



PEACE ON EARTH

Blessed Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Peace on Earth* (*Pacem in Terris*) lives on in Pope Francis' call for non-violent solutions in Syria

The call issued by Pope Francis on September 7th 2013 for a non-military solution in Syria — reinforced by his call to Catholics and all people of good will to gather in local churches around the world to pray and fast for a non-violent resolution to this crisis — powerfully echoes Blessed Pope John XXIII's historic declaration of peace, his encyclical *Pacem in Terris* — *Peace on Earth*, issued 50 years ago, in April 1963

Pope Francis urged the Group of 20 leaders assembled at the G-20 meeting at St. Petersburg to abandon the "futile pursuit" of a military solution in Syria as the Vatican laid out its case for a negotiated settlement that guarantees rights for all Syrians, including minority Christians.



The Pope has followed up his initial call to action with a pointed letter delivered to the heads of state at the G20 meeting in St Petersburg, Russia. In a letter to the G-20 host Russian President Vladimir Putin, Pope Francis lamented that "one-sided interests" had prevailed in Syria, preventing a diplomatic end to the conflict and allowing the continued "senseless massacre" of innocents. He wrote: "To the leaders present, to each and every one, I make a heartfelt appeal for them to help find ways to overcome the conflicting positions and to lay aside the futile pursuit of a military solution".

It is heartening to see this vision of non-violent options both being dramatically translated into a call for worldwide action and, at the same time, forming the substance of an urgent and concrete message directed to the key policymakers, including President Obama, who was preparing to go ahead with military strikes in Syria within days. Millions of people around the globe say with one voice, "There are non-violent options — let's use them!". Prayers were answered; plans of the US and British governments to bomb targets in Syria were thwarted.

PAPAL PEACEMAKERS of the last 100 years.

Pope Benedict XV (1914-22). was elected supreme pontiff in 1914 immediately after the outbreak of the First World War and died only four years after its conclusion. His pontificate in large part was coloured by the difficult task of acting as pastor to a world torn asunder by the greatest armed conflict that had ever occurred up to that time.



Pope Benedict XV naturally took a position of strict neutrality throughout this "war to end all wars". He sent a representative to each country to work for peace and in 1917 delivered the "Plea for Peace" which demanded a cessation of hostilities, a reduction of armaments, a guaranteed freedom of the seas and international arbitration. This plea was largely ignored by the Allies. The American President Woodrow Wilson was the only ruler who answered him

and adopted most of Benedict's proposals for establishing peace as part of his fourteen-point peace plan. During and after the war Benedict XV gave freely to the war's victims – widows, orphans and wounded – and established a bureau of communication for prisoners of war and their relatives. After the war he was widely honoured for his efforts. Muslim Turkey erected a statue to him in the courtyard of the Catholic Cathedral in Istanbul honouring him as "the benefactor of all people, regardless of nation or creed."

Pope Pius XI (1922-39), one of the most significant modern pontiffs, took as his motto "*The peace of Christ in the kingdom of Christ*" to illustrate his work to construct a new Christendom based on world peace.

He confronted the grave problems of the re-construction of a war-torn world, insisted on the need to recognize the basic unity of mankind even within the temporal sphere. Hatred in this area was driving all towards destruction and taking the place of "the great law of love and Christian brotherhood that embraces and holds in a single family all nations and peoples with one Father who is in heaven". He negotiated with



Mussolini, the representative of King Victor Emmanuel II of Italy, to found the Vatican City State in 1929. Pius XI was responsible for the three major encyclicals against the totalitarian systems that challenged Christian principles: *Non Abbiamo bisogno* (1931; "We Do Not Need to Acquaint You") against the abuses of Fascist Italy; *Mit brennender sorge* (1937; "With Deep Anxiety") against Nazi Germany, and *Divini redemptoris* (1937; "Divine Redeemer") against the ends of atheistic communism.

Venerable Pope Pius XII (1939-58) dedicated his whole pontificate to peace. Before war



broke out in 1939 he made desperate attempts to induce a settlement of the German- Polish differences, calling for moderation on both sides, directly and through his nuncios and delegates abroad and diplomats accredited to the Holy See. After the invasion of Poland he continued his efforts for peace, undaunted by the negative response of the German political authorities. The telegrams of sympathy and protest when countries were invaded were given the widest publicity so that no one could ignore his condemnation of the war. Under his instructions his nuncio in Turkey, Mgr Angelo

Roncalli, helped at least 20,000 Jews to escape from Nazi-occupied territories. The Jewish

diplomat Pinchas Lapide in Jerusalem estimated that no fewer than 860,000 Jews were saved by the interventions of papal representatives on the instructions of the Pope.

