

*TWENTY SEVENTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME
October 5, 2014*

Homily Next Week:
Father John D. Whitney, S.J.

Readings for October 12, 2014

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 5:1-7
SECOND READING: PHILIPPIANS 4:6-9
GOSPEL: MATTHEW 21:33-43

Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday - 5 pm
Sunday - 9:00 am, 11:00 am & 5:30 pm

Weekday Mass Schedule

Monday - Friday, 7 am, Parish Center

Reconciliation

Saturday - 3:30-4:15 pm in the Church
or by appointment

Parish Center Hours

Monday-Friday - 8 am - 4:30 pm

Saturday - 9 am - 1 pm

www.stjosephparish.org

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St. Joseph School

Main Office x210
Patrick Fennessy, Principal x218
Mary Helen Bever, Middle School Dir x215
Lillian Zadra, Primary School Dir x219

COMMISSION SPOTLIGHT Liturgy & Worship

Commission Chair Mark Mills



Members include John Adams, Mary Helen Bever, Lisa Blume, Catherine Huston, Jennifer Kelly, Diane Lostrangio, Wim Roach, Amanda Seymour, Joy Sherman, Jen Tilghman-Havens, & Bob Trotter

Some of the ministries served by this commission include Cantors, Choir, Instrumentalists, Altar Servers, Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Ushers, Daily Mass, Centering Prayer, Rosary Group, Body in Prayer Yoga, Sacred Silence.

Learn more about the Liturgy & Worship Commission:

stjosephparish.org

From the desk of the Pastoral Assistant for Administration

This week, you may notice a different look-and-feel for our weekly bulletin as well as our website.

Over the past year, the Pastoral Team has worked diligently to strengthen our infrastructure so we can better serve you and the mission of St. Joseph Parish. Our strengthened infrastructure is a direct result of your feedback during the mission, vision, and covenant process, as well as during strategic planning. Many, many parishioners have been involved in the mapping and implementation and we are endlessly grateful for all the support.

The shift in the bulletin and website formats align with our new Commission and Committee structure: Liturgy & Worship, Parish Life, Faith Formation, Faith Justice, School, and Stewardship & Communication.

If you haven't done so already, I encourage you to review The State of Our Parish 2014-2015 annual report that was mailed to your home, which provides specific information about the improvements we've made, as well as provides a list of parishioners who have stepped into leadership roles for our community.

I look forward to hearing your feedback about our new bulletin and website formats. As always, please don't hesitate to let me know how we can better serve you and our community.

With gratitude,
Rebecca

This Is the Time to Weep

With this "What does it matter to me?" in their hearts, the merchants of war have perhaps made a great deal of money, but their corrupted hearts have lost the capacity to cry. Cain did not cry. He was not capable of tears. The shadow of Cain hangs over us today in this cemetery. It has been seen here. It is seen from 1914 right up to our own time. It is seen even in the present.

With the heart of a son, a brother, a father, I ask each of you, indeed for all of us, to have a conversion of heart: to move on from "What does it matter to me?" to tears: for each one of the fallen of this "senseless massacre", for all the victims of the mindless wars, in every age. Weeping. Brothers and sisters, humanity needs to weep, and this is the time to weep.

-Pope Francis-

The new war into which the United States has entered—undeclared, but nevertheless real—costs, according to conservative Pentagon estimates, \$10 million a day. This estimate does not include the cost of replacing those munitions that are used (e.g., the 47 tomahawk missiles used in the first day, at a cost of \$1.4 million each). Nor does it include the continuing war in Afghanistan, nor the predator drones which are being used across the region, including in Pakistan and Yemen. Did you know that we killed people in both of these countries last week? This estimate, also, does not account for a ground war, although increasingly that is being encouraged and, according to polls, is expected by most Americans in near future. Using the last war in Iraq as a benchmark, we may assume such an incursion could add significantly to the \$1.7 trillion cost of that war, and to the approximately \$500 billion cost for veterans of the conflict. And, of course, this is just the financial cost to our country, not counting the human cost to those who are caught in the crossfire or to those asked to carry the burden of the fight.

