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“Let us think of the sunset of our life”

Pope Francis offers incense before an image of the Blessed Virgin in the Verano Cemetery.

(AsiaNews) – “THE FIRST TWO DAYS of November,” Pope Francis said to the 30 thousand people in St Peter’s Square in the morning of November 1, “the first two days of November are for all of us an intense moment of faith, prayer and reflection on the ‘last things’ of life. In fact in celebrating all the saints and commemorating all the faithful departed, in the Liturgy the pilgrim Church on earth lives and expresses the spiritual bond which unites her to the Church in heaven. Today we praise God for the countless host of holy men and women of all ages: simple men and women, who sometimes were the ‘last’ for the world, but ‘first’ for God. At the same time we already remember our departed loved ones by visiting cemeteries.” The Holy Father visited the Roman cemetery in the afternoon. “It’s a matter of great consolation,” he continued, “to think that they are in the company of the Virgin Mary, the apostles, the martyrs and all the saints of heaven.”

“Today’s Solemnity thus helps us to consider a fundamental truth of the Christian faith that we profess in the Creed: the communion of saints. It is the communion that comes from faith and unites all those who belong to Christ by Baptism. It is a spiritual union that is not broken by death, but continues in the next life. In fact there is an unbreakable bond between us living in this world and those who have crossed the threshold of death. We here on earth, along with those who have entered into eternity, form one great family.”

“This beautiful communion between heaven and earth takes place in the highest and most intense way in the Liturgy, and especially in the celebration

of the Eucharist, which expresses and fulfills the deepest union between the members of the Church. In the Eucharist, we encounter the living Jesus and His strength, and through Him we enter into communion with our brothers and sisters in the faith, those who live with us here on earth and those who have gone before us into the next life, life without end. This reality of communion fills us with joy: it is nice to have so many brothers and sisters in the faith who walk alongside us, supporting us with their help and together we travel the same road toward heaven. And it is comforting to know that we have other brothers and sisters who have already reached heaven ahead of us and who pray for us, so that together in eternity we can contemplate the glorious and merciful face of the Father.”

“In the great assembly of the saints, God wanted to reserve the first place for the Mother of Jesus. Mary is at the center of the communion of saints, as a unique custodian of the bond between the universal Church and Christ. For those who want to follow Jesus on the path of the Gospel, she is a safe guide because she is the first disciple, an attentive and caring Mother, to whom we can entrust every desire and difficulty.”

Later in the afternoon, surrounded by thousands of faithful who filled the paths and alleys between the monumental tombs of Verano Cemetery, the pontiff celebrated Mass accompanied by Cardinal Agostino Vallini, vicar of Rome, Mgr Filippo Iannone, vice-regent of the Diocese of Rome, the diocese’s auxiliary bishops and Fr Armando Ambrosi, priest at the St Lawrence Outside the Walls Parish Church,

where the cemetery is located. In coming here, Pope Francis revisited a tradition that John Paul II had upheld until 1 November 1993. Since then, Benedict XVI did celebrate the Eucharist at the nearby Basilica of St Lawrence outside the Walls in 2008.

“Today,” the pope explained, “on the feast of All Saints, before the day of All Souls, we need to think about hope, the hope that accompanies us in life . . . Early Christians represented hope as an anchor, as if hope was anchored in God’s life, on the other shore. To have our life anchored where our dearly departed, Jesus Christ, and God are brings the hope that does not disappoint.”

“Hope is the yeast that widens the soul,” said the Pope. “Even in difficult times, hope, the soul goes on. Today is a day of hope. Our brothers and sisters are in God’s presence. We too shall be there if we walk along Jesus’ road . . . Everyone who has this hope based on him makes himself pure’ (1 Jn. 3:3). Hope purifies; it lightens us; it makes it go faster.”

“As sun starts to set today, let each of us think of our own sunset. Am I looking at it with hope? . . . Where is my heart anchored? If it is anchored on the shore, hope cannot disappoint because Jesus does not disappoint.”

At the end of the Mass, the pope concluded, “I would like to pray in a special way, in particular for our brothers and sisters who died as they sought a better life. We saw the cruelty of the desert, and of the sea where many drowned. Let us also pray for those who were saved, now languishing in shelters. Let us hope they might go to other, more comfortable places, in other centres.” ■

LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST

Vatican approves new statutes

(Rome Reports) THE VATICAN has approved the new statutes of the Legionaries of Christ, which were developed during the General Chapter of the Congregation that concluded in February.

The Legion of Christ delivered its new constitutions in February. After further study, the Holy See requested some adjustments as they were explicit references to the texts of the Second Vatican Council. They also asked to include points from the Code of Canon Law which would serve as a key in interpreting the rules.