Rome was bombed on July 19, 1943, by 521 Allied planes, with three targets: first, that morning, 150 Allied B-17 Flying Fortresses attacked the San Lorenzo freight yard and steel factory. In the afternoon, the second target was the Scalo del Littorio district on the northern side of Rome. The third was the Ciampino airport, on south-east side of Rome. Many bombs fell in the surrounding area causing thousands of civilian casualties. When the news reached Pope Pius XII he left immediately by car with his secretary Mgr. Montini (the future Pope Paul VI), travelling without escort to the Basilica di San Lorenzo fuori le Mura and the surrounding district, which had been badly damaged, to bring comfort to the suffering. He was soon surrounded by the people who joined him in prayer for the victims. He then walked round the district and visited the many wounded before returning home to the Vatican in his bloodstained cassock. The German army occupied Rome on 8th September 1943. The frontier with the Vatican was marked with a white line across St Peter's Square.

The last of Pius XII's great Christmas messages (1957) ended with an invocation for peace: "so good, so precious, so productive, so desirable and so desired, that every effort in its defense, even with grave sacrifice for legitimate individual ambitions, is well spent." " A river of peace upon the world!" For the realization of this wish, fervently cherished in his heart, he prayed and worked without respite.

Blessed Pope John XXIII (1958 – 63) wrote his famous encyclical *Pacem in Terris* — *Peace on Earth* — that was intended not only for Roman Catholics but for persons of good will everywhere. If peace was to be achieved it naturally must be the work of everyone everywhere, and so the search for this elusive potential must include all of us. *Pacem in Terris* was a love letter to humanity, but one that sprang, not from a sentimental naïveté or a groundless optimism, but from a profound meditation on the horrendous dangers that the Cold War in those days posed to all life, with which the Pope had grappled in a direct way during the, then recent, Cuban Missile Crisis.



With the discovery in October 1962 by the United States that the Soviet Union had installed nuclear missiles in Cuba, the United States and U.S.S.R. found themselves on the brink of full-scale nuclear war. There was a profound sense of inevitability as the showdown escalated. Pope John XXIII played a vital role in creating the conditions for an 11th hour agreement. The Pope actively took part in behind the scenes talks in which he agreed to deliver on Vatican Radio an urgent call for both parties to pull back from the edge. With his plea Pope John XXIII had given the Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev a way out. By withdrawing now, he would be seen as a man of peace, not a coward. At virtually the last moment, the impasse was broken and a deal was worked out, with the Soviet Union withdrawing its missiles and the United States secretly agreeing to withdraw its missiles along the border in Turkey. The world breathed a profound sigh of relief. In the months that followed Pope John began his work on *Pacem in Terris*. This historic text has borne much fruit in the half century since it was issued.

Venerable Pope Paul VI (1963-78) had served in the Vatican's Secretariat of State from 1922 to 1954. During WWII, at the request of Pius XII, Mgr. Giovanni Battista Montini was involved in the establishment of Church Asylum, providing protection to thousands of Allied soldiers, who had escaped from Axis prison camps, Jews, anti-Fascists, Socialists, Communists, and after the liberation of Rome, German soldiers, partisans and other displaced persons. At the request of the

Pope, he created an information office for prisoners of war and refugees, which in the years of its existence from 1939 until 1947 received almost ten million information requests and produced over eleven million answers about missing persons.

The 1983 film *The Scarlet and the Black* starring Gregory Peck, from JP Gallagher's book *The Scarlet Pimpernel of the Vatican*, tells the story of the Vatican Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty whose exploits in saving countless Allied troops, Jews and aliens who were being rounded up in Nazi-occupied Rome, with the active assistance of Mgr. Montini, were conducted under the eagle eye of Pope Pius XII.