At the same time, we find ourselves unable to fund adequately the efforts against Ebola in Africa, or to rebuild the infrastructure of our own country, or to decrease the number of hungry in the United States and across the world. We find it economically irresponsible to provide complete and appropriate medical care for our veterans or for the first responders at Ground Zero. We condemn, as socialism or hubris, the notion of public investment in the economy through work projects or student loan forgiveness; yet, we think it appropriate economically and morally to take vast amounts of capital and resources and simply destroy them over the skies of Syria or in the hills of Afghanistan—leaving in our wake only the dead and the disaffected. With assertion of "realism" and claims of our imminent death, politicians of both parties market the barbarism of our opponents and make themselves appear strong by pouring treasure and blood onto the fire of these conflicts—while, across the globe, children die of malnutrition and malaria, and refugees wander, homeless, in a burning world.

In all this, we act as a people terrified. A people in whom an irrational and excessive fear of death by violence has made discernment impossible. We gobble up the stories of cruelty and destruction, as though we had never before been told such stories to goad us into war. We listen to the same voices, telling us that this time the wolf is really among the sheep, that this time violence and war will work to bring us safety and peace, that this time it is all true. And, numb in our fear, we believe the voice of the serpent again, and pluck the fruit that God has forbidden us to eat. We pick up the stone that the murderer has used against our brother, believing that we can wield it without sin, without the death of our soul.

None of this is to deny that ISIS is a brutal and bloody force, which has caused untold damage to women and men, to Christians and Moslems throughout eastern Syria and northern Iraq. Nor is it meant to encourage the West simply to abandon those of this region who seek justice and reconciliation. Nor to assert the pure pacifism of those who oppose even the limited self-defense of the Just War Theory proposed by St. Augustine and St. Thomas. Rather, it is to ask ourselves, as Christians: ***is this war consistent with the Gospel or with our Catholic tradition?***

When we free ourselves from the irrational and irreligious fear which sees only our own self interest; when we set aside the disordered affections stirred by propaganda and the historically unreliable reports of the war promoters; when we release the blinders that keep us saying, "What does it matter to me?", in the face of all those for whom this war is a present horror; when we think with the mind of Christ: can we justify this war? Can we go along with more bombing, more death, more refugees, more young women and men broken by what they have seen and what they have been asked to do?

This month, the Catholic Church celebrates the *Month for Life*—a chance to recall that the Incarnation of God in Christ Jesus makes all life holy and precious. What better time for us, as citizens, to help free our nation to the endless narcotic of war to which we have become addicted. With the eyes of Christ, we can see its wreckage—though the addict rarely does. We see the wreckage in the broken lives and suicides of so many veterans, and in the militarization of our police forces. We see it in the reduction of the unborn or the aged to mere commodities to be discarded like excess baggage, and in the idolatry of guns as a solution to human issues. We see the wreckage in the xenophobic fear of children on our borders, and in the constant, delusional belief that more war can finally bring peace.

Let us ask for God's help and mercy, let us wash ourselves clean in the river of tears, and proclaim with our Holy Father: "War never again! Never again war!"



LITURGY AND WORSHIP



St. Joseph Community extends its prayers and hopes for the following intentions: For Tom who is in the terminal stage of lung cancer . . . For Susan who has cancer . . . For Bob's comfort . . . For Carl to find successful employment . . . For Marcee's health . . . For Carol as she begins a new job.

Prayer Tree



"But Jesus said to them, It is I; be not afraid."
John 6:20

If you have petitions you would like included in the prayer tree, including birth announcements, illnesses and deaths, please call the parish office at 206-324-2522 ext 100 or email rleet@stjosephparish.org

Mass of Remembrance For Children Who Have Died and the People Who Love Them

You are invited to join together in community to pray for children who have died and for those who mourn them. At this Mass, we remember those who died before we had a chance to meet them, especially those lost through miscarriage, stillbirth or abortion. We also remember and honor our sons and daughters who died too young. All are welcome to join us for this reflective evening of remembrance, healing and prayer, lifting us toward God's promise of hope and eternal life. Sunday, October 19 at 5pm at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church (7000 35th Ave SW - Seattle 98126).

