

CATHOLIC WORLD LAST WEEK

(CWLW)

8-14 Aug 2022

8-8-22

Pope to Teams of Our Lady: 'Be courageous witnesses to faith, hope, fraternity'

(8-8-22) On August 6, Pope Francis received youth of the Équipes Notre-Dame (Teams of Our Lady). Founded by Father Henri Caffarel in 1939, the international movement received Vatican approval in 1992.

"I encourage you to entrust yourselves daily to the Virgin Mary," Pope Francis said. "She will also help you to grow as an équipe (team), sharing the gifts you received in a spirit of dialogue and of mutual acceptance. Our Lady will help you to have a generous heart, to discover the joy of freely serving others."

'May Jesus become your great friend,' Pope tells young people

(8-8-22) "May Jesus become your great Friend, your Companion along the way," Pope Francis said in an address to participants in the Alpha Youth Camp in Molise, Italy. "May the living Jesus become your life! Every day and forever. I repeat what Carlo Acutis said: please, don't be photocopies, but originals, every one of you!"

(Blessed Carlo Acutis, an Italian youth deeply devoted to the Holy Eucharist, died in 2006 at the age of 15.)



Indian cardinal denies cover-up of bishop's offenses

(8-8-22) Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai has denied reports that he sought to cover up evidence of an Indian bishop's sexual misconduct. The cardinal said that a recording of a phone conversation with Bishop Kannikas Antony William of Mysore had been "mischievously edited" to suggest a conspiracy to conceal evidence.

Bishop William has been accused of having several affairs, including some that produced children, and of arranging the killing of priests who

urged his removal from office. A Vatican investigation of the charges against Bishop William was begun in 2021, but has not yet produced any result.

The Church Militant web site has obtained a recording of a phone conversation between Cardinal Gracias and Bishop William that apparently took place in 2020. In that recording the cardinal recommends that Bishop William submit to a paternity test, and suggests that it could be done at a friendly Catholic hospital "so we can control the media, control the doctors, control the publicity given to the whole thing."

Cardinal Gracias acknowledges that he recommended a paternity test, as "the best way to end the controversy." He denies that he had intended to cover up evidence or "that there was collusion between Bishop William of Mysore and myself."

German bishop helped abusive clerics in Latin America, report says

(8-8-22) The German bishops' conference has revealed charges that a deceased bishop engaged in sexual abuse of minors, and helped other clerics charged with the same sort of abuse, while serving as head of a charitable organization in Latin America.

Bishop Emil Stehle is charged with sixteen cases of sexual abuse, and with helping pedophile priests to escape prosecutors in Latin America. He had served as bishop of two dioceses in Ecuador, and as head of Adveniat, an arm of the German bishops' conference that provides aid to Latin American communities.

Earlier reports had suggested that Bishop Stehle, who died in 2017, had also helped European priests who were charged with abuse to find new posts in Latin America.

6 beatification causes advance

(8-8-22) Pope Francis has recognized the martyrdom of Father Petro Oros (1917-1953), paving the way for his beatification. The Ruthenian Greek Catholic priest, who ministered in secret, was murdered by Communists in Ukraine, which was then part of the Soviet Union.

The Pope also authorized the publication of decrees recognizing the heroic virtues of five Servants of God, who may now be honoured as venerable. They are Father Jesús Antonio Gómez (1895-1971), a Colombian diocesan priest; Father Umile da Genova (1898-1969), an Italian Capuchin Franciscan friar; Father Juan Sánchez Hernández (1902-1975), a Spanish priest who founded a secular institute; Father Vítor Coelho de Almeida (1899-1987), a Brazilian Redemptorist priest; and Sister Maria Celina Kannanaikal (1931-1957), an Indian Ursuline sister.

Slovak Cardinal Tomko dead at 98

(8-8-22) Cardinal Jozef Tomko, the retired prefect of the Congregation for Evangelization, died early on Monday morning, August 8.

At 98, Cardinal Tomko had been the oldest living member of the College of Cardinals. He was hospitalized in June because of an injury to his cervical spine, but released last week to spend his final days at his home in Rome.

Born in what was then Czechoslovakia—now Slovakia—the future cardinal was sent to study in Rome and ordained in Rome in 1949. He served in several Vatican posts, at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Congregation for Bishops, before being secretary-general of the Synod of Bishops in 1979. He remained in that office, helping to organize four worldwide Synod meetings, until Pope John Paul II made him prefect of the Congregation for Evangelization: a position that he held until his retirement in 2001 at the age of 77. He was raised to the College of Cardinals by Pope John Paul II in 1985.

(12-8-22) Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, the Dean of the College of Cardinals, presided at the August 11 funeral Mass of Cardinal Jozef Tomko. Pope Francis was present at the Mass and presided over the final commendation. Earlier, the Pontiff had paid tribute to the Slovak cardinal's "great faith" and love for service to the Church.



Macao - The International Exhibition of Eucharistic Miracles has been extended: Blessed Carlo Acutis conquers the hearts of visitors

(8-8-22) After the great success of the International Exhibition on Eucharistic Miracles, conceived and realized by Blessed Carlo Acutis and held in Macau from June 17th to July 31st, the organizers have decided to extend the exhibition: the exhibition will therefore reopen on August 9th, and can be visited until September 30th. The guided tours will also be resumed. Anti-Covid restrictions have been eased. Macao is the first Asian stop of this international exhibition on the Eucharistic Miracles officially recognized by the Church, conceived and realized by the young Blessed Carlo Acutis. The Macao Catholic community is particularly interested in exploring the relationships and influences between Catholic culture and contemporary science, and is therefore also concerned with realities that human science cannot prove and that are beyond the reach of scientific research, thanks to the contribution of Blessed Carlo Acutis, whose life also in depicted in the exhibition.

Venezuela - Missionary sending of five seminarians to the indigenous communities of the Pemón

(8-8-22) Five seminarians have been sent by the Diocese of San Cristóbal to the Apostolic Vicariate of Caroní, who in the month of August and in various indigenous communities will pastorally

accompany the Pemón people. The seminarians from Táchira will go out to the people and proclaim the Good News of the Gospel. The bishops emphasize the importance of living this missionary experience in the last year of priestly formation.

The Pemón are an indigenous community in Venezuela living in the Gran Sabana and Canaima National Park in the state of Bolívar.



Global union of religions shows solidarity with Myanmar

(8-8-22) A global union of religious leaders has voiced solidarity with the people of Myanmar, especially after the execution of four pro-democracy activists by the military junta.