The new text also clarifies the relationship be-



tween the Legion of Christ and Regnum Christi.

In July 2010, Benedict XVI named Cardinal Velasio de Paolis as Apostolic Delegate to the Legion of Christ. The Pope asked that he supervise the redevelopment of the Constitutions.

De Paolis ended his work on February 2014, after the election of new superiors. In July, the Vatican named renowned canonist, Gianfranco Ghirlanda, as Pontifical Assistant in order consolidate the renewal of the congregation, and to help in preparing the statutes of the Regnum Christi movement. ■

SISTINE CHAPEL

New LED lighting brings out more detail

(Rome Reports) THE RESTORATION of the Sistine Chapel began in 1980 and ended in 1994. After this immense work, no one thought that Michelangelo's masterpiece could be seen any better, until now.

With the new lighting system installed in the Chapel, visitors can enjoy the paintings in a whole new light. Before the installation, some details of the creation of Adam were barely recognizable. Now they can clearly be seen with vivid colors.

Before, the blue color of the Final Judgement served merely as a background. Now, the celestial tone intensifies the scene portrayed.

The light that emanates from Christ is another example. Thanks to the 7,000 LED light points, all the details and figures from this work of art gain



life and expression.

Michelangelo finished painting the Sistine Chapel on October 31st, 1541. Those who have visited the chapel for over 500 years can say that his masterpiece looks as if it was painted yesterday. ■

HOLY FATHER AT THE PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Francis Calls Benedict XVI a Great Pope

(Zenit.org) - WHILE ATTENDING this morning's plenary session of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences held in the Vatican's Casina Pio IV, the Holy Father Pope Francis spoke of his retired predecessor at the unveiling of a bust of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI inaugurated by the Academy.

Francis noted his predecessor was great for his incredible intellect, his theological contributions, his virtues, religiosity, and equally for his deep love of the Church and of human beings.

Reminiscing, he recalled that Benedict XVI was the first to invite a president of this Academy to participate in the synod on new evangelization, "aware of the importance of science in modern culture."

His address didn't focusing on the complex issue of the evolution of nature, the theme

of the academy's session, but underscored instead that "God and Christ walk with us and are also present in nature."

CREATION

"When we read in Genesis the account of Creation, we risk imagining God as a magus, with a magic wand able to make everything," he said. "But it is not so. He created beings and allowed them to develop according to the internal laws that He gave to each one, so that they were able to develop and to arrive at their fullness of being."

The Lord, Francis explained, gave autonomy to the universe's beings at the same time at which he assured them of his continuous presence, which "gives being to every reality," until it became what we know today.

This, he said, is precisely because God is not "a demiurge" or "a conjurer," but the "Creator who gives being to all things."

Moreover, the beginning of the world, he said, is not "the work of chaos that owes its origin to another," but derives "directly from a supreme Origin that creates out of love."

Regarding the Big Bang theory, often said to explain the origin of the world, the Pontiff said, "It does not contradict the divine act of creating, but rather requires it." The evolution of nature does not contrast with the notion of Creation, as evolution presupposes the creation of beings that evolve."

MAN

"With regard to man," he continued, instead, there is a change and something new.

SURVEY IN BURKINA FASO

African Women Turning to Natural Family Planning

ANNE MORSE AND STEVEN MOSHER

Population Research Institute

IT SEEMED LIKE your typical family planning conference: it was sponsored by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Health Organization's Department of Reproductive Health and Research. It had the typical title: "Is access enough? Understanding and addressing unmet need for Family Planning." It even seemed to have the usual group of presenters ready with their cherry-picked findings to lobby for even more money to be spent on the contraception and sterilization of African women.

But, this time, in the small town of Nanyuki, Kenya, which sits right on the Equator, something different happened.

Three researchers—one from Geneva, one from Paris, and one from Burkina Faso—presented a paper which called into question several of the basic premises of the population controllers. They found that natural family planning methods not only work well, but that they are successfully used by large numbers of women. They also found that, because previous surveys completely ignored NFP, the so-called "unmet need for contraception" has been grossly overestimated.

The researchers came to their remarkable conclusions in the course of a study conducted in Ouagadougou, the capital city of the West-African country of Burkina Faso, and published in the journal *Studies in Family Planning* this June.

They took a novel approach: Instead of simply using the standard health



questionnaire that ignores NFP, they decided that their survey would include questions to the women about their use of natural methods of family planning.

They found that surprisingly large numbers of women used NFP. Of the women surveyed, almost 25% reported that they used a natural method for family planning. That is to say, the previous health surveys carried out by USAID and other population control-minded organizations had completely ignored that fact that one-quarter of the women were using some form of NFP.