When modern warfare had become capable of destroying the whole human race, Paul VI stressed the peaceful means of negotiation. In 1968 he addressed the Diplomatic Corps to the Holy See, claiming that "diplomacy is the art of creating among peoples humane and reasonable relations, animated by a high moral ideal, and aiming at establishing the rule of right, justice and peace in the international community". On October 4th 1965 Paul VI addressed the United Nations General Assembly in New York (right) : "...Long discourses are not necessary to proclaim the supreme goal of your institution. It is enough to remember that the



blood of millions of men, numberless and unprecedented sufferings, useless slaughter and frightful ruin are the sanction of the covenant which unites you, in a solemn pledge which must change the future history of the world: No more war, war never again. It is peace, peace which must guide the destinies of peoples and of all mankind. Our thanks to you, glory to you, who for twenty years have labored for peace and who have even suffered the loss of illustrious men in this sacred cause. Thanks and glory to you for the conflicts which you have prevented and for those which you have brought to an end. The results of your efforts on behalf of peace, including the most recent, even if they are not yet decisive, are such as to deserve that We, presuming to interpret the sentiments of the whole world, express to you both praise and gratitude..."



Blessed Pope John Paul II

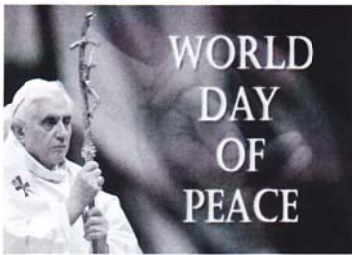
Whilst in Israel in 2000 the Pope visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial to honour the memory of Jewish victims of the Shoah. His visit to the Western Wall in Jerusalem included his placing in one of the cracks the prayer :

God of all the ages
on my visit to Jerusalem, the "City of Peace",
spiritual home to Jews, Christians and Muslims alike,
I bring before you the joys, the hopes and the aspirations,
the trials, the suffering and the pain of all your people throughout the world.

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
hear the cry of the afflicted, the fearful, the bereft;
send your peace upon this Holy Land, upon the Middle East,
upon the entire human family;
stir the hearts of all who call your name,
to walk humbly in the path of justice and compassion.

"The Lord is good to those who wait for him,
to the soul that seeks him!"

Pope Benedict XVI (2005-13) in his message for the 2013 World Day of Peace, says that



...“ ...no one should ignore or underestimate the decisive role of the family, which is the basic cell of society from the demographic, ethical, pedagogical, economic and political standpoints. The family has a natural vocation to promote life: it accompanies individuals as they mature and it encourages mutual growth and enrichment through caring and sharing. The Christian family in particular serves as a seedbed for personal maturation according to the standards of divine love. The family is one of the indispensable social subjects for the

achievement of a culture of peace. The rights of parents and their primary role in the education of their children in the area of morality and religion must be safeguarded. It is in the family that peacemakers, tomorrow's promoters of a culture of life and love, are born and nurtured”.

FHF PILGRIMAGE to London - October 2013

Kings and prelates, saints, martyrs and a pope were recalled during the FHF pilgrimage to London. Our party included three priests, our spiritual director Fr. Anthony Pellegrini with Mgr. Daniel Hart and Fr William Wilby. For a short time we were accompanied by three Sisters from the Shrine at Walsingham. Our tight schedule was expertly assisted by Philip Dean who organized our stay at the magnificent new Park Plaza Westminster Hotel and also our faultless travel arrangements that were ably assisted by our London Blue Badge guide Richard Briggs who assured our punctual arrival at every destination.



Following the life of St Thomas More we began at **Lambeth Palace**. The **Crypt Chapel** (left) is the oldest remaining section of Lambeth Palace. It is thought that the vaulted undercroft and chapel at Lambeth Palace was completed in 1220. A Fresco of Christ in Glory, which hangs on the wall in the Crypt was given by Pope Paul VI to Archbishop Ramsey in 1966. This gift marked the first official meeting between The Archbishop of Canterbury and The Papacy since the 16th century. We celebrated Mass here in the Crypt.