“As we hear these many cries of human and planetary pain, and as we pray and seek to relieve and assist with the little we have, and the little we feel we can practically do, we have not ceased to follow your trajectories of survival in Myanmar,” says the letter from Religions for Peace. “We are with you in our minds, with our

hearts, and with our souls.” The letter signed by Azza Karam, secretary-general of Religions for Peace, was sent to Cardinal Charles Bo of Yangon over the weekend. Cardinal Bo is co-president of Religions for Peace International and the patron of Religions for Peace Myanmar.

The execution of four pro-democracy activists two weeks ago sparked global outrage against the military rulers who ignored appeals by the international community and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to halt them.

Thousands pledge to defy India's Eastern Rite synod

(8-8-22) The liturgical dispute in the Eastern-rite Syro-Malabar Church seems to have deepened with the laity along with priests and nuns of an archdiocese pledging to stick to their demand for celebrating Holy Mass with the priest facing the congregation.

More than 40,000 Catholics representing around 360 parishes of Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese gathered at a large stadium in Kochi on Aug. 7 in open defiance of the liturgical formula mandated by the supreme synod of the church, according to which the Mass celebrant turns to the altar during the Eucharistic prayer. Their action comes a week after the Vatican appointed Archbishop Andrews Thazhath as the apostolic administrator of the archdiocese on July 30 after removing Archbishop Antony Kariyil as its metropolitan vicar.

Church seeks help for families of Korean suicide victims

(8-8-22) An official from a Church-sponsored pro-life organization in South Korea has called on the government and civil society groups to reach out to family members of suicide victims as the nation continues to grapple with a rising number of cases.

Father Cha Bauna, director of the One Body One Spirit (OBOS) Suicide Prevention Center, based in the capital Seoul, emphasized the need to pay particular attention to those left behind so that there are no further tragedies.

“Family members of suicide victims and suicide survivors are six to seven times more likely to attempt suicide than the general population. Studies show the risk is often nine times higher. Therefore, taking good care of them is very important in suicide prevention,” said Father Cha Bauna in an interview with Catholic Peace Broadcasting Corporation (CPBC) on Aug. 5.

Filipino Catholic group opposes night curfew for children

(8-8-22) A Catholic youth group in the Philippines has expressed concerns over a bill seeking a night curfew for children purportedly aimed to protect them.

San Lorenzo Ruiz Youth Group, which promotes devotion to the first Filipino saint Lorenzo Ruiz, termed the draft law “disturbing.” “The Philippines not just saw but experienced what happened during curfew hours during the martial law period....Curfew hours were set not to discipline but to mask the

anonymity of human rights violators during the Marcos regime,” said the group in a statement on Aug. 7. The group said that setting curfews was part of a pattern during the dictatorship of the late dictator President Ferdinand Marcos, the father of the current president.

“The nine-year military rule ordered by then President Ferdinand Marcos in 1972 unleashed a wave of crimes under international law and grave human rights violations, including tens of thousands of people arbitrarily arrested and detained, and thousands of others tortured, forcibly disappeared, and killed. Most of these illegal acts happened at night when there were no witnesses,” the group added.

Pakistani Christians suffer heavy losses in deadly July floods

(8-8-22) The unusually heavy rains and flash floods that hit Pakistan's Balochistan province in July have left a trail of devastation for Christians and Church-run institutions.

“At first we didn't think much of the rain. However, after a week of continuous downpour, the white paint started to come off the old walls. Then the cement started crumbling and the ceiling started to swell,” recalled Father Samson Shakir as he narrated the damage sustained by a free tuition centre attached to St. John Vianney Church in the provincial capital city of Quetta.

“Churchgoers were advised to keep away from the old parish buildings as I was away visiting affected families from our parish. It was sad seeing the households of the poor covered in mud,” the priest told UCA News. Many Christians in Quetta were already struggling to survive with the record inflation that has hit the nation. “Several of the affected families shifted to their relatives or friends. They cannot hope to rebuild their homes,” said Father Shakir.



9-8-22

Parolin speaks on Ukraine war, legitimate defense

(9-8-22) The Church always favours peace, but acknowledges the right to national defence, the Vatican Secretary of State told an interview.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin said that the Catholic Church “believes in peace, works for peace, fights for peace, witnesses to peace and seeks to build it. In this sense she is pacifist.”

However, in the same interview with *Limes* magazine, Cardinal Parolin acknowledged that “the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* provides for self-defence. Peoples have the right to defend themselves if attacked.”

The cardinal explained that any use of force must be limited, must be a last resort, and must be proportional—in accordance with traditional just-war principles. He also emphasized that nations caught up in war have a moral obligation to seek a negotiated solution.

Applying these principles to the war in Ukraine, Cardinal Parolin said with regret that “there does not seem to emerge at the moment any readiness to engage in real peace negotiations.” Both sides must be willing, he added. He remarked that Pope Francis, with his repeated calls for peace talks, seems to be “a voice crying out in the wilderness.”

On other issues, the Vatican Secretary of State said:

Pope Francis hopes to visit Kiev, and is ready to travel to Moscow “in the presence of conditions that are truly helpful to peace.” (That phrase suggested that recent statements by the Russian government and of the Russian Orthodox Church, suggesting a continued support for aggression, could be an obstacle.)

On the Vatican's secret agreement with China, “I can say that steps have been taken, but that not all obstacles and difficulties have been overcome.”

The possibility of an escalation in Ukraine, leading to a global confrontation, cannot be dismissed. But the Vatican is also concerned about a “Third World War fought piecemeal,” in many different conflicts around the world.

Nuncio to US weighs in on synodality, Eucharistic revival, abortion

(9-8-22) Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the apostolic nuncio to the United States, said in an interview that “the Pope wants to put the Church in a kind of synodal mentality” because “we live in a time where ... there is a lack of communication and education, especially in the communication of the faith.”

“There is a process now of individualism, of synchronization, of isolation of people,” he explained.

“The parents do not speak to the children, and the children are informed of their own future not by the parents but other sources.”

Archbishop Pierre also discussed abortion. “We save life because life is sacred. That’s it. It’s created by God,” he said. “There is no right to abortion ... The Church is the kind of witness of the beauty of the human reality, the beauty of life. The life of the mother, the life of the child.”

In final Lambeth address, Archbishop of Canterbury calls his church to tell, teach and transform

(9-8-22) The church is not just another nongovernmental organization but “God’s chosen means of shining light in the darkness,” he said. Anglican Welby emphasized evangelism, formation and discipleship, focusing on bishops’ vocation in leading God’s church, which exists for the sake of the salvation of God’s world, throughout his final address.

It’s in periods of darkness that churches confront the world’s challenges and grow, and their members must be educated in Scripture and extrapolate it into the world.

