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CATHOLIC PRESS MONTH - It is time you remember the media professionals in your prayer for their time, knowledge and expertise, who risk their own life to provide the readers authentic, unbiased reporting of secular and religious news for their livelihood. Appreciate their efforts, support their endeavours. Nothing comes free now-a-days, so in all the possible ways - please show your solidarity to improve and enhance their quality of life, their mission and profession. - **K. M. Selvaraj, Founder Editor, Catholic News Update Asia Email newsletter**

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AUSTRALIA : "From the very beginning, this charity has been a miracle" - ACN celebrates its 70-year anniversary (CNUA)

This year, the international Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), is celebrating its 70th anniversary as well as the 100th anniversary of the appearances of Our Lady of Fatima, to whom the charity has been consecrated.

The international executive president of Aid to the Church in Need, Baron Johannes Heereman, explained: *"From the very beginning, this charity has been a miracle: it has given countless people the strength to forgive and to show unconditional magnanimity and grew out of a belief in Jesus Christ as well as the staunch conviction that the gospel holds the truth. Today, our charity continues to bear witness to the living God when hundreds of thousands of people all over the world support our brothers and sisters in the faith in His name."*

The pastoral charity was founded in 1947 by the Dutch Norbentine priest, Father Werenfried van Straaten. From the very beginning, the focus was on fostering reconciliation as well as bringing about the love of one's enemies that is called for in the gospel. This can be seen in the fact that the charity, which initially began as an aid campaign to help German refugees after World War II, was launched in Belgium

and the Netherlands of all places, where the population had suffered greatly under German occupation. The aid for the "enemies of yesterday" was thus not only intended to alleviate the immediate distress of the people, but also to overcome hatred, foster reconciliation in a ravaged and hostile Europe and at the same time become a "school of love" for those who bestowed the aid.

Fatima, 14th of May 1992: Fr Werenfried stands in front of the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity in Fatima © Aid to the Church in Need

The pastoral charity rapidly grew and extended its activities to encompass the countries behind the Iron Curtain as well as those in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Over time, it primarily began to focus its efforts on supporting the pastoral work of the Catholic church in areas where the church had become the object of retaliatory measures or lacked the necessary means to fulfill its mission. Next to providing material aid, one of its primary concerns was giving the persecuted "Church of Silence" a voice.

The Catholic pastoral charity is closely linked with the message of Fatima and was consecrated to Our Lady of Fatima 50 years ago and on other occasions since then. Father Martin Barta, the international spiritual assistant of the charity, explained that the founding of the charity should be considered within the context of the October revolution and the appearances at Fatima. He continued by saying that Aid to the Church in Need has in the meantime "grown into a global spiritual movement" that calls for a "rebellion of the heart". This "revolution" is not based on the "false myths of godless communism or humanistic relativism, but on the reality of the cross of Jesus Christ, His Pierced Heart".

Aid to the Church in Need is consecrated to Our Lady of Fatima because Fr Werenfried van Straaten considered the foundation of the charity to be in response to the message of Fatima. The "total rebellion against God", which first culminated in the October revolution in Russia and initiated persecution against the church of a severity that has yet to find its equal, still continues today in various forms throughout the world. Aid to the Church in Need is an immediate answer to the Mother of God's call to convert and turn to God. "As a pontifical foundation, we would like to intensify our efforts in helping the church carry the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary all over the world," Fr Barta said.

Fatima, 14th of May 1992: Fr Werenfried and Jan Cardinal Korec of Slovakia, stand either side of Sister Lucia, the sole surviving visionary at the time to witness the 1917 Marian apparitions in Fatima © Aid to the Church in Need

Today, *Aid to the Church in Need* supports more than 5,000 projects each year in over 140 countries throughout the world. Currently, one focus of its efforts is helping persecuted and threatened Christians in the Middle East and preventing the purging of Christian communities from the cradle of Christianity.>>
> <http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1487301492.html>

HOLY FATHER : 'May God give us the grace to proclaim an end to wars in world' By Devin Sean Watkins



Pope Francis celebrated Mass on Thursday in the Casa Santa Marta, asking God to give us the grace to proclaim an end to wars in the world

(Vatican Radio via CNUA) War begins in a person's heart, for this reason we are all responsible for caring for peace. This was Pope Francis' message during his morning Mass at the Casa Santa Marta. Pope Francis at Mass spoke about the sufferings of so many people whose lives are upset by wars waged by the powerful and arms traffickers. The dove, the rainbow, and the Covenant. The Holy Father spoke about these three images, present in the day's First Reading from the Book of Genesis, in which Noah releases a dove after the flood. This dove, which returns with an olive branch, is "a sign of what God desired after the flood: peace, that is, that all would live in peace." He said, "The dove and the rainbow are fragile. The rainbow is beautiful after a storm, but then a cloud comes and it disappears." Even the dove, he added, is fragile. The Pope said he was reminded of when at a Sunday Angelus two years ago a seagull swooped in and killed the two doves he and two children had just released from a window of the Apostolic Palace.