Because of this error—which some would call deliberate—the previous health surveys have been way off the mark. They record that only 35% of Burkina Faso women used artificial contraception and wrongly conclude from this that the other 65% have an "unmet need" to be put on the pill, injected with Depo Provera, or sterilized.

The new study shows that 1 in 4 women in Burkina Faso cannot possibly have an "unmet need for family planning", since their "needs" are already being met by the use of a safe,

effective, healthy and free natural method. The authors conclude that past surveys have overestimated the "unmet need for contraception" by a whopping 25%.

All this is to say that the population controllers hold natural methods of family planning in such disdain that they wrongly view the 25% of women who use NFP as deluded.

As for the other 40%, it is by no means certain that they are eagerly lining up to be contracepted or sterilized either. USAID's "experts" also cite Burkina Faso's high birth rate as evidence that—regardless of what the women themselves say—they obviously have an enormous "unmet need" to be contracepted and sterilized. According to the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) carried out by USAID, the average woman in Burkina Faso gives birth to 6 children over her lifetime. Because this is slightly more than their average desired fertility of 5.2 children, the population controllers conclude that the average woman in Burkina Faso is having more children than she wants.

But it doesn't take a Ph.D. in demography to figure out why Burkina Faso women are having children. Child mortality rates are so high that the probability of having 5 children who all live until their 5th birthday is only 50%. And just 25 years ago, when women who are now ending their reproductive lives were in their early twenties and just starting to have children, the probability of having 5 children who all survive until their 5th birthday was less than 30%. Simply put, the women of Burkina Faso are giving birth to more children than

they say they want because so many of their children die. Having an "extra" child or two is insurance. It's the only way they can ensure that they reach their desired family size.

At the end of the day, population controllers really don't care what the women of Africa want. Instead, they are determined to dictate to them what their fertility will be regardless. And it's no wonder that they exaggerate "unmet need," since this number is one of the principal justifications for USAID's billion-dollar population control budget. "Look at how many hundreds of millions of women have a crying need for more contraceptives," its lobbyists tell Congress. "We need more money."

The authors of the new study suggest what we at PRI have been saying for years, namely, that future surveys must ask questions to accurately include the large proportion of women who use natural methods, and that health clinics actively promote natural fertility awareness methods.

The current surveys that miscategorize a quarter of the women serve the purposes of the population controllers and the pill manufacturers, not the women themselves.

The author's also concluded that women aren't refusing hormonal contraception because of "problems of access", but because of "dislike for modern methods [of contraception]."

If you've ever wondered why USAID insists on shipping container loads of contraceptives to places like Burkina Faso, where they rot in warehouses and gather dust on the shelves of family planning clinics until they are thrown away, well, now you know. ■

Francis Calls Benedict XVI...

When, on the sixth day of the account in Genesis, man is created, God gives the human being autonomy, an autonomy that is different to that of nature, which is freedom.

When God tells man to name everything and to go ahead through history, Francis continued, this makes man responsible for creation, so that he might dominate it in order to develop it until the end of time.

For this reason, the scientist, and

above all the Christian scientist, must adopt the approach of posing questions regarding the future of humanity and of the earth, and, of being free and responsible, helping to prepare it and preserve it, to eliminate risks to the environment of both a natural and human nature.

Yet, simultaneously, the scientist must be motivated by the confidence that nature hides, in her evolutionary mechanisms, potentialities for intelligence and freedom to discover and realize, to

achieve the development that is in the plan of the Creator.

HOPE AND WARNING

So, while limited, the action of humanity is part of God's power and is able to build a world suited to his dual corporal and spiritual life, one which is for "all human beings," not for an exclusive group or class of privileged persons.

"This hope and trust in God, the Creator of nature, and in the capacity of the human spirit," the Holy Father concluded, "can offer the researcher a new energy and profound serenity."

Yet, he warned, "It is also true that the action of humanity – when freedom becomes autonomy – which is not freedom, but autonomy – destroys creation and man takes the place of the Creator. And this is the grave sin against God the Creator." ■

MACAU RICCI INSTITUTE REVIVES INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUMS

Jesuits and Protestants in 2016

PEDRO DANIEL OLIVEIRA

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FATHER Artur Wardega, SJ, director of Macau Ricci Institute (MRI), told O CLARIM that efforts are being made to resume on a regular basis the international symposiums organized by the entity he leads.