Sacred Silence

A time for silent prayer and peace

The Sacred Silence prayer group gathers on Monday nights at 7 pm in the Church for an hour of silent prayer. Newcomers always welcome. Open to all types of prayer practice. People are encouraged to use whatever silent prayer practice works best for them whether it is centering prayer, Ignatian imagination or another prayer. Time is spent both sitting and walking in silence.

For information on Sacred Silence and silent prayer contact Jim Hoover at jhoover3law@qwestoffice.net or 206-286-0313.



Ad Majorem Concert Series

The next concert in our series is this coming Friday, October 9 at 7:30 pm in the church. The concert features St. Joseph Choir-In-Residence: Choral Arts. Suggested donation is \$25 general admission and \$20 seniors. Students with an ID are ALWAYS free!

Bach PLUS: The Ecstasies Above

In October we celebrate music of the spirit with performances that awaken the soul and send your spirit soaring. We celebrate the craft of one of the world's greatest composers - J.S. Bach - through performances of two of his most-loved pieces for chorus and strings: the cantata "*Der Herr denket an uns*" and the motet "*Lobet den Herrn*". The program also includes "The Ecstasies Above", a colorful and expressive new piece by composer Tarik O'Regan for string quartet and chorus and William Averitt's "The Deepness of the Blue", a choral cycle on poems by Langston Hughes.

*Preach the Gospel at all times and
when necessary use words.*

~Francis of Assisi



PARISH LIFE

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will celebrate its first anniversary next month. Currently, we are fourteen members strong, with room for anyone and everyone who would like to join, either knitting from home, and/or knitting in community once a month at the parish center. We will meet the first Thursday of every month unless otherwise noted. In this first year of the ministry, twenty eight shawls were made, blessed by Father John or Deacon Steve, and given to people in need of hope and healing. Many parishioners used the prayer shawl request form that is in the vestibule. If you have any questions and or need help getting started on a shawl, please contact Jennifer Rothmeyer at jenniferrothmeyer@hotmail.com. The knitters meet at the parish center on the first Thursday of the month, join us on November 6th at 7:00 pm!



Father John and a lucky recipient of a beautiful prayer shawl.

St. Joseph Women's Ministry

St. Joseph's Women's Ministry Group invites you to join us for "Coffee Connect" Sunday, October 12th from 10 am-11am at Starbucks on 4000 E Madison.

Contact Sheila Sifferman Marie
206.251.7035 if you have any questions.
Thank you.



Get Ready For Some Hoops!

WHAT: CYO Basketball sign ups
WHO: 4th to 8th grade boys/girls
WHEN: Registration ends Oct. 15th

HOW TO SIGN UP: Go to <http://www.stjosephsea.org/basketball/>

QUESTIONS? Girls' Contact: Doug Skrobut - doug@mccormickwoods.com - Boys' Contact: Steve Knight - steve.knight@olympiceagle.com

Young Adult Social - Oct 12th

It's Pumpkin Time! Join us Sunday, October 12th in the Parish Center after the 5:30 Mass for fall inspired fellowship. Carve a pumpkin or just enjoy the company with seasonal beers & treats. Carving masters: feel free to bring your own pumpkin if you have a favorite shape or size; we will have some pumpkins on hand for people to team up on if desired as well as basic carving tools. Hope to see you there!