Over 650 bishops from across the Anglican Communion gathered July 26 at the University of Kent, just outside the city center, for the 12-day conference. Many African bishops boycotted the Lambeth Meeting because of the Church’s stand on sexual identity.



Malawi - Jubilee year of the Pontifical Mission Societies: conveying the message through music

(9-8-22) In view of missionary October and the Sunday dedicated to the missions, the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) of Malawi presented two songs on 7 August, one in English and one in the local Chichewa language. The songs were composed and produced by four siblings from the same family, the Mbewe Family and the first performance took place on the national Catholic TV channel - Luntha TV.

Encouraged and supported by the National Direction, the young people who composed the songs used their talents to compose and spread the message of the Jubilee Year and convey its meaning to people in a musical way.

Asia - Young people in the footsteps of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

(9-8-22) "Young people in the countries of Central Asia should know that they are not alone on their way to holiness, but that there are many of their peers who share the same ideals. They should know what it means to be committed Christians, a living example of faith in the midst of their culture, knowing that they live in a Muslim majority. That is why we organized a meeting at the beginning of August, in Shymkent, Kazakhstan between Uzbek, Tajik and Kazakh members – about 40 in number - of the 'Voice of the Word', a youth movement of the Institute of the Incarnate Word. They are young people who have committed themselves to living the example of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati and to being active in the apostolate and in formation", says Father 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) to Fides.

Pakistan - The vocation of the young people of "Jesus Youth": "Disciples and missionaries to proclaim the love of God"

(9-8-22) "As young Catholics we are also missionary disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are called to fulfill a mission of healing and renewal of life. We are the hands and feet of Jesus Christ, we walk with great zeal and commitment to our young fellow human beings, to proclaim the love and mercy of God. To pass on the Good News of Jesus Christ, to be an accompanying hand for them to grow and live the Catholic faith," said Father Qaisar Feroz (OFM Cap), national chaplain of the Jesus Youth International (JYI) Church Movement, in its Pakistan branch, at the conclusion of a week-long training seminar entitled "Lead 2022: Discipleship training Programme" organized in Ayubia.

The program included a training course in evangelization, based on the six points of the kerygma, aimed at helping new members of the movement experience the personal encounter with Jesus Christ, the starting point of mission.

After the successful completion of the training course, the participants, who came from the dioceses of Karachi, Hyderabad, Multan, Faisalabad and Lahore, took part in further specific training courses on topics such as discipleship, being synodal church, mission and evangelization, spirituality and charisma of the Jesus Youth.

Pakistan Church rejects sex allegations against archbishop

(9-8-22) A Church official in Pakistan has condemned a suspended priest accusing Archbishop Sebastian Shaw of Lahore of homosexuality and said the priest needs psychological care.

Archdiocesan Vicar General Father Asif Sardar said that "there is no truth" in the allegation Father Rashid Alfonse made on Aug. 4, a week after he was suspended from the priesthood. "I strongly condemn the video [posted] by the suspended Father Rashid Alfonse against our archbishop on social media,"

Father Sardar said in a video released on Aug. 8 on Catholic TV. It said in the past Lent season, a Catholic family complained that Alfonse had been repeatedly visiting their house, instigating them and offering them money "to kill the rector of the seminary."

"After suspending the priest, the bishop formed an investigation team," which uncovered that Alfonse had made a plan more than a year ago to kill three other priests of the Lahore archdiocese. The vicar general said Alfonse started the "character assassination" of Archbishop Shaw "to divert the attention of the public. Our bishop has trained 40 percent of the priests in Pakistan. There is no truth in the controversial video." Alfonse in a video posted on his social media page on Aug. 4 called Archbishop Shaw a "homosexual bishop."



Indonesian Catholics hold tourism fest amid Komodo row

(9-8-22) Ruteng Diocese on Indonesia's Catholic-majority island of Flores has kicked off a week-long festival involving parishes to promote "holistic tourism" amid an ongoing row over raising the entry fee to the famed Komodo National Park.

The Golo Koe Festival, referring to a hill in the tourism town of Labuan Bajo in West Manggarai district, began on Aug 8 with a traditional *teing hang* ritual, in which the local ethnic Manggarai tribe, seeks blessings from their ancestors.

As part of the celebrations, Bishop Siprianus Hormat, along with diocesan and government officials, distributed basic food assistance to poor families and people with disabilities.

In a statement, the diocese said the festival was part of an effort to fight for "holistic tourism, a model of participatory, cultured and sustainable tourism."

"This festival aims to foster tourism that is rooted and grows in the uniqueness and richness of the local culture and spirituality. This festival also intends to encourage and activate all creative economic activities of the community in improving their welfare," it said.

On Aug. 14 a grand procession of Our Lady of Assumption is to be held on land and at sea in Labuan Bajo and on Aug. 15 Bishop Hormat will celebrate a Mass with hundreds of priests in Waterfront City, Labuan Bajo.

On Aug. 8, Tourism and Creative Economy Minister, Sandiaga Salahuddin Uno, announced the new ticket policy had been postponed based on the advice of President Joko Widodo, and would be implemented next year following dialogue with tourism actors.

10-8-22

Pope finishes series of audience talks on old age

(10-8-22) At his weekly public audience at Paul VI Audience Hall on August 10, Pope Francis concluded a series of talks on old age, speaking about “the ministry of awaiting the Lord.” Here is a summary of his talk:

In our continuing catechesis on old age, we now consider Jesus’ words of farewell to his disciples, as recorded in Saint John’s account of the Last Supper (*Jn 14:1-3*). On the eve of his death, our Lord encourages the disciples to persevere in faith and assures them that he is going to prepare a place for them in the house of the Father. Like the first disciples, Christ’s followers in every age live in joyful expectation of the fulfilment of that promise. Old age can be an especially fruitful time for bearing witness to the message of hope proclaimed by the Gospel. By their serene faith and trust in Christ’s promises, the elderly can show us that our time on earth is meant to be lived as a preparation for something immensely greater: the joy of eternal life in the company of our Lord and all the saints in the heavenly Jerusalem. The passing of the years can thus become a blessing, not a threat, and a testimony to the good news that life, at every stage, points beyond itself to a fullness that is God’s gracious gift to his beloved children.

Pope praises indigenous peoples’ sense of family, community

(10-8-22) Pope Francis tweeted on August 9, “How precious is that profoundly genuine sense of family and community among #IndigenousPeoples! And how important it is to cultivate properly the bond between young and old, and to maintain a healthy and harmonious relationship with all of creation!”



September trial date for Cardinal Zen

(10-8-22) A Hong Kong court has set a trial date in September for Cardinal Joseph Zen and five other pro-democracy leaders, who are charged with register a charitable fund with the government.