After the event that dwelt on the repression, survival and restoration of the Jesuit missions worldwide, which took place from October 28 until October 30 at the Handover Gifts Museum of Macao, he confirmed that MRI is going to organize another international symposium, named "Encounters between Jesuits and Protestants in Asia," to be held from November 9th to 11th of 2016.

"The discussion will be about how the local Jesuits dealt with Protestants in Macau and in the Southeast Asian region after their second arrival in the coastal of China, from 1842, together with the Western powers, such as Great Britain, France and the United States, among others," said the director of



MRI on the 2016 edition.

The event that will be organized in partnership with Boston College (Massachusetts) is going to take place about a year before the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Father Artur Wardega also stressed that the periodic-

ity of the MRI international symposiums will depend on events that are somehow related to the Jesuits.

Meanwhile, the institution will hold on the 10th November the seminar "Count Maurice August Benyowsky in Macau (1771)," by Edward Kajdański.

The event will be divided into three parts: the lecture; the reception of the map of Count Maurice Benyowsky's sea itinerary by Chan Ieng Hin, director of the Macau Museum; and the presentation of various publications on Count Benyowsky.

The unforgettable journey in the sea began after he was sent into exile to Kamchatka, by personal decree of Russian czarina Catherine II. He managed to put under his control a great number of exiles and sailors. A successful plot was carried out and after they overtook Bolsheretsk, the main city of the peninsula, the Russian ship "Sts. Peter and Paul" was captured.

Having no options left, they sailed through the unknown regions of the Bering Sea and Northern Pacific down to Taiwan Strait, to Macau (where they stayed for four months) and to Canton, from where they travelled to France, their last destination. This incredible voyage was described by Count Maurice Benyowsky in his Journal, which is a part of his Memoirs and Travels published in 1790. ■

True Embodiment

TERESA LO

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NOVEMBER 15th is the Feast Day of Blessed Mary of the Passion, the Foundress of Franciscan Missionary of Mary. Formal celebrations in school have begun since 2010. Having responded to the call of God, Blessed Mary of the Passion overcame all obstacles with her absolute trust and love in God, set up FMM, a universal congregation with the mission to follow Mary and St. Francis, upheld the beauty of fraternal living and lived humbly in the footsteps of the Crucified Christ.

The Foundress is an extraordinary woman whose ideals, spirituality and life history have attracted over 8000 sisters to join the mission at its peak. I highly admire her nobility, her determination and her love for Christ and for her community. Just because of her richness and complexity in the review of her biography, I found it extraordinarily difficult, in my own limitations, to bring out the essence of the Foundress' spirituality in each of the celebrations.

When I was at my wit's end, I prayed. I believe the saints are so close to God that they are more than willing to intercede for these poor souls like me. I



"talked" to the Foundress, and the other two saints she revered, begging for guidance and inspirations so that whatever I put in the program could benefit the students and teachers.

They did intercede for this confounded me, together with the Holy Spirit, hinting to me where I should start and how to proceed. Then, I followed the inspiration and began to locate the best guest speakers to come and share the message.

Sr. Florence Leung took the lead in 2010 by sharing her missionary life in war-afflicted areas in Africa, followed by

Sr. Magdalene Law, the then-school supervisor in 2011, who elaborated how a missionary found the goodness of God in service. In 2012, Sr. Victoria Lau fascinated the whole assembly with a full review of the Foundress' life, mission and implications to us. Her most heartfelt sharing on the seven FMM martyrs in China challenged us to think what we could do as contemporary Catholics and women in the 21st century. Other items – singing, praying and preparing the Adoration of the Eucharist – were also carried out in love and joy by Sr. Judith, Sr. Fatima, Sr. Janina and Sr. Olivia.

These FMM missionaries are likened to the "mustard seed" being planted in the garden by God. "When it was fully grown, it became a large bush and 'the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches' " (Luke 13:19). For the past 80 years, the sisters came to Macau at different times in the path of history to serve the Macau students, the parents and the teaching staff and to manifest the goodness of God through their true embodiment of the FMM spirit, initiated and practiced by the Foundress.

The FMM community seeks to preach as well as to focus on the interior life with Christ in the presence of the Adoration of the Eucharist. They are Martha

and Mary merged into one.

The impact of their service can indeed be felt palpably and unconsciously in us and in anyone who might have encountered them in other parts of the society. The students and teachers may not have understood the life history of the Foundress, but they could smell in their day-to-day interaction the fragrance of the FMM spirit in each missionary serving in school.

Back in 2010, we arranged a time for the Adoration of the Eucharist in the Religion Room once a week, then last year the holy hour with Jesus was moved to the chapel. The area was bigger, but students were scarce.