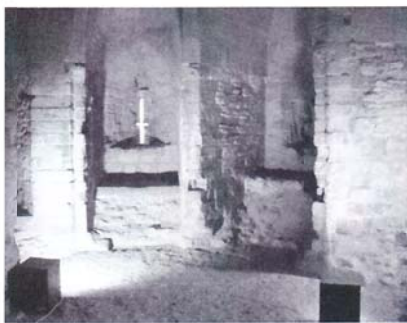
The **Guard Room** dates from the 14th Century and is one of the most important rooms in the palace. In 1490 the 12- year-old Thomas More was sent to Lambeth to serve as one of Cardinal Morton's pages and took part in household entertainments. His quarters were in Morton's Gate. He returned to Lambeth as Sir Thomas More on April 12th 1534 and it is said to have been in this room that he was summoned by Thomas Cromwell to swear an Oath of Supremacy declaring Henry VIII as head of the Church in England. By refusing to deny the authority of the Pope, Thomas More was led away from Lambeth to the Tower of London.



As a young man Thomas was inclined to join the monastery of the Carthusians, Canon Hugh Williams showed us round **the Charterhouse** where traces of the medieval building can still be seen, including the door of one monk's cell, the cloisters and foundations of the Church that was demolished at the Reformation but the foundations were revealed after the bombing of London in 1941. Mass was celebrated in the Lady Chapel of **St Bartholomew the Great** nearby, where

lunch was served in the ancient cloisters. We visited **Chelsea Old Church** where Thomas More, whose house was next door on Thames-side, had built a special chapel for the interment of his first and second wives and also for himself. He placed a large tablet in the Chapel expressing these ambitions in moving terms that in his own case were never fulfilled. It is still there. We then called at **Allen Hall** in Beaufort Street, the Westminster diocesan seminary built on the site of More's great house whose land stretched up to King's Road, to see the ancient mulberry tree that is regarded as having survived from that time.

Baroness Gloria Hooper received us in **Westminster Hall** and showed us the spot where the martyrs stood to be tried and were condemned for treason. She then showed us the beautiful Chapel of St Mary Undercroft, the only part of the Palace of Westminster that survived the great fire of 1824.



The Governor of the **Tower of London** kindly arranged for us to visit the cell of St. Thomas (left) in the Bell Tower that is within the living quarters of the Constable. Standing in the cell of St Thomas that is damp and low lying by the Traitor's Gate on the Thames we recalled the year that he endured gradual loss of privileges as he steadfastly refused to acknowledge Henry VIII's divorce from Queen Catherine of Aragon and accept the Act of Supremacy by which the King rejected the primacy of the Papacy. We peered through the cell's lancet window where Thomas watched the Carthusian monks pass "like men joyously walking to their wedding" on their way to

the gallows at Tyburn. We were then conducted to the cell of Cardinal John Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was imprisoned for the same reasons.

Our journey continued to the **Crypt Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula** in the Tower where St Thomas's headless body lies under his tomb. His head was saved from being tossed into the Thames from the pike on Tower Bridge by his daughter Margaret Roper who kept it with her until her own death when it was interred with her in the Roper Vault at St Dunstan's, Canterbury where it remains to this day. From there we walked to **Tower Hill** where both Thomas More and John Fisher were beheaded in 1535.



We spent a day in the country at **St Albans** to honour England's first martyr, **St Alban**, who had lived in the Roman city of Verulamium. During the persecution of Christians by the Emperor Diocletian in AD 303 Alban, then a pagan, had sheltered a Christian priest in his house and was converted and baptized by him. Roman soldiers were sent to Alban's house to apprehend the priest but Alban exchanged his cloak with the priest who then escaped. Alban was taken to the magistrate who was furious at the deception. Alban admitted "I worship and adore the true and living God who created all things" and was taken to a hill near the town and was beheaded on the spot where the Cathedral now stands. A shrine was constructed there and in 793 an abbey was raised over the site by Offa, King of Mercia. Building of the present Norman Church that succeeded it commenced in 1077. We celebrated

Mass in the Lady Chapel.



SHAKESPEARE'S FARM
ABBOT'S LANGLEY, HERTS
BIRTHPLACE OF THE ENGLISH POET
ADRIAN IV, DIED 1159

In 1100 **Nicholas Breakspeare** was born to a poor family 6 miles south of St Albans at **Abbot's Langley** where we visited the site of his birthplace. The farm house traditionally regarded as marking his birth-place was recently demolished to build several small houses, but a plaque was installed at the roadside marking its place. As a boy Nicholas had hoped to join the monastery at St Albans but was refused as he was considered insufficiently educated. He travelled to Paris to acquire learning then joined the monks at the Abbey of St Rufus in Avignon. Nicholas eventually became

Abbot but was too strict for the community who appealed to the Pope to remove him. He did, taking him into his own service sending him to Scandinavia to revive the Church there. As legate, he reorganised the Swedish church, sent missionaries into Finland and set up a huge bishopric embracing Norway, Iceland, Greenland, the Faroes, Shetland, and the Orkneys. His mission was so successful that on returning to Rome just after Pope Eugenius III had died, he was elected his successor, taking the name **Adrian IV** (1154-1159).