The cardinal and his co-defendants were originally charged with colluding with foreign powers: a more serious offense under Hong Kong’s harsh national-security law. They now face fines if convicted.

The trial will begin on September 19.

DR Congo priest, wounded in attack on convent, dies

(10-8-22) Armed men in Kwilu Province attacked a convent at a parish and killed Father Godefroid Pembele, according to Congolese French-language media reports.

“The bandits went there to steal because the parish was preparing to celebrate a ‘Mass of the first fruits’ for one of its priests who was just recently ordained,” said the mayor of Kikwit, the province’s largest city.

Archbishop Paglia on Archie’s death: ‘Humanity defeated when life decided by a court’

(10-8-22) Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, the president of the Pontifical Academy for Life, expressed sorrow at the death of Archie Battersbee. The 12-year-old boy died hours after an English hospital ended life support against his parents' wishes.

Within the past week, the Italian daily edition of the Vatican newspaper printed two articles in defence of Archie—the first written after the court order that paved the way for the boy's death, the second, written by editor Andrea Monda, after the child died.

Peace is a duty that concerns all, say bishops of Japan

(10-8-22) Each year, the Church in Japan holds ten days of prayer for peace, beginning on August 6, the anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, and concluding on August 15, the Feast of the Assumption.

"Russia's invasion of Ukraine shocked the world as a violent act of a major power that trampled on the growing efforts of the international community in its search for peace," the president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan, Archbishop Isao Kikuchi of Tokyo, said in his message for the days of prayer. "The situation continues to unfold without regard for the wishes of so many people who want to protect life and seek peace."

Archbishop Kikuchi cautioned that "the world is being swept by feelings that peace can be won through violence. But that would only trample on true peace."



Most English babies in 2021 born out of wedlock

(10-8-22) For the first time in recorded history, the majority of newborns in England and Wales in 2021 were born out of wedlock.

Of the 625,000 births recorded in the year, only 304,000, or 48.6%—were born to couples in a legal marriage or civil partnership. The proportion of births occurring outside marriage had been rising for decades.

The statistics also show a rise in the number of births to women over the age of 40. That category accounted for nearly 5% of all births—and more than twice the number of births to teen mothers.

Caritas head warns of grave food crisis in Africa

(10-8-22) The Secretary General of Caritas Internationalis, the Church's confederation of relief and development agencies, warned of a widespread looming food crisis in Africa, which imports 44% of its grain from Russia and Ukraine.

"In the Sahel region, more than 12.7 million people are exposed to a high vulnerable situation of hunger as well as exile from their rural homesteads," said Aloysius John. "The different countries in the Horn of Africa have a combined population of more than 160 million people, and 45% of this population will be affected by food insecurity."

DR Congo – Barbarism in Kikwit: a priest murdered by armed bandits

(10-8-22) Father Godefroid Pembele Mandon of the diocese of Kikwit has been murdered.

"Fr. Pembele was shot dead by gunmen during a raid on the church in the parish of St. Joseph Mukasa in Kikwit on the night of August 6-7, 2022. He was taken to Kinshasa and died there on Sunday, August 7, 2022, at Olive Lembe Kabila Hospital in Nsele district," says the chancellor of the diocese.

Also during the night, from August 6 to 7, 2022, another parish in Kikwit, the parish of Saint Murumba, was attacked by gunmen "who robbed women who were preparing for the first Mass of a new priest and they took away many personal belongings", say diocesan sources.

Malawi - The Archdiocese of Lilongwe begins the diocesan Synod

(10-8-22) On July 30, the Archdiocese of Lilongwe in Malawi, started the 2022-2023 "Discerning with the Holy Spirit". It is expected to be a comprehensive synod of the universal church on synodality.

The Archdiocese of Lilongwe invites all people to walk together: "All Catholics are invited to listen with an open heart and mind, to share their life experiences and to give space to the voices of those who are often marginalized or excluded. Just as the first assembly in Jerusalem healed the tensions between the members of the first Christian community, a synod like this should essentially be a process of healing, both from the wounds we have suffered within the church and from those experienced in other areas of our our lives and relationships". The synod hopes to address general pastoral issues, the liturgy, finance, investment, administration and social development.



Pakistan - Minority Day: August 11 is meant to commemorate the rights of all Pakistani citizens

(10-8-22) "Let's start with the question of forced conversions, a scourge in the life of Pakistan's religious minorities. This painful mentality goes hand in hand with extremely worrying factors such as violations of fundamental human rights, discrimination, poverty and the absence of the rule of law. The government's inaction on this issue encourages perpetrators to use their faith to cover up crimes against minority women. The vulnerable and poor members of religious minorities are unable to defend themselves in order

to obtain justice", said Catholic and Pakistani human rights activist, Peter Jacob, interviewed on the occasion of Pakistan's Minority Day, celebrated every year on August 11th.

Jacob, who was executive secretary of the Catholic Commission on Justice and Peace (NCJP) in the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Pakistan for some 30 years and now directs the "Centre for Social Justice", states:

"The problem of abuse of minority rights must be recognized and addressed through adequate legislation in order to take specific measures to protect women belonging to religious minorities. Awareness and education programs are therefore urgently needed to increase protection and awareness in the Pakistani society for the vulnerable and marginalized status of minorities in the country. We will continue to speak out until the state ensures justice and the Pakistani people become aware of it," says Peter Jacob.

India marks World's Indigenous Peoples Day

(10-8-22) Every year on Aug. 9, tribals across India observe International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples to highlight their socio-economic condition, their plight and challenges in their daily lives.

This year, tribals in several states clad in traditional attire danced, sang and participated in debates to observe the day as well as raise their voices against discrimination.

"The purpose of the celebration is to promote tribal culture, dance, art, song, wisdom and knowledge bringing all the tribal communities in one platform and to promote unity in diversity," Father Vincent Ekka, head of the department of tribal studies at the Jesuit-run Indian Social Institute, told UCA News. "This is also an occasion when we tribals across the nation join together to raise our voices against the injustice done to us as the Indian government still does not acknowledge us as indigenous people," he said.

The three-day event which ended on Aug. 9 was joined by more than 5,000 people, including political and tribal leaders, activists, academics and experts from across the country.

Father Ekka said India has several laws and constitutional provisions, such as the Fifth Schedule for Central India and the Sixth List for certain areas of the Northeast that recognize the rights of indigenous peoples to land and self-government, but their implementation is far from satisfactory.

Indonesia's top Christian cop charged with murder

(10-8-22) Police in Indonesia have named a high-ranking Christian police officer as the prime suspect for the premeditated murder of a junior Christian officer.

National Police chief General Listyo Sigit Prabowo announced on Aug. 9 that Inspector General Ferdy Sambo, the chief of Internal Affairs, was the mastermind behind the murder of his own aide, Brigadier Yosua Nopryansyah Hutabarat.

