 'Your name was born in the very instant in which your heart became an effigy. Your name was born from what you gazed upon'. Receiving the name is like being born again, it is a new beginning".

Iraq - Chaldean Patriarch Sako: may the light of Christ's Easter illuminate the darkness of these times of war

(13-4-22) During Easter, which this year partly coincides with Ramadan (the month of fasting and prayer in the Islamic calendar), "every believer in God, and in particular Christians, must reject the deadly logic of war". This is what Cardinal Louis Raphael Sako, Patriarch of the Chaldean Church points out in the message spread for the upcoming Christian solemnity and invites us to look at the resurrection of Christ as the only light that can illuminate the darkness of the present time, marked by the omens of "a devastating world war". Referring explicitly to the wars that tear the world apart, the Chaldean Patriarch invites "all believers, Christians and Muslims, as they are currently fasting Ramadan, and Jews as well to look at the tragedy in Ukraine and Middle East Countries, their humiliation, and the harsh dismantling of its beautiful mosaic".

Indian archbishop seeks succour for paddy farmers

(13-4-22) A Catholic archbishop has appealed to the communist-led provincial government in southern India's Kerala state to provide immediate aid to paddy farmers who lost their crops to unseasonal rains.



Kuttanad, known as the rice bowl of Kerala, has witnessed torrential rains accompanied by heavy winds that flattened matured paddy fields during the past 10 days.

“It is heartbreaking to see the waterlogged paddy fields and hear the cries for help from the farmers,” said Archbishop Joseph Perumthottam of Changanacherry after visiting paddy farmers in Kuttanad on April 12.

He said that unless the government took immediate steps to help them, it will not be possible for them to survive. “Mere assurances would not help them at this juncture,”

he added.

Malaysian Catholics laud pioneering missionaries during Lent

(13-4-22) Malaysian Catholics have participated in a special pilgrimage during Lent to honour missionaries who brought and nurtured Catholic faith in northern Borneo in the 19th century. Some 50 Catholics from Blessed Sacrament Church in Labuan in the Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu, including parish priest Father Thomas Madanan, joined the annual pilgrimage despite scorching summer sun on April 3, *Catholic Sabah* reported on April 11.

The walk of faith celebrated the arrival of Spanish mariner turned missionary Don Carlos Cuarteron, who landed in Labuan on April 14, 1857, along with a group of Italian missionaries from the Philippines. This year the pilgrimage holds special significance as the parish marks the 165th anniversary of the Vatican’s erection of the Apostolic Prefecture of Labuan, which later became part of the Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu, which was created in 1976.

Indonesia passes long-awaited sexual violence bill

(13-4-22) Indonesian lawmakers have passed a long-awaited bill aimed at cracking down on sexual violence in a move welcomed by rights and religious groups.

The bill, passed on April 12, will provide a legal platform on which often neglected victims can finally win justice, they said.

The new law targets nine forms of sexual violence against women and children: physical assault, non-physical sexual harassment, forced contraception, forced sterilization, forced marriage, sexual torture, sexual exploitation, sexual slavery and circulating sexual content without consent online.

Rape and forced abortion were removed from the bill to prevent overlapping elements in a criminal code bill being deliberated by lawmakers.

Sri Lankan govt denies claims of Easter attack cover-up

(13-4-22) The Catholic Church in Sri Lanka is still waiting for justice and punishment for the real culprits behind the Easter Sunday bombings that rocked the island nation nearly three years ago. Nine suicide bombers belonging to local Islamist group National Thowheed Jamath carried out a series of blasts that destroyed three churches and luxury hotels on April 21, 2019, killing 269 people, including 82 children and 47 foreigners belonging to 14 nations, besides injuring more than 500 others.

Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith has maintained that justice was not done to victims as the real conspirators were never brought to book. “Now it is being revealed to us who those conspirators are,” he said in Negombo on April 9. “Some members of the Rajapaksa families who stole money have already fled the country,” said Cardinal Ranjith.

The Sri Lankan government denies all allegations. Kamal Gunaratne, the secretary of defence, said 735 people were charged following investigations by local and international sleuths.

But the Church remains skeptical about claims over police investigations, which they claim to be a political cover-up to save those who ignored prior intelligence warnings about the attack.

Cardinal Ranjith even hinted at some forces from India interfering in the affairs of the country and thereby “posing a great threat to the independence of the country.”

At the 49th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, which he attended, the cardinal said the initial suspicion was the attack was a handiwork of a few local Islamic extremists. But subsequent investigations found that the bombings were part of a grand political plot.

“Those including the former president, prime minister and top officials who were responsible for ignoring prior intelligence warnings on the attack have not yet received any punishments,” said Surini Niroshani, who has been fighting for justice for the Easter attack victims.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan Church and civil society organizations have planned various events to commemorate the three-year anniversary of the Easter attack.

