The Empty Tomb

The empty tomb, filled with the mystery of the risen Lord Jesus, gave every heart a God given dream and destiny. Explored through the social and spiritual instincts we display, we are called out to live out and pass on to the next generation the legacy of that unconditional and sacrificial love our Heavenly Father bestowed on us. The greatest experience of ultimate love and compassion through His Son is strongly perceived and grasped during the season of Lent. While Ash Wednesday, gives us a commandment, to take up our cross and courageously walk the good/narrow road, no matter how many obstacles emanate on the way. This time creates an ideal of moral standards of daily life, where the soul is in search of cleansing itself and the purity of heart and mind, even facing and encountering breaking and bending itself and dying to oneself only to rise again to dispel the darkness of sin: to be the resurrected Easter people in Christ. The empty tomb fills us with hope of being saved through the greatest mystery of Easter.

Wishing you all a happy Easter

+ Cardinal Patrick D'Rozario
Chairperson, OLF
**NEWS**

**Christians Forgive Aggressors**

After the attack, the response was forgiveness. Pastor Samson Ashiq, who leads the community of the faithful of the Church of the Assemblies of God in the district of Malir, in the area of Karachi, Pakistan has signed an official document forgiving some Muslims who on February 11 attacked the Christian community immediately after Sunday liturgy.

The document was signed in the police station between Church officials and opponents. “As Christians, we must forgive those who hurt us; this is what the Lenten time invites us to do. We want to promote reconciliation and harmony.”

The clash occurred on Sunday, February 11, immediately after Sunday prayers. Faysal Inayat, one of the wounded faithful, said: “We were in church for the Sunday liturgy, when some Muslim men blocked the church gate with motorcycles. They did not allow people to home, and harassed some women outside the church gate.” Seven Christians were seriously injured. Muslims also entered a house, and started beating a man and a woman with wooden sticks. The pastor called the police who managed to stop the fight, and brought the injured to the hospital for first aid. Church leaders have filed a police report.

~ Agenzia Fide

**Papal envoy tells Filipinos to spread faith globally**

Filipino Catholics should spread the “light of Christ” with their piety and devotion not only in the Phillippines but also in Asia and around the world, the Vatican's envoy to the country says.

Archbishop Gabriele Giordano Caccia, papal nuncio to the Philippines, expressed his admiration of the people's faith after attending feast of the Child Jesus celebrations in Cebu this week.

He said he was overwhelmed by the participation of up to two million people during a four-hour religious procession in honor of the Child Jesus.

“We will bless you so that you will continue to become a sign of hope, joy and peace for your society, country, and for this great Asian continent, and the world,” said Archbishop Caccia.

~ ucanews

**Christians urged to defend rights in China**

New stricter religious affairs regulations in China should prompt believers to become more aware of how to defend their rights, according to Ying Fuk-tsang, director of the divinity school at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The regulations coming into force on 1 Feb. were first released in draft form in 2014 before a fuller version was made public in 2017.

Critics maintained that concerns expressed about an eroding of religious freedom were largely ignored. Among stricter provisions are those concerning official registration of places used for religious purposes amid a measure of confusion about criteria to be applied.
Ying told ucanews.com that much would depend on how lower and higher level communist officials implement the details of the amended Regulations for Religious Affairs.

~ www.ucanews.com

'Be close to Jesus in the Eucharist'

“I encourage you all to remain in close contact with the Lord Eucharistic and to always be present at the Eucharistic Adoration. It is the best moment and place to experience the relationship with Jesus Christ present in the Eucharist. In silence you can share everything with the Lord Eucharistic, all the most intimate concerns and secrets. It is also the moment to listen to him” said Bp Benny Travas of Multan, on 29 Jan. 2018 to the young Catholics of the diocese, gathered for a three day spiritual retreat on the theme “Witnesses of Christ.” Mgr. Travas presides the Commission for the Liturgy in the Episcopal Conference of Pakistan, which takes care of all the events of formation and liturgy organized on the occasion of the special “Year of the Eucharist” that the Church in Pakistan lives.

~ Fides News.