Prabowo stated the special team formed to investigate the case found Sambo allegedly ordering another aide, Richard Eliezer [RE], to shoot Hutabarat at his official residence. Prabowo said investigators were still gathering evidence and witnesses to find out if Sambo also fired shots at the victim. Two other police officers were also named as suspects in this case, bringing the total to four, for the killing on July 8.

One killed in shooting at Christian colony in Pakistan

(10-8-22) An elderly man succumbed while three teenagers were injured in the incident reported from Balochistan province. An elderly Catholic has died while three teenagers were left injured when motorcycle-borne gunmen attacked a Christian colony in the Mastung area of Pakistan's Balochistan province.

Wilson Masih, 65, was hit with three bullets when the two motorcyclists opened fire in an open playground in front of the Christian colony around 7.20 pm on Aug. 8. Masih and the three injured teenagers were rushed to the trauma centre of Civil Hospital in the provincial capital Quetta, located some 43 kilometers from Mastung. Masih died next day morning and his funeral was held at the Blessed Joseph Gerard Church near the Christian Colony on Aug. 10.

Masih was the elder brother of Late Hendry Masih, a parliamentary from Balochistan who was killed by his bodyguard in Quetta in 2014. Mastung, a Muslim-majority town, is home to 115 Christians. Two policemen have been posted at the gates of the Christian colony as a security measure to protect the 16 Christian houses. "Muslim children had left the ground for the Maghrib (evening) prayer. The other boys were playing when the shooting began. My uncle was shouting for help. Sanam, a 14-year-old boy, too was shot in the stomach and is in critical condition," Masih's nephew Danish Saleem told UCA News. He said the first information report of the incident had not been registered yet nor have any arrests been made. An hour after the shooting, local Christians staged a protest blocking the nearby national highway for an hour.

Oblate Father Nadeem Rafique of Mastung visited the injured children in Quetta on Aug. 9.

"It is sad seeing them in pain. Bishop Khalid Rehmat of Quetta apostolic vicariate has instructed me to stay close to the victims' families. Unfortunately, the ongoing political instability and economic crisis have resulted in a surge of terrorism," he said. Impoverished Balochistan is Pakistan's largest province and has been wracked by violence perpetuated by Islamist militants and separatists.

Huge gatherings celebrate feast of St. Dominic in Vietnam

(10-8-22) Tens of thousands of people throughout Vietnam have been urged to follow St. Dominic's example of giving light to people in need.

On Aug. 7, the eve of the Saint's feast, more than 18,000 lay Dominicans from southern dioceses attended special celebrations to mark the feast of St. Dominic, founder of the Order of Preachers, at St. Martin de Porres Shrine in Bien Hoa, Dong Nai province. They had to wear raincoats and huddled under umbrellas as the rain poured.

The gathering under the theme "St. Dominic — the Man of Meeting" was held ahead of the official feast that fell on the following day. Twenty-five Dominican priests concelebrated the Mass presided by Father Vincent Pham Xuan Hung, assistant to the provincial superior.



Papal praise for Argentine parish's missionary work among indigenous people

(11-8-22) Pope Francis has sent a brief Spanish-language video message to an Argentine parish missionary group that spent a week celebrating Mass and bringing the word of God to members of the Wichí people in northern Argentina.

"Thank you for what you have done, thank you for this work," Pope Francis said in his August 11 video. "To do mission," the Pope added, is "to go out of yourselves to give the best of yourselves and the best of what God gives."

Pope: Ukrainians still suffering from a 'cruel war'

(11-8-22) At the conclusion of his August 11 general audience, Pope Francis asked for continued prayers for the people of Ukraine.

"I urge everyone to build unity and peace in the family, in the Church, and in society," the Pope added. "It is not easy to be peacemakers, both in the family and in the Church, [and build] unity; but we have to do it, because it is important work."

Nicaraguan Church observes day of prayer after bishop's arrest

(11-8-22) The Catholic bishops of Nicaragua have asked their people to observe August 11 as a day of prayer and Eucharistic adoration, as they await news about Bishop Rolando Alvarez of Matagalpa, who is under house arrest.

The arrest of Bishop Alvarez, and the closing of several Catholic radio stations, marked an escalation in the campaign against the Church by President Daniel Ortega.



Holy See diplomat: Ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy

(11-8-22) Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, apostolic nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, addressed the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

"Ensuring the peaceful use of nuclear energy means that nuclear energy, medicine, and research facilities must not be targeted in war, which could turn such sites into sources of proliferation, create 'dirty bombs,' or radiologically contaminate local communities and the environment, harming present and future generations," the archbishop said.

Archbishop Caccia also spoke of "the promise of providing climate-neutral energy without harmful impacts to health, the environment, and future generations," while cautioning that "states should take steps to remediate environments negatively affected by nuclear accidents and uranium mining, assist communities suffering from such effects, and agree on long-term storage solutions for high-level radioactive waste."

Reconciliation is key to national cohesion in Côte d'Ivoire, say country's bishops

(11-8-22) The president of the Ivory Coast Catholic Bishops' Conference, Archbishop Ignace Bessi Dogbo of Korhogo, spoke of the continued need for reconciliation in the wake of the 2010-11 Ivorian crisis. Côte d'Ivoire, a West African nation of 28 million, is 44% Muslim, 18% Catholic, and 16% Protestant, with 22% adhering to ethnic religions.

Irish pro-life advocates may face fines, imprisonment for praying near abortion clinic

The Irish government "intends to introduce fines and prison sentences for people who pray, hold signs, or try to persuade women not to have abortions while they are within the vicinity of an abortion clinic," according to the report.

"Assuming the law goes through, it will be one of the most restrictive in the whole of Europe because other countries have more respect for the right to protest and consider laws like this to be disproportionate," said David Quinn, director of the Iona Institute.

Nigeria - Attacks on church in Owo: Suspected responsible arrested

(11-8-22) Two other people suspected of being responsible for the massacre on Pentecost Sunday (June 5) at the Catholic Church of St. Francis Xavier in Owo, state of Ondo have now been arrested. This was announced on August 10, by Nigerian Defence Ministry Press Office Chief Maj. Gen. Jimmy Akpor, who gave the names of the suspects as Al-Qasim Idris and Abdulhaleem Idris and confirmed that they were arrested on August 9 in Omialafara (Omulafa), Ose LGA, Ondo State. On August 9, the Nigerian army announced the arrest of four other people accused of the massacre in the Catholic Church. The arrests were made on August 1 in a joint military/DSS (military intelligence agency) operation in Eika (Okehi LGA), Kogi state.

