



OPUS CHRISTI SALVATORIS MUNDI

Newsletter
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MISSIONARY SERVANTS OF THE POOR OF THE THIRD WORLD

May's Papal Intention for Evangelization:

That Mary, Star of Evangelization, may guide the Church in proclaiming Christ to all nations.

Intention entrusted to us by the Holy Father at the Apostolate of Prayer

A Word from the Magisterium

*We continue with our presentation of extracts of the exhortation **EVANGELII GAUDIUM** from 24th November. We are presenting the parts that are most relevant to our charism, mostly on the topics of poverty and mission.*

II. THE INCLUSION OF THE POOR IN SOCIETY (...)

190. Sometimes it is a matter of hearing the cry of entire peoples, the poorest peoples of the earth, since "peace is founded not only on respect for human rights, but also on respect for the rights of peoples".^[154] Sadly, even human rights can be used as a justification for an inordinate defense of individual rights or the rights of the richer peoples. With due respect for the autonomy and culture of every nation, we must never forget that the planet belongs to all mankind and is meant for all mankind; the mere fact that some people are born in places with fewer resources or less development does not justify the fact that they are living with less dignity. It must be reiterated that "the more fortunate should renounce some of their rights so as to place their goods more generously at the service of others".^[155] To speak properly of our own rights, we need to broaden our perspective and to hear the plea of other peoples and other regions than those of our own country. We need to grow in a solidarity which "would allow all

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peoples to become the artisans of their destiny".^[156] since "every person is called to self-fulfilment".^[157]

191. In all places and circumstances, Christians, with the help of their pastors, are called to hear the cry of the poor. This has been eloquently stated by the bishops of Brazil: "We wish to take up daily the joys and hopes, the difficulties and sorrows of the Brazilian people, especially of those living in the barrios and the countryside – landless, homeless, lacking food and health care – to the detriment of their rights. Seeing their poverty, hearing their cries and knowing their sufferings, we are scandalized because we know that there is enough food for everyone and that hunger is the result of a poor distribution of goods and income. The problem is made worse by the generalized practice of wastefulness".^[158]

(Continues)

^[154] Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 157.

^[155] Paul VI, *Apostolic Letter Octogesima Adveniens* (14 May 1971), 23: AAS 63 (1971), 418.

^[156] Paul VI, *Encyclical Letter Populorum Progressio* (26 March 1967), 65: AAS 59 (1967), 289.

^[157] *Ibid.*, 15: AAS 59 (1967), 265.

^[158] *Conferência Nacional Dos Bispos Do Brazil, Exigências evangélicas e éticas de superação da miséria e da fome* (April 2002), Introduction, 2.

News from the Church

Pope Francis' Travel to the Holy Land, in the footsteps of Paul VI

Pope Francis will travel to the Holy Land for the first time this month, from 24th – 26th May. It will be a short visit, in three stages, visiting Amman, Jerusalem and Bethlehem, after having received the invitation from the Israeli President, Shimon Peres, and from the Palestinian President, Mahmud Abas.

The Pope himself had announced this visit during the Angelus on 5th January, before the multitude of the faithful who swarmed St. Peter's Square in full Christmas cheer.

The reason he chose this day to announce the trip was "to commemorate the historic meeting between Pope Paul VI and the Patriarch of Constantinople, Athenagoras, which took place on 5th January exactly 50 years ago", in 1964, after centuries of division, after the so-called "Great Schism" of 1054.

They were barely fifty seven hours that Pope Paul VI defined as "a strike from the plough that moved a hardened and motionless ground", and actually changed the face of the Papacy.

In fact, if Paul VI was the first Pope who visited the Holy Land (4th – 6th January, 1964), the sacred places from where St. Peter came out never to return, his example was followed by the now canonized John Paul II, who visited the Holy Land from 20th – 26th March, 2000, and by the current Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, who spent five days there in 2009 (from 8th – 15th May). Pope Francis will be, therefore, following the footsteps of his predecessors, the fourth Pontiff who will travel to the Holy Land.

This will be the second big international trip of his pontificate, started in March 2013, after having visited Brazil last July for the XXVIII World Youth Day (JMJ).

On announcing this imminent trip, the Holy Father also manifested his intention of celebrating an ecumenical meeting in the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. All the representatives of the Christian Churches of Jerusalem, and Bartholomew, the Patriarch of Constantinople, successor of Athenagoras, would participate.

In a handwritten note from 21st September 1963, in which Pope Paul VI explains the point of that pilgrimage, he wrote that:

"A Papal visit to the Holy places in Palestine... would have as an objective paying honour to Jesus Christ, our Lord, in the land that His coming to the world made holy and worthy of veneration and protection to all Christians. Every other reason, even if it be good and legitimate, should be excluded from this Papal pilgrimage, which must be and appear eminently religious".

The same words can be applied to Pope Francis' pilgrimage, which, as he himself wanted to stress, will be a pilgrimage of prayer. If when he was elected, the Holy Father asked the whole Church to pray for him, he did it again in a very special way after the announcement of this pilgrimage. May we all accompany the Successor of St. Peter over the course of these few days, so that they may be days of grace for the Church and for the whole world.

The Light of our Charism

We continue with our document written by Fr. Giovanni on 14/09/1986 for the Contemplative Community.