World Meeting of Families - Catechesis to be available online

To help parishes, groups, individuals and families better prepare for the World Meeting of Families. Vatican organizers are releasing a multimedia series of catechetical materials in five languages online. The Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life announced that it would launch a digital series of seven catecheses. There would also be monthly video shorts meant for groups and parishes. All the materials will be available for free on the dicastery’s site www.laityfamilylife.va and its YouTube channel, PC Famiglia. Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the dicastery, told reporters on 25 Jan. 2018 that the series was meant to provide simple and inspiring ways to reflect, pray and prepare over the next seven months until the start of the world meeting in Dublin on 21-26 Aug.

~ CNS

Caritas educates Sri Lankans on new electoral system

Caritas Colombo is making the public aware of the newly introduced electoral system to be used in local government elections in Sri Lanka. The polls on 10 Feb will be the largest in the country's history. Over 15.8 million people are eligible to elect 8,293 members for 341 local authorities in polls that will be contested by 30 political parties and 100 independent groups.

Pope Francis on 5 March 2018 called on Christians to consult the Bible with the same frequency as they might consult their cellphones for messages. Speaking to the crowds gathered in St. Peter's Square following his weekly Angelus blessing, the Pope urges those present to give the Bible the same place in daily life as cellphones. The Bible, he explained contains the word of God, the most effective tool in fighting evil and keeping us close to God. “If we always carried God’s Word in our hearts, no temptation would distance us from the Father, and no obstacle would take us off the path towards good” he said.

~ www.en.radiovaticana.va
Pope registers as World Youth Day Pilgrim

Leading by an example he hopes youth from around the world will follow, Pope Francis on 11 Feb.'18, registered to be a pilgrim for World Youth Day, which will be held in Panama in January of 2019.

It was the day that registration opened and the Holy Father was joined in the window overlooking St. Peter's Square after praying the Angelus by two young people, who provided the computer tablet so he could register live in front of the crowd estimated at 30,000.

~ Zenit

Pope renews membership of child protection commission

Pope Francis has named nine new members to the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, including abuse survivors of the parents of survivors, the Vatican said. However, respecting “the right of each person to disclose their experiences of abuse publicly or not to do so,” the commission said on 17 February.

~ CNS

Young people participate in synodal process

300 young people participated in a first-ever of its kind Pre-Synodal Meeting which took place on 19-24 March in preparation for the XV Synod of Bishops on Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment 300 young people from around the world were chosen to come to Rome in preparation for the XV Synod to take place in October 2018.

~ www.en.radiovaticana.va

Rohingya welcome plans to include the UN in repatriation

Rohingya refugees and aid workers have welcomed a plan to include the United nations in the repatriation of tens of thousands of the persecuted minority who fled deadly violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State. Bangladesh Deputy Foreign Minister Shahriar Alam said on 12 Feb. 2018 that the government had signed a deal to let the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, take part in the process. “We want to fill in the (repatriation) forms in their (UN) presence.”

~www.ucanews.com

ART Meeting in New Delhi in June 2018
The AsIPA Resource Team (ART) Annual Meeting will be held from18-22nd June 2018, at Salesian Centre, Okla, New Delhi, India.
AsIPA 8TH General Assembly
Batam Island, Pangkal Pinang Diocese, Indonesia
17 - 24th October, 2018
Theme: “Small Christian Communities (SCCs) promote greater communion in families, leading to mission”
Organized by the FABC Office of Laity and Family – AsIPA Desk
Co-organized and hosted by the Diocese of Pangkal Pinang, Indonesia
Venue: Pacific Palace Hotel (www.pacificpalacehotel.com) in Batam Island, Indonesia
Email: asipa.fabc@gmail.com for more details

Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC)-OLF-Youth Desk
4th BILA on YOUTH
“Young people, faith and vocational discernment”
(XV General Assembly of the Ordinary Synod of Bishops)
July 9 – 13, 2018 / Pattaya, Thailand
Email: guscini@yahoo.com.ar for more details

Out going OLF Executive Secretary Ms. Wendy Louis met the former Chairperson of the FABC – OLF the 91 year old Archbishop Emeritus Joseph Ti-Kang of Taipei, who was visiting his classmate Rev Fr. Paul Tong in Singapore.