People die in wars promoted by the powerful and arms traffickers - Pope Francis said, "The Covenant which God makes is strong, but we accept it in weakness. God makes peace with us but it is not easy to care for peace. It is a daily task, because within each of us is that seed of original sin, that is, the spirit of Cain which - for envy, jealousy, greed, and the desire to dominate - leads to war." In this way, the Holy Father observed that, when speaking of the Covenant between God and humanity, reference is made to "blood". As the First Reading states, "For your own lifeblood, too, I will demand an accounting: from every animal I will demand it, and from one man in regard to his fellow man." We, the Pope said, "are our brothers' keeper, and when there is blood spilt, there is sin, and God will demand an accounting." "In today's

world there is blood being spilt. Today the world is at war. Many brothers and sisters are dying, even innocent people, because the great and powerful want a larger slice of the earth; they want a little more power, or they want to make a little more money on arms trafficking. And the Word of the Lord is clear: 'For your own lifeblood, that is for your life, I will demand an accounting: from every animal I will demand it, and from one man in regard to his fellow man.' Even of us – it seems peaceful here – the Lord will demand an accounting of the blood of our brothers and sisters who are suffering war."

Both caring for peace and a declaration of war begins within each of us - "How do I care for the dove?", Pope Francis asked himself, "What do I do so that the rainbow is always a guide? What do I do so that more blood is not spilt in the world?" All of us, he said, "we are involved in this." Prayer for peace "is not a formality; work towards peace is not a formality." He noted with bitterness that "war begins in the heart of a person; it begins at home, in the family, among friends and then goes out into the whole world." What do I do, he asked, "when I feel that something enters my heart that wants to destroy peace?" "War begins in here and finishes out there. The news we see in the papers or on television... Today so many people die, and that seed of war, which breeds envy, jealousy, and greed in my heart, is the same – grown up, become a tree – as the bomb which falls on a hospital, on a school, and kills children. It is the same. The declaration of war begins in here, in each of us. For this reason the question arises: 'How do I care for peace in my heart, in my interior, and in my family?'. Care for peace; not only care for it but make it with your hands every day. Just so will we succeed in spreading it throughout the whole world."

The Pope's childhood memory of the end of the war - Pope Francis said, "The blood of Christ is that which makes peace, but not that blood which I make with my brother or which arms traffickers make, or that of the earth's powerful in the great wars." The Pope then recalled an anecdote from his childhood about peace. "As I recall, the alarm at the Fire Brigade began to sound, and then those on the television and the city... This usually happened to draw attention to a tragedy or something else. And immediately I heard our neighbor call my mother: 'Mrs. Regina, come here, come here, come here!' My mother went out a little afraid: 'What's happened?' And the lady from the other side of the garden told her: 'The war is over!' and she cried." Francis then recalled the hug the two women shared, their crying and joy because the war had ended. "May the Lord," he concluded, "give us the grace to say: 'War is finished, crying. War is finished in my heart; war is finished in my family; war is finished in my neighborhood; war is finished in my workplace; war is finished in the world.' In this way shall the dove, rainbow, and Covenant be strengthened."

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> http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/02/16/pope_at_mass_%E2%80%98may_we_proclaim_an_end_to_wars_in_the_world/1292931

HOMILY : God's Way To Be Man By Fr Fabian Radcliffe, OP (TORCH via CNUA)

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (A) [Lev 19:1-2,17-18](#) | [1 Cor 3:16-23](#) | [Matthew 5:38-48](#)



Photograph by Fr Lawrence Lew OP of a rainy day in Edinburgh

Many years ago a friend recited to me a comical little rhyme, which has stuck in my memory ever since.

The rain it raineth every day, / Upon the just and unjust fella;

But more upon the just, because / The unjust hath the just's umbrella.

This is obviously based on Jesus's words in the Sermon on the Mount, read at today's Mass. Jesus says that the Father loves us all, because he sends his rain equally on the righteous and on the unrighteous. The rhyme may be witty and light-hearted. But Jesus's Sermon is a serious and profound call that we should treat ourselves, our enemies and our friends as God does. Jesus

proposes the kind of justice that is creative and healing. It is based on the way our Father treats us, the way Jesus himself lived.