"We wanted to present the suspects to the public immediately, but we could not do so because some investigations are still ongoing," said the general, who also announced the capture on August 7 in Aiyetorosi, in the state of Ondo, of Idris Ojo (37), a high-ranking member of the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP). "Ojo was planning more deadly attacks and perfected those plans with his accomplices before he was captured," the chief of defence staff said. "In due course the world will see who is behind other attacks in the country," he added. According to the authorities, ISWAP was also responsible for the Owo church massacre. Ondo State Governor Arakunrin Akeredolu reported that another person who housed the suspects before the attack was also arrested.

About 40 people were killed and 80 injured in the attack on the Catholic Church of St. Francis Xavier on June 5.

ISWAP, meanwhile, claimed responsibility for a series of bombings and the attack on a prison in Abuja in early July, which allowed more than 400 detainees to escape, most of whom were later recaptured by the security forces.

Bishops have long warned that the security situation in Nigeria is out of control.

East Timor - 2022 Census: Catholic Church calls for participation

(11-8-22) The Catholic Church in East Timor is calling on the population to take part in the forthcoming general census, scheduled for autumn 2022, which will officially start on August 15th. The Office of Statistics team, led by Director Elias dos Santos Ferreira, in his capacity as Chairman of the Technical Commission for the 2022 Census, recently met the Archbishop of Dili and Cardinal-Elect, Virgilio Do Carmo da Silva. Both agreed on the usefulness of the initiative and the need for all Timorese citizens to participate. In a message addressed to the population, the archbishop said: "The data from individuals and households that will be collected and processed at the national level will help the government to formulate appropriate policies and programmes", and urged citizens to take action to participate.

The quinquennial 2022 Census will take place from 4 September to 5 October across the country.

Calls for paternity test on Indian bishop grow louder

(11-8-22) Calls for a paternity test for an Indian Catholic bishop accused of sexual misconduct have become louder in the wake of a leaked conversation he had with Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai. The conversation between Bishop Kannikadass Antony William of Mysore and Cardinal Oswald Gracias, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India, took place two years ago and discussed the possibility of the bishop taking a paternity test in a Catholic hospital.

The discussion was leaked in July, with the media interpreting it as the cardinal trying to influence an outcome in favour of the accused bishop - so "we can control the media, control the doctors, control the publicity given to the whole thing."

Some priests and lay leaders in Bishop William's diocese in southern Karnataka state have accused him of fathering two children and having illicit relationships with women. Bishop William took over the administration of the diocese in January 2017. Months after his consecration, 37 of his priests wrote to the Vatican seeking his removal, accusing him of fathering two children, keeping mistresses, and

misappropriating Church funds. Bishop William denied the allegations claiming that the priests were annoyed with him for transferring them from key positions as part of his effort to reform the diocese. Bishop William agreed to undergo the test in the conversation with the cardinal whose comments were interpreted as his collusion with a Church-run hospital in influencing the result of a test in favour of Bishop William.

Cardinal Gracias denied the allegations but admitted that the leaked audio clip was part of a conversation he had with Bishop William in August 2020 but that it was edited with malicious intention. The accusers insist that the paternity test be done in a government hospital.

Indian Christians stage first 'National March for Life'

(11-8-22) Pro-life activists and Christians gathered to observe the first National March for Life in New Delhi on Aug. 10. The day also marked the 51st anniversary of the passing of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act which legalized abortion. Some 100 people from across the country assembled at Jantar Mantar, a place allotted by the government to hold protest marches, holding placards against abortion, singing Christian hymns and reciting prayers to end abortion. The protesters including a bishop, priests, nuns and laity observed a “Day of Mourning” in memory of the millions of aborted fetuses across the world.



The protest was organized by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services in India and the Delhi Catholic Charismatic Service of Communion to raise awareness about abortion.

Recent studies revealed that there are 15.6 million abortions in India each year. The abortion law was amended in 2003 to enable women to have better access to safe and legal abortion services. There were further amendments in 2021 to allow women to seek safe abortion services on the grounds of contraceptive failure and an increase in the gestation limit to 24 weeks for special categories, though it is scientifically proven that the child’s heartbeat is perceivable on the 21st day after conception.

(11-8-22) **The death toll from South Korea's record-breaking rains** and flooding has risen to 11, officials said on 11 August, with eight more people still missing as Seoul struggles to clean up after the deluge.

Filipinos slam police chief’s vow to continue drugs war

(11-8-22) Human rights groups in the Philippines have voiced opposition to the new police chief’s pronouncement to continue former President Rodrigo Duterte’s war on illegal drugs.

The Catholic Social Action Group in Legaspi diocese in Albay province, Bicol region, together with left-wing Akbayan, on Aug. 10 criticized newly installed police chief General Rodolfo Azurin’s vow revealing President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos, Jr.’s position on the alleged human rights violation of his predecessor. Duterte had allegedly killed 40,000 suspected drug users without giving them a chance through recourse to law to prove their innocence.

12-8-22

Pope speaks with Ukrainian leader

(12-8-22) Pope Francis spoke by phone with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on August 12. It was the 3rd conversation between the Pontiff and the Ukrainian leader since the Russian invasion. Zelensky issued a statement thanking the Pope for his prayerful support of the Ukrainian people. “Our people need support of world spiritual leaders who should convey to the world the truth about acts of horror committed by the aggressor in Ukraine,” he said.

Zelensky broke the news that the Pope had called him; it was quickly confirmed by the Ukrainian ambassador to the Holy See.

Nicaraguan human-rights groups urge Vatican to speak out

(12-8-22) A coalition of Nicaraguan civic groups has joined in a plea to the Vatican, urging Pope Francis “not to leave us alone” in the face of mounting government repression.

Saying that the “persecution and hatred of the regime against the Catholic Church has no justification,” representatives of 61 different groups appealed to the Pope to condemn the actions of the Ortega regime, which continues to keep Bishop Rolando Alvarez of Matagalpa under house arrest. The bishop and the people with him, shut up in diocesan headquarters, have been without access to food or water for nine days.

Vatican cardinal sees strict conditions for ‘summit meeting’ with Russian Patriarch

(12-8-22) Cardinal Kurt Koch, the prefect of the Dicastery for Christian Unity, says that Pope Francis should meet Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill only if they can agree to conditions that show mutual respect.

The cardinal’s caution about prospects for a “summit meeting” reflect the Vatican’s concern about the Russian Patriarch’s public support for the Russian war in Ukraine. Cardinal Koch says that if the two could join in a plea for peace, a meeting would be amply justified. However, he also suggests that the Pope should visit Ukraine before a meeting with Kirill.