His reign was particularly important in the history of the Papacy in that he saved the Papal States from abolition, the successor of which is the Vatican City State. At the time Republicanism was in the air. The Roman Senate decided it wanted the city to become a Commune, led by Arnold of Brescia a powerful republican. Faced with the loss of his rule over the Papal States, Pope Adrian imposed an interdict on the City. It was Holy Week and pilgrims were pouring in for Easter. No religious services other than baptism and funeral were allowed. The Senate climbed down, Arnold was expelled and the threat was averted.

On Sunday 13th October we celebrated the feast day of **St. Edward, King and Confessor**. In the morning we attended High Mass in **Westminster Cathedral**. After visiting the shrine of St. John Southworth and the shrine of Our Lady of Westminster we went to the Galley Museum to see the various relics and momentos including a piece of fabric from St. Edward's shroud.



After lunch we walked to **Westminster Abbey** for Evensong. Our party was privileged to be seated in the 13th century Choir Stalls with the world-famous Abbey Choir singing immediately in front of us. The Orlando Gibbons chant was greatly inspiring. After the service we were conducted to the Sanctuary, where we were able to admire the recently restored 13th century Cosmati Pavement that is usually covered by carpet for its protection. We passed round this into the Shrine of St Edward where we were able to offer prayers and see the medieval tombs of Kings including those of Edward III and Henry II.



On the following day our busy schedule in London came to an end with Mass at the **Church of St. Etheldreda** at Ely Place, the oldest church in Catholic hands in London. In the middle ages it was the chapel of the London palace of the Bishops of Ely who took **St. Etheldreda** as their patron saint.

Etheldreda (635-679) was a daughter of King Anna of the East Angles. Although the girl had made a vow of perpetual virginity, a political marriage was arranged with King Ecgrith of Northumbria in 660. She decided to become a nun which caused a long quarrel between the King and St. Wilfrid, then Bishop of York. The King tried to bribe Wilfrid to persuade his bride to consummate the

marriage, but to no avail. He tried to take her by force but she fled to the fens of Ely but as he rode in hot pursuit the tide came in, thwarting his attempt. Ecgrith married again and expelled Wilfrid from his kingdom, while Etheldreda founded a double monastery at Ely that flourished for two centuries until 870 when it was destroyed by the Vikings. Our Mass was followed by a trip to the nearby **Shard**. At an amazing 1004 feet high it is the tallest building in Western Europe and from the viewing platform we had a spectacular view of the city we had explored with such interest over the past few days.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

AGM – 2014

This will take place on at **6.30 pm Thursday 12TH June 2014** at Vaughan House in Francis Street, behind Westminster Cathedral. It will be preceded by Mass in the Cathedral at which the chief celebrant will be Rt Reverend Alan Hopes, Bishop of East Anglia who will attend the AGM and reception afterwards.

F.H F 2014 PILGRIMAGE to ROME AND ASSISI 23rd – 29th September 2014

In honour of Pope Francis and St Francis our pilgrimage will take us to places associated with the life and times of St Francis including Assisi where he lived and died; the Lateran Basilica where he was given leave to found his Order by Pope Innocent III in 1210; Greccio where he created the first living Christmas crib(left) in 1223; the basilica of St Mary and the Angels at Assisi in which is situated the Porziuncola, the ancient Benedictine church he rebuilt; La Verna, a mountain retreat where he received the Stigmata; Cortona near Lake Trasimeno where he founded a hermitage. We will also have the opportunity to see a great art treasure



- Piero della Francesca's *Resurrection* at San Sepolcro.

For further information to join this pilgrimage please write to:

**Mgr. Ralph Brown Prot. Ap.,
St. Wilfrid's Convent, 29, Tite Street, Chelsea, London, SW3 4JX.**

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WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR !

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23^a Vincent House, Vincent Square, London SW1P 2NB**

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