Is praying so difficult? Or should I say, are we supposed to pray even more because life is difficult? Are we presuming that praying is no longer important in comparison to studies and other achievements?

"My end is Love," says Blessed Mary of Passion. Whether the school can fulfill the Dream of St. Francis and exude the fragrance of Blessed Mary of the Passion relies much on our incessant prayer, our thanksgiving, our perseverance and our love for God.

Transformation will take place, just as the way the Eucharist transforms us. ■

AT THE CATHEDRAL

Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed celebrated in Latin

"As CHRIST was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" - Romans 6:4.

On 2nd of November, Sunday, the Sé Cathedral of Macau celebrated All Souls' Day. The Mass was celebrated in Latin, which is the liturgical language of the Roman Catholic Church. The celebration began at 3:30 pm. The main celebrant was Rev. Fr. Joao Evangelista Lau, along with Rev. Fr. Domingos Soares, as concelebrant. The Choir was composed of alumni of St Joseph's Seminary who rendered polyphonic songs composed by Michael Haller (1840-1915) and a piece from Andrew Lloyd Webber.

While the dead are often associated with spooky ghosts and scary poltergeists, at this time of the year the Catholic Church instead celebrates the Feast of All Saints (the Church in heaven) and commemorates all Souls (the Church in purgatory). It is a time to reflect on those who have passed from this life to the eternal life in Christ. So what is purgatory? And how can we (living beings) help the souls being purified in purgatory? The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, point 210 says, "Purgatory is the state of those who die in God's friendship, assured of their eternal salvation, but who still have need of purification to enter into the happiness of heaven." Point 211 adds, "Because of the communion of saints, the faithful who are still pilgrims on earth are able to help the souls in purgatory by offering prayers in suffrage for them, especially the Eucharistic sacrifice. They also help them by almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance".



However, in our daily lives, we often fall short of the life we received in Baptism. While tasting the new life of Christ, we act out of our old nature and give in to temptation and sin. This is why All Souls Day is so important. It reminds us that God, knowing the weakness and frailty of our human nature, has made a way for us to enter his holy presence perfectly cleansed and acceptable to him. ■



06
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6.30 pm

Festa Barocca

THEORBO & BAROQUE GUITAR: LUCA MARCONATO (ITALY)
HARPSICHORD & ORGAN: AURELIO PORFIRI (ITALY)
CELLO: LEONG CHON HANG (MACAU)





SINGERS:
TEACHERS AND STUDENTS FROM
SANTA ROSA DE LIMA ENGLISH SECONDARY
OUR LADY OF FATIMA GIRLS' SCHOOL

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HOLY SPIRIT CHAPEL
(Inside Santa Rosa de Lima English Section)

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主日福音
Sunday Gospel

祝聖拉特朗大殿（慶日）
Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome



NOVEMBER 9, 2014 – FEAST OF THE DEDICATION OF THE LATERAN BASILICA

The Temple of Stones is a Symbol of the Living Church

Ezk 47:1-2,8-9,12; 1 Cor 3:9c-11,16-17; Jn 2:13-22

“TODAY the liturgy celebrates the dedication of the Lateran Basilica, called ‘mother and head of all the churches of the city and the world.’ In fact, this basilica was the first to be built after Emperor Constantine’s edict, in 313, granted Christians freedom to practice their religion.

“Initially the observance of this feast was confined to the city of Rome; then, beginning in 1565, it was extended to all the Churches of the Roman rite. The honoring of this sacred edifice was a way of expressing love and veneration for the Roman Church,

which, as St. Ignatius of Antioch says, ‘presides in charity’ over the whole Catholic communion.

“By making the dedication of the papal church a feast throughout the world, the Church intends to stress Catholic unity without detracting from the glories of lesser churches. Other churches also have feasts, and each diocese celebrates the anniversary of its cathedral’s dedication. But today, all churches everywhere, even bare rooms in poor towns, or huts in tropical missionary lands, align themselves in prayer with the Church’s church. Now, basilica means ‘house of a king,’ and you will recall that Pilate styled Jesus ‘King of the Jews’ in mockery. Today the Lateran basilica is

home of the King of Kings, and occasions a feast of praise. But the feast’s special significance is that the Vicar of Christ the King maintains this church as his cathedral.