Cardinal Koch said that he would not support calls to bar the Russian Orthodox Church from participation in the World Council of Churches (WCC). He said that would likely discuss the war in Ukraine, exposing serious disagreements, but it would be better to remain in dialogue.



Somalian famine looms

(12-8-22) Bishop Giorgio Bertin, the apostolic administrator of Mogadishu, reports a massive humanitarian crisis in Somalia, where a severe drought has driven a million people from their homes in search of adequate food.

The archbishop noted that because the lower house of parliament has given the green signal to Hamza Abdi Barre, the new Prime Minister to

form the government, Church’s chances of dialogue with the government are brighter

Spanish shrine where Our Lady of Fatima appeared to Sister Lucía is falling into ruin

(12-8-22) The Shrine of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima in Pontevedra, Spain, needs significant repairs—and the Spanish bishops’ conference has acquired the shrine from the World Apostolate of Fatima in Spain in an attempt to address the situation.

The Pontevedra apparitions (1925-26) are associated with the First Saturday devotion; they took place after the apparitions in Fátima, Portugal.

Witch hunts on the rise worldwide, warns German aid agency Missio

(12-8-22) “In at least 43 countries, women, but also men and children, are in mortal danger because they are being persecuted as alleged witches,” according to the report.

Polish Church official: State commission can’t access abuse documents

(12-8-22) “This commission’s rights and competences, as established by law, do not include access to church documents — under current procedures, it must request this from the Holy See,” said Father Piotr Studnicki, director of the Polish bishops’ Child and Youth Protection Office, in reference to Poland’s State Commission on Pedophilia.

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German Catholics want expanded lay roles, greater tolerance for dissent

(12-8-22) The German bishops' conference has prepared a 13-page report, dated August 5, summarizing German Catholics' contributions to the international synodal process. "If they wish to restore trust in the Church, the bishops need to take up a clear position on the pressing issues of our time, such as equal access for all baptized people to Church offices, a reassessment of sexual morality, and a non-discriminatory approach to homosexual and queer people," the summary concluded.

Bishop in Zambia cautions priests against allowing politicians to speak in Church

(12-8-22) "Whenever the politicians visit our churches, they should be treated like any other ordinary Christian coming to worship," said Bishop Benjamin Phiri of Ndola, Zambia, who directed that politicians should never be given the "chance to speak to the gathered faithful during Mass at the pulpit, nor should they be given an audience outside Mass to speak to the parishioners within the parish premises."

Kenya - Presidential elections: Bishops warn against unreliable projections

The results of the presidential and parliamentary elections held in Kenya on August 9th have not yet been published. However, unofficial and sometimes conflicting media projections show that former Prime Minister Raila Odinga and outgoing Vice President William Ruto are in close competition. Regarding the unofficial media extrapolations, the Catholic bishops warn that "while the IEBC has a constitutional obligation to announce the results, other actors have been authorized to make parallel counts. We ask all those who do so to inform their audience that these results are provisional. The public should not be misled".

Eswatini - The Bishop: "The road to dialogue is marked by uncertainty"

(12-8-22) "If I had to summarize the situation eSwatini is experiencing, I would use the term 'uncertainty'. This is the state of mind that best represents and characterizes the situation for some time and I've been talking about this for a long time by posting messages on social media: "We don't really know which way to go at the moment and nobody is talking about it much. When the violence broke out in June 2021, we as the Council of Christian Churches spoke directly to the Prime Minister in charge and were told that the best response to the tense situation was national dialogue. Months passed and in February the Finance Minister said he wanted to organize a high-level dialogue. Finally, we recently learned that a team had been selected to shape this dialogue. We are now in August and we are still waiting for news", said Father José Luís Gerardo Ponce de León, Consolata Missionary and Bishop José Luís Gerardo Ponce de León, I.M.C. of Manzini, the only diocese of eSwatini.

Hong Kong - The Hong Kong Catholic Marriage Advisory Council: Spiritual accompaniment on a common path

(12-8-22) Spiritual accompaniment on a common path: this is the mission accomplished in 55 years by the Hong Kong Catholic Marriage Advisory Council, a Catholic voluntary organization founded in 1965 by the Jesuit Fr. Edward Collins, S.J. (1915-2003), who was also its first president. Today, one of his confreres, Bishop Stephen Chow Sau Yan, S.J. of Hong Kong chairs the organization that works to promote and protect the sacrament of marriage among Christian couples.

During the 55th anniversary service, Bishop Chow emphasized "that the primary purpose of the church is to be a field hospital, not a classroom or an inquisition." The bishop called on the



organization's members to "protect marriage between a woman and a man as a commitment for life." "In addition, the wounds of couples and others involved must be healed in order to promote a happy married life," said the bishop.

Asia's indigenous people underline fight for justice, dignity

(12-8-22) In 1982, the United Nations declared August 9 as the day to celebrate the indigenous peoples globally, but across Asia they are constantly battling to defend their cultures, territories and, above all, their rights.

Tribal people marched on the streets of India and Bangladesh to mark the International Day for the World's Indigenous Peoples, on 9 August. They turned up in traditional attire, sang, danced and beat the drums while also raising banners against the everyday discrimination they face.

Indian tribal leaders said several laws and constitutional provisions were made to protect their lands and rights over them, but they were not being properly implemented.

About 8.6 percent of India's more than 1.2 billion people belong to different tribal groups. Bangladeshi tribal leaders alleged denial of their fundamental rights in absence of any law or commission to protect their identity, land rights and end the abuses by majority Bengali people.

The government came under criticism for leaving out a large number of people during the recent national census. The data showed Bangladesh has little more than 1.6 million ethnic minorities in a population of about 165 million. Tribal groups say their actual number should be around three million.

Sri Lankan Catholic priest surrenders, gets bail

(12-8-22) A Catholic priest at the forefront of the Galle Face protests in Sri Lanka has been granted bail after he surrendered himself before a court.

Father Amila Jeewantha Peiris, the parish priest of the Church of the Risen Christ, Niwithigala, a prominent figure in the movement that ousted Gotabaya Rajapaksa as president, appeared in the Colombo Fort Magistrate Court on Aug. 12. The Catholic priest was granted bail against the production of two personal sureties each worth 500,000 Sri Lankan rupees (about US\$ 1,375).

The crippling economic crisis that gripped the island nation had prompted the 45-year-old parish priest from a remote village of plantation labourers in Ratnapura Diocese in south-central Sri Lanka to join protesters in Colombo.

The police went looking for him at his parental home and the St. Joseph's Church Balangoda on July 27. This prompted Father Peiris to petition the Supreme Court to prevent his imminent arrest. He filed a Fundamental Rights petition that came up for hearing on Aug. 9. Father Peiris said he had not received any court order. The Balangoda police had gone to his parish church and parents' home but did not hand over any court order.