Contemplate his face and you will be radiant!

(...)

4. Penance: growing closer to the Lord

With respect to penance, we know that today we cannot be rigid, with austere penances. What is important is that everybody grows closer to Christ. However, we do not exclude corporal penance, the most austere penance, the penance that the Church has been practising and advising for the Contemplatives. Moreover, these penances are not a reason for ostentation, as I have already said, but they represent union with the poor, the leading the same life as them, being like them, those who are silenced even though they could speak very well, who sleep on the floor, go through cold and hunger, are tortured...

And so, penance will be kept to penance in food, in sleeping, in dress, in speaking. The silence in the house of the Contemplatives must be strict and absolute. A silence that, like everything else, is a preface for contemplation, as everything is a means to reach the Lord. However, the penances must be under the control of a spiritual director and a doctor, as we must consider the weakness of our physical bodies: *"The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak"* (Mk 14, 38). What is important is that they grow closer to Christ, to infused contemplation. So we must be austere, and at the same time, balanced.

5. The door to the Secret... open

What is important are souls; what is important is that Jesus heals everybody, that Christ is loved, and

that, as St. Francis de Sales opened the door to contemplation to the most austere souls in the XVII century, and the same time to the weakest, so the Movement of the Servants of the Poor opens the door to contemplation to all. What a joy to see how beautiful the future of the contemplative community formed by Priests, by Brothers, by so many different people, will be! Everybody comes together around Christ and everybody will become radiant: this is where we have to arrive. This is my dream, this is my aim: everybody around Christ, and, in the centre of attention, the Contemplatives: and everybody united by the bonds of love.

The Contemplative Servants have to be like the mother of everybody. When we find ourselves with children, the first thing we do is ask how their mother is: we show concern for her, we give her medicine, milk, vitamins, sugar, etc, so that she may be strong and healthy, so that she can feed her baby well, or her child. If this mother does not have enough vitamins, she cannot breast-feed her child. The same thing happens in the Movement. In this way, every Contemplative Servant is like the mother of everybody. They must be especially intent on filling themselves with God, in order to teach this divine life, to give God to their brothers: they must be full of divine vitamins. In the same way, every servant who is dedicated to serving the poor in the active life must be full of this divine life in order to give it to the poor.

6. Tender love of Mary

In this way, our model, our example, we have in the Virgin Mary. She lived infused with the Lord. Sunken in the Most High, she kept a profound interior silence. There, in the innermost receptacle of her soul, she lived fascinated by her God. From there her attitude of service sprung up. Deeply detached from herself, mistress of herself, dead to the 'I', she is totally "outside herself", ready to serve. She proclaims the greatness of the Lord from her profound silence and humility. Nobody has pleased Christ as she has, and nobody has given Him to the world better than she has. In the Virgin, we have our example of the true Contemplative and of the Active. Contemplative in Action. (*Continues*)

News from our Homes

Fr. Alvaro's trip to Guadalajara

From 6th – 16th March 2014, Fr. Alvaro Gomez, Vicar General of the Movement, travelled to Guadalajara (Mexico), where our first missionary family to be sent to another country has been working for the past month. As we already published in January's issue, on 12th December their "missionary departure" took place in our chapel in the City of Boys. Guillermo and Francisca went with their sons Javier and Maria Isabel (their eldest son, Jose Angel studies in Ajofrin).

Over the course of these few days, after a cordial meeting with the Cardinal of Guadalajara, Mgr. Jose Francisco Robles Ortega, and a visit to the Carmelites of the city, the main activities consisted of coordinating the new activities of the apostolate, which are taking place not only in Guadalajara, but also in Monterrey (from where our oblate Mayra came to meet with Fr. Alvaro).

The family Salazar Cruz have already started some activities in one of the poorest areas, and the idea is to carry out, for the moment, many family visits, making use of the method of the 'Virgen Peregrina' (the 'Pilgrim Virgin').

This is an apostolate that we have carried out in Peru for many years, consisting in taking a picture of the Virgin of Fatima from house to house, praying the Rosary with the Families who

receive it (it stays for approximately a week) and who, even though they are very poor, usually reserve a nice clean space in a corner of their small house, decorated with beautiful flowers.

There was also the opportunity for Fr. Alvaro to participate in a few programmes shown by the Catholic television network "Maria Vision", and to record others in order to be able to spread our charism. Numerous youths have come to us, showing their interest in our Movement, and their labour with the poor, some of them wishing to do a year of experience in Peru, others wishing to form young support groups, coordinating their activities with Guillermo (for the boys' group) or con Francisca (for the girls' group).

In Guadalajara they are constructing a national sanctuary in honour of the saints and beatified Mexican Cristero martyrs, among whom is the child Blessed Jose Luis Sanchez del Rio, whose name has been given to our new "Home School" centre in the City of Boys (where our minor Seminarians study, the children of our missionary families and several young lads – boarders and day boys).

Fr. Alvaro made use of this occasion to take some equipment back to Peru with him (prayer cards, little books...) so he can spread the devotion to Blessed Jose Luis Sanchez del Rio among our children.

Missionary Pledge of the Month:

During this Marian month, I will request some copies of the picture of Our Lady Mother of the Poor from the Missionary Servants of the Poor TW, and I will give them out as a form of Marian apostolate.