“Dear friends, today’s feast celebrates a mystery that is always relevant: God’s desire to build a spiritual temple in the world, a community that worships him in spirit and truth (cf. John 4:23-24). But this observance also reminds us of the importance of the material buildings in which the community gathers to celebrate the praises of God. Every community therefore has the duty to take special care of its own sacred buildings, which are a precious religious and histori-

cal patrimony. For this we call upon the intercession of Mary Most Holy, that she help us to become, like her, the ‘house of God,’ living temple of his

love.” (Benedict XVI, Angelus Address, November 9, 2008) ■

Fr. Fernando Torres, CMF
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FREEDOM BOOSTER

It's an inside job

REV. JOSÉ MARIO O. MANDÍA

jmomandia@gmail.com

IMAGINE that the richest man in the country told you that he wanted you to be part of his family. From now on – just because he wants to – you will start enjoying all the privileges that his family has. You can travel in his family's private jets or at least always travel first class to any point on earth, you can go sailing in one of the family yachts anytime you wish, stay in any of the family's luxury hotels or resorts, use his family's credit card, and so on. Wouldn't you consider yourself lucky?

Well, if you have been baptized, you are even luckier than that, because the one who has invited you to be part of his family not only owns a group of companies. He owns the world. He actually owns the whole universe! Baptism makes us adopted children, part of God's family, and a future heir to all that he rules and possesses. Incredible! To make that happen, God gives us grace – “sanctifying grace”.

If we are part of such a family, we also have to be educated and trained to be part of that family. The model, of course, is the only natural Son, Jesus Christ. We are to learn from him how to be children of the Father. Moreover, God gives us what are called “actual graces” to assist us in this task. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (no. 1996) says that “Grace is favor, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life.” In fact, even before we respond to his invitation to be part of his family, he has already given us actual graces. He is always calling us and assisting us. But first let us clarify what actual grace really is.

Many people think grace is something that can be felt, something that makes them shed tears or have goose pimples. However, the Catechism of the Catholic Church (no. 2005) tells us: “Since it belongs to the supernatural order, grace escapes our expe-



rience and cannot be known except by faith. We cannot therefore rely on our feelings or our works to conclude that we are justified and saved.” The Catechism then uses a little story to explain this point. “A pleasing illustration of this attitude is found in the reply of St. Joan of Arc to a question posed as a trap by her ecclesiastical judges: ‘Asked if she knew that she was in God's grace, she replied: “If I am not, may it please God to put me in it; if I am, may it please God to keep me there.”’”

If grace is not something felt, if it is not something that gives me a kind of emotional high, then what is it? In what way does it help?

When we spoke about freedom, we recalled the teaching of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (no. 1731) that it is a power “rooted in reason and will”. God always respects this freedom, respects our reason and our will. Thus, when God acts to assist us, what he does is to assist both our reason and our will. He gives light to our mind so that we can think clearly, and strengthens our will so that even if the choice is a difficult one we are not fazed by the obstacles. Actual grace is light and strength. It's what you would call “an inside job”. It works so gently that we hardly notice its presence. This is why it so often happens that when we do something good, we congratulate ourselves and think: “Oh, how good I am! God, I thank you that I am not like other men, corrupt, unjust, adulterers...” Oops. Doesn't that sound familiar? See Luke 18:11 on what Jesus

has to say. Consider this other prayer: “he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.” (Luke 1:48-49) Little do we realize that most of the good acts we do could not have been done without God's light and God's strength. It is our decision, yes. They are acts done “with the glorious freedom of the children of God” as St Paul says (Romans 8:21) but with heaps of heavenly assistance.

This is why Saint Paul said, “By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God which is with me.” (I Corinthians 15:10)

One might ask: is grace irresistible? Not really. God knocks at the door of my heart, and it is up to me to open the door, to make use of the help he gives. I am always free. In fact, I can resist simply by not praying or receiving the Sacraments – both are channels of grace. If I don't want to be bothered by God, the only thing I have to do is shy away from them. I can always busy myself with other things and ignore the One who waits patiently. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who

has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (Revelation 3:20-22)

Sometimes we don't respond because we are afraid. We fear that he might ask too much and we will be left with nothing. Saint John Paul II knew about this fear. This is why he said in his first homily as Pope on 22 October 1978, “Brothers and sisters, do not be afraid to welcome Christ and accept his power. Help the Pope and all those who wish to serve Christ and with Christ's power to serve the human person and the whole of mankind. Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ. To his saving power open the boundaries of States, economic and political systems, the vast fields of culture, civilization and development. Do not be afraid. Christ knows “what is in man”. He alone knows it.

“So often today man does not know what is within him, in the depths of his mind and heart. So often he is uncertain about the meaning of his life on this earth. He is assailed by doubt, a doubt which turns into despair. We ask you therefore, we beg you with humility and trust, let Christ speak to man. He alone has words of life, yes, of eternal life.”