Philippines offers jobs to senior citizens, disabled persons

(12-8-22) Authorities in the Philippines have signed contracts with private organizations to re-employ senior citizens and people with disabilities to eradicate their poverty and miseries.

Manila City mayor Honey Lacuna said a contract was signed with an Asian pizza company on Aug. 10 to offer employment to retired citizens and persons with disabilities who wish to work. Earlier, the Philippine government signed agreements with online food and grocery delivery companies where retirees and disabled persons can package food and groceries.

The moves come in handy as recent studies suggest many elderly people in the Catholic-majority nation suffer from poverty following their retirement.



Postal stamps celebrate 400 years of Battle of Macau

(12-8-22) The authorities in Macau have released special postal stamps to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Portuguese victory against Dutch forces in the Battle of Macau.

The Post and Telecommunications Bureau of Macau has announced the release of the stamps on Aug. 9, saying the stamps will be available for sale from Aug. 15.

Macau celebrates the feast as "Macau City Day" in remembrance of the miraculous providence and divine intervention that they believe saved the

city. Church records say Jesuit priests in Macau guided the fighters as they fired shots and canons atop Monte's hill against the Dutch, causing extensive damage to their fleet.

Macau, a special administrative region of China, was a Portuguese colony from 1557 to 1999.

(12-8-22) **Hong Kong saw a net outflow of 113,200 residents over the past year**, census data showed Thursday, setting a new record in population decline as the city maintained strict pandemic curbs.

Protests, hunger strike mark Pakistan's Day of Minorities

(12-8-22) Pakistani Christians nationwide marked the National Day of Minorities on Aug. 11 with calls for direct voting for minority MPs to stop forced conversions of non-Muslim girls and misuse of the anti-blasphemy law.

More than a hundred activists of the interfaith Rawadari Tehreek (Movement for Tolerance) group staged a hunger strike in front of the Punjab Provincial Assembly in Lahore on Aug. 10-11 to reject the reserved seats for minority parliamentarians and demanded urgent reforms to elect their representatives with their own votes.

13-8-22

Ukrainian President thanks Pope Francis for prayers in phone call

(13-8-22) A telephone conversation between Pope Francis and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky took place on Friday, 12 August, nearly six months after the start of the war in Ukraine. Their conversation came as part of the Pope's oft-expressed solidarity with all the Ukrainian people. President Zelensky broke the news himself in a tweet. The two men spoke of the horrors being suffered by the Ukrainian people since Russia invaded on 24 February, and the president expressed his gratitude to the Pope for his prayers.

Estonia - An exhibition dedicated to the cultural and pastoral commitment of Archbishop Profittlich, builder of the local Church and martyr

(13-8-22) The exhibition on the Servant of God has reached its fourth stage of its travel in the ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia in the presence of the Foreign Affairs Minister and the apostolic administrator of Estonia.

Born into a peasant family in a town in the south of the German Empire, Eduard Profittlich entered the Society of Jesus at the age of 23 in the Netherlands, since the Jesuits had already been banished from the territories of the Second Reich.

Appointed Apostolic Administrator of Estonia by Pius XI on May 5, 1931, his vocation coincided with the re-founding and reorganization of the Catholic Church in Estonia. With his Catholic flock small in number, he faced challenges he emphasized closeness with the intelligentsia of the Baltic republic, yet very humble. He obtained Estonian citizenship. With his consecration as Archbishop in 1936 and he chose to remain in Estonia during the Soviet invasion of June 1940. Soviet religious persecution did not spare the Archbishop of Tallinn: arrested in June 1941, he was deported to Kirov, a Russian city some 950 km from Moscow, where he died in prison in 1942.

The exhibition on the occasion of the eighty years of his martyrdom is also part of the celebrations of the first centenary of the diplomatic recognition of the Republic of Estonia by the Holy See.

Sri Lanka - Appeal of Christians: the nation needs international support and solidarity

(13-8-22) There is a desperate need for international intervention and solidarity initiatives to help the paralyzed nation: this is the appeal launched by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), an ecumenical body that sent an ecumenical pastoral delegation to Sri Lanka in early August. The CCA expresses its deep concern over the severe economic crisis that has caused unprecedented political turmoil and social upheaval in the nation. The country, says CCA, has become "a social volcano" due to the economic collapse and the worsening of the situation in the country, mainly due to high inflation, the increase in the prices of raw materials, the increase in hunger and malnutrition, the shortage of fuel and medicine, the crisis of public order, the increase in violence and human rights violations.

The CCA team, led by the organization's Secretary General, Mathews George Chunakara, met leaders of various Christian denominations in Sri Lanka, as well as members of parliament, leaders of opposition political parties, leaders of civil society, trade unionists, former ministers, worker representatives, interreligious groups and leaders of minority religious communities, as well as representatives of the 'Aragalaya' ('struggle') movement, at the forefront of the popular struggle.

14-8-22

Pope Francis at Angelus: 'Rekindle the flame of faith'

(14-8-22) Greeting pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square for the Sunday Angelus, Pope Francis looked at the expression in the Gospel of the day's liturgy when Jesus says, "I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!" (Lk 12:49); a powerful phrase that challenges us. Jesus brought the Gospel, the good news of God's love for each one of us, the Pope explained, and that is why the Lord says the Gospel is like a fire, because it is a message when it "erupts into history" overturns the old ways of life, helping us overcome selfishness and break our dependence on sin leading to new life in the Risen One.

Jesus' words call on us to "rekindle the flame of faith," the Pope pointed out, and this is of primary importance and more than just a means to "individual wellbeing," but rather enables us to act, like "a living flame to keep us wakeful and active even at night."

In conclusion, the Pope called on us to ask ourselves how passionate we are about the Gospel, whether we read it often and take it seriously so that it ignites "the flame of witness" in us, whether individually or as Church.

Pope Francis calls for attention to the "mortal danger" facing Somalia

(14-8-22) Following the recitation of the Marian Prayer on Sunday, Pope Francis drew attention to "the serious humanitarian crisis affecting Somalia and parts of neighbouring countries."

The Pope emphasized that "the populations of this region, already living in very precarious conditions, are now in mortal danger from drought." He said that in spite of the war drawing our attention, we cannot slacken our commitment to health, education and the fight against hunger.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations says that famine could set in in eight regions of Somalia by September if crop failures and lower livestock production continue.

"I hope that international solidarity can respond effectively to this emergency. Unfortunately, war diverts attention and resources, but these are the objectives that demand the greatest commitment: the fight against hunger, health, education," he said. The Pope again reminded all to pray for Ukraine.