The old Jewish law said: 'Eye for eye and tooth for tooth'. This was enacted to limit revenge, rather than encourage it. If someone takes out one of your eyes, you are not entitled to take out both of his. That would only escalate the violence. So the old law aimed to limit human wickedness, but could not eradicate it. In contrast, Jesus says: 'Turn the other cheek'. To be slapped with the back of the hand on the right cheek was a gross insult; it implied that the person hit is inferior. Our natural instinct is to hit back. Jesus says it is far better to find a creative way forward, reflecting the patient love of God himself. By offering the other cheek, you are effectively saying: 'Hit me again if you wish; but this time, treat me as an equal, not as an inferior'.

Similarly, Jesus says that if your opponent in law would take the shirt off your back, give him your vest too. In those days in Palestine, a poor man would have just two garments: a cloak and a shirt. By surrendering both of them, you shows your opponent what he is really doing: reducing a poor man to nakedness and shame.

Again, you may be obliged to carry some equipment for a Roman soldier. The military had the right to make civilians do this, but only for one mile, not more. Very well then, says Jesus: surprise him by offering to go two miles. That is far more constructive than making an official complaint, or plotting revenge by joining a resistance movement. You would be showing the Romans that there is a different way to be human, a way which reveals God's victory over all oppression, injustice and inequality.

These three little scenes give glimpses of God's way for us to live a truly human life. They are not easy; and perhaps they were not intended always to be taken literally. But they should certainly urge us to think about our own behaviour, and realise that we are often oppressive or domineering. They should encourage us to share Jesus's truly creative and loving way of being human.

Some people reject the Sermon on the Mount, thinking that it offers us totally unreal objectives; or that it presents a subtle way to control other people by non-violence; or even that God is teasing us by pointing towards something that is in fact impossible to do. But no. It's not like that at all. Jesus is giving us good news, not good advice. He is not asking us to do anything that he did not do himself. When they challenged his teaching, he told Parables, quizzical and often humorous stories, which forced them, and us, to think differently. When they mocked him, he did not respond. When they struck him and scourged him, he accepted the pain, uncomplainingly. When they made him carry the burden of the cross, the ultimate symbol of Roman domination, he carried it as far as he was able, and then had the humiliation of someone helping him with it. Together they brought it to the place of execution; and as the soldiers hammered in the nails he prayed for them.

We are inclined to think of the Sermon on the Mount as a blueprint for our moral behaviour; but when we try to live by it, it seems to make impossible demands. But try reading it differently. Try seeing it as a description of Jesus himself, and the way he himself lived. He is poor in spirit, he is meek, he is merciful. He does not resist the one who is evil, but turns the other cheek. He loves both neighbour and enemy. In short, he shows us God's way to be man. And if he shows us the way, he will certainly also lead us the truth and the life.

INDIA : The New Apostolic Nuncio to India Arrives (CBCI via CNUA) The New Apostolic Nuncio to India His Excellency, Most Rev. Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro has arrived in India. Travelling by Air India flight from Rome, the Apostolic Nuncio touched Indian soil at 7.51 a.m. on 16th February, 2017. He was received at the Delhi Indira Gandhi International Airport by His

Eminence Cardinal Baselios Cleemis, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, His Eminence Cardinal George Alencherry, Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly; Most Rev. Anil Couto, Archbishop of Delhi; Most Rev. Theodore Mascarenhas, SFX, Secretary General of CBCI; Most Rev. Kuriakose Bharanikulangara, Archbishop-Bishop of Faridabad; Most Rev. Jacob Mar Barnabas, OIC, Bishop of Gurgaon and the Officials from the Nunciature, Msgr. Henryk M. Jagodzinski and Msgr. Tuomo T. Vimpari,

INDIA : St. Xavier's University gets Vice-Chancellor (CNUA) Father Felix Raj, SJ, the principal of St. Xavier's College, Kolkata is the first vice-chancellor of St. Xavier's University. "As vice-chancellor, my first task will be to form the Governing Board of the university, which will consist of 36 members," Felix Raj said, adding that he would take over the reins of the Rajarhat University with "immediate effect".

Father Jeyaraj Veluswamy, SJ, the chancellor of the university who appointed Fr. Felix Raj as VC, also appointed professor Ashis Mitra as registrar. The bill for setting up the university, which is operational from February 8, the date of notification, was unanimously passed by the Assembly on December 15. Governor K.N. Tripathi gave his consent to the bill on January 16. The Governing Board, which will include a state government nominee and a UGC representative, will meet for the first time on the University campus on April 28.

"St. Xavier's College, which gave birth to the University, kept its quality for 157 years and has become the number one college in India with 3.77 CGPA out of 4. The university will emulate that. It will in no way compromise on quality," Fr. Felix Raj told the press. Teachers, to b
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