Once we discover the beauty of the spiritual life, once we realize how good it is to respond to God's grace, we will realize how much we have missed. Thus, Saint Augustine prayed, “Late have I loved you, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new, late have I loved you! You were within me, but I was outside, and it was there that I searched for you. In my unloveliness I plunged into the lovely things which you created. You were with me, but I was not with you. Created things kept me from you; yet if they had not been in you they would not have been at all. You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness. You flashed, you shone, and you dispelled my blindness. You breathed your fragrance on me; I drew in breath and now I pant for you. I have tasted you, now I hunger and thirst for more. You touched me, and I burned for your peace.” ■

天主的聖殿是甚麼？

MAY TAM

拉特朗大殿祝聖紀念

讀經一：厄則克耳47:1-2, 8-9, 12

讀經二：格林多前書3:9b-11, 16-17

福音：若望福音2:13-22

在過去，以色列通過聖殿與天主交往，但從現在開始，基督徒透過耶穌與天主交往。

第一篇讀經，先知厄則克耳預言了上主啟示給他的聖殿，是一個具體而恩惠的聖殿。在第二篇讀經，聖保祿告訴我們聖殿的屬靈意義。然而，是在今天的福音中，耶穌告訴我們甚麼才是真正的天主聖殿。在基督復活前，猶太人和耶穌的門徒都不能理解這個概念。

耶穌不祇「把自己視作天主在人間的永久住所」（天主教教理586），祂將自己在加爾瓦略山十字架上所受的苦難犧牲，取代了以前聖殿裡的祭品。祂結束了舊約聖經中欽崇天主的方式，並以聖體聖事為一個全新的，跨越時空的永恒祭品。在過去，以色列通過聖殿與天主交往，但從現在開始，基督徒透過耶穌與天主交往。

明白了這一點，聖保祿進一步指出，我們是天主的聖殿，是天主屬靈的居所。基督是頭，所有基督徒都是祂身上的肢體，而基督奧妙的身體就是教會。（格前12:12-31；哥羅森書1:18, 24；2:18-20；厄弗所書1:22-23）。像厄則克耳所見，我們可以看見的教會，是一座建築物或是一個組織機構，但不單如此，教會亦如同聖保祿所說：「『我們』是天主的建築物」（格前3:9b）。無論教會是什麼的形式，它都是神聖的，因為它有天主的臨在。

當耶穌驅趕商販出聖殿時，除了顯示祂對天主之家的熱愛，耶穌也在提醒我們，當我們來到天主的居所時，必須心懷虔敬。如果耶路撒冷的聖殿，沒有了約櫃（約櫃是天主臨在的具體象徵，在公元前587年巴比倫人摧毀耶路撒冷時失去了），人仍然必須尊重聖殿，那麼現在，永生的天主真臨聖體中，當我們進入教堂時，不是應該更加尊重教堂嗎？讓我們提醒自己，我們有着天主的臨在，所以我們一生都要盡力活出聖潔和美德，「因為天主的宮殿是聖的，這宮殿就是『我們』」（格前3:17）。

有關基督奧體的詳細資料，請參閱考教宗庇護十二世於1943年撰寫的通諭 *Mystici Corporis Christi*。■

HISTORY OF SALVATION

Time of Israel (XVI)

救恩史

以色列時代 (十六)

從預像到實現

「預像」是什麼意思？預像是天主藉著一個人物、一個事實，預示未來另一個人物或另一個事實。

From type (symbol) to reality

What does “type” mean? Through types or symbols, God uses a person or an event to represent a future person or event.

► 預像 Figure

民長紀約成書於公元前1200年至1050 年的150年間。那時希伯來（以色列）人十二支派各自為政，只有同盟聯邦的關係。由於散居客納罕各地後，一神信仰開始受到多神偶像崇拜的影響，道德也隨之墮落。當天主懲罰他們的時候，希伯來人就會想起天主。

The Book of Judges covers the 150-year period from around 1200 to 1050 BC. During that time, the twelve tribes of Israel formed a kind of federation. After the tribes were assigned their own portions in Canaan, their belief in one God (monotheism) was influenced by the belief in many gods (polytheism) of the surrounding peoples. Not surprisingly, moral degradation also ensued. Whenever God punished them, the Hebrews (Israelites) would remember to turn to God.

實現 Reality

所以民長紀主要是教訓我們救恩只在於天主，除非忠實信仰、服從依賴天主，決得不和平與幸福。

The Book of Judges teaches us that salvation only comes from God. If we are not faithful to our faith, if we do not serve and trust God, we will never attain peace and happiness.

► 預像 Figure

以色列人
Israelites

實現 Reality

人
Men

► 預像 Figure

壓逼者
Oppressor

實現 Reality

魔鬼
Devil

► 預像 Figure

民長 — 以色列人的解放者
Judges - liberators of Israel

實現 Reality

耶穌基督 — 罪人的解放者
Jesus Christ - liberator of sinners

民長紀 BOOK OF JUDGES

3:7-11

3:12-30

4:1 - 5:32

6:1 - 10:5

10:6 - 12:15

13:1 - 21:25

以色列人犯罪 ISRAELITES SIN

以色列子民行了上主視為惡的事，忘卻了上主他們的天主，而事奉了巴耳諸神和阿舍辣諸女神。
And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, forgetting the LORD their God

以色列子民行了上主視為惡的事。
And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD.

以色列子民行了上主視為惡的事。
And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD.

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以色列子民行了上主視為惡的事。
And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD.

亞當與厄娃
Adam and Eve

公元前？
? BC

亞巴郎
Abraham

公元前1800
1800 BC

公元前？
? BC

諾厄
Noah

聖祖
PATRIARCHS

公元前1300
1300 BC

梅瑟
Moses

民長
JUDGES

王帝
KINGS

先知
PROPHETS

公元前1200
1200 BC

以色列十二支派
Twelve Tribes

公元前1000
1000 BC

達味
David

公元前920/930
920/930 BC

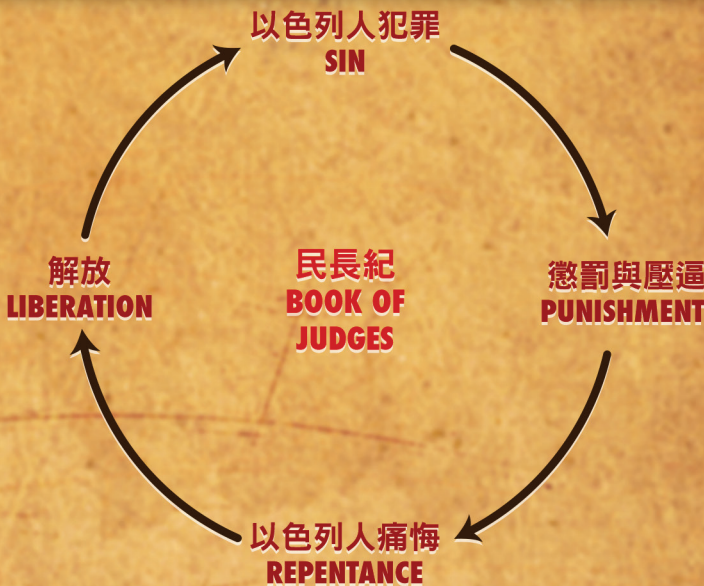
以色列（北國）建都撒瑪黎雅、猶大（南國）建都耶路撒冷
Israel (North) with Samaria as capital and Judah (South) with Jerusalem as capital

史
(六)

民長時期: 民長紀

THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES:
THE BOOK OF JUDGES

壓逼者 (懲罰) OPPRESSOR (PUNISHMENT)	後悔 REPENTANCE	解放者 (民長) LIBERATOR (JUDGE)
厄東王雇商黎沙塔般 Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia	以色列子民向上主呼籲。 The people of Israel cried to the LORD.	敖特尼耳 Othni-el
摩阿布王厄革隆 Eglon the king of Moab	以色列子民向上主呼籲。 The people of Israel cried to the LORD.	厄胡得 Ehud
客納罕王雅賓，他當時在哈祚爾為王 Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor	以色列子民向上主呼籲。 The people of Israel cried to the LORD.	女先知德波辣 Prophetess Deborah
米德楊人、阿瑪肋克人和東方子民 Midianites and Amalekites and the people of the East	以色列子民向上主呼籲。 The people of Israel cried to the LORD.	基德紅 Gideon
非利士人和阿孟子民 Philistines and Ammonites	以色列子民向上主呼籲。 The people of Israel cried to the LORD.	基肋阿得人依弗大 Jephthah the Gileadite
非利士人 Philistines	以色列子民向上主呼籲。 The people of Israel cried to the LORD.	三松 Samson



「三松就抱住正中支殿的兩根柱子，右手抱一根，左手抱一根；然後三松說：『讓我的性命和培肋舍特人同歸於盡！』於是他奮力屈身，大殿隨之倒塌，壓在酋長和裏面所有的民眾身上；這樣他在臨死時所殺死的人，比一生所殺死的人還多。」
"And Samson grasped the two middle pillars upon which the house rested, and he leaned his weight upon them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. And Samson said, 'Let me die with the Philistines.' Then he bowed with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people that were in it. So the dead whom he slew at his death were more than those whom he had slain during his life."