FAITH FORMATION



Welcome The Newly Baptized

Wesley Peter Evanson

Raleigh Keswick Grammer

Henry Klubben Hahn

Holden Fitzgerald Marcuss

Michael Edgar Victor Ott

Sonia Eileen Rustagi

George William Sorenson

Malcolm Theodore Stamper II

Ignatian Companions: Small Group Spiritual Direction

For Men Only (Steve Wodzanowski, facilitating)

For Men and Women (Rosanne Michaels, facilitating)

Information Evening FOR BOTH: Tuesday, October 14,
7-8 pm | St. Joseph Parish Center

Join a small group of 4-9 people committed to accompanying and supporting one another for the purpose of cultivating attention to God at work in prayer and daily life. Each evening will typically include communal prayer, ritual, check-in, shared reflections, careful listening, and silence. Each group member will be expected to have a regular prayer life, an ability and willingness to share about one's interior life and prayer, an openness to listening deeply to oneself and others, and experience with Ignatian spirituality. This is a group spiritual direction process guided by experienced spiritual directors/ISC facilitators. We hope you will prayerfully consider this rare opportunity to go more deeply into your life of prayer and faith with the support of Ignatian companions!

COST: \$225 program fee for 7 monthly gatherings; includes a \$25 refundable application fee due by Tuesday, October 21. Partial work scholarships and payment plans available. For more information, contact Andrea Fontana at (206) 329-4824.

An Evening On Authentic Ignatian Leadership

Monday, 27 October 2014 | 7-9 pm | St. Joseph Parish

Co-facilitators: Matt Barmore (Seattle Prep) and
Brooke Rufo Hill (Magis @ Seattle University)

How might I be an authentic Ignatian leader? How can my formation in the Ignatian tradition be applied in concrete ways to the areas where I wish to be a leader—in my home, workplace, community and beyond? Using concepts from "Heroic Leadership" by Christopher Lowney and examples from real life and work, presenters Brooke Rufo Hill (Director, Magis at Seattle University) and Matt Barmore (former Principal, Seattle Prep) will help you and other Ignatian leaders to explore through prayer, presentation, personal reflection and group discussion what it means to be an Ignatian-inspired leader—someone who lives with authenticity and integrity, humility and love.

Come explore, share and hear from colleagues about our lived experiences of leadership in a variety of Jesuit educational institutions, ministries and community works! Join us to be nourished & inspired to "set the world on fire"!

Free will offering (Suggested donation: \$20) Please RSVP by Thursday, October 23rd to Andrea Fontana at andrea@ignatiancenter.org or (206) 329-4824. For more information, visit <http://www.ignatiancenter.org/programs/ignatian-leadership-series/>. Sponsored by the Ignatian Spirituality Center.

Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.

~Francis of Assisi

FAITH FORMATION

Pathfinders 2014

Calling all 6th, 7th & 8th Graders!

Are you looking for an adventure,
a chance to help others, a community?

Join Pathfinders Middle School Youth Group! We meet on Wednesday nights in the Parish Center from 6:00 to 7:30 pm. Come next Wednesday, October 8th and get to know us.

For more information contact Erin Tobin at cff@stjosephparish.org or (206)324-2522 x111

Register at <http://www.stjosephparish.org> "Pathfinders"

Confirmation

Confirmation classes and mass will once again be offered this year at St. Joseph Parish. Confirmation Preparation Classes begin Sunday, October 19th at 12:30 pm in the Mother Teresa Room of the Parish Center (basement level). All class materials including books, food, and the retreat supplies will be provided. The fee for classes is \$125. The Confirmation preparation program includes class sessions along with a Saturday retreat on November 22nd, service learning experiences, and a Reconciliation service. A Confirmation Mass rehearsal and Confirmation Mass will be in *late January or mid-February.

To register please visit our website www.stjosephparish.org or call Dottie Farewell 206-965-1652 with any questions.

**Confirmation mass is not assigned until mid October by the Seattle Archdiocese.*

Save The Date

**CFF2 Parent & Child Retreat is
October 18th!**

Children's Faith Formation

As Simple as A, B, C

Here at St. Joseph's we are excited to offer enriching programs that support the faith life of our youngest parishioners. Raising a family takes love, effort, time, and community and we work hard to provide experiences and education that helps support families. Children's faith education starts at the very beginning, in their homes with the adults who teach them their faith heritage. At St. Joe's we work to continue that education in a dynamic way. We call it the "A, B, C's" of Children's Faith Formation.

Brief Overview

CFF A encompasses our two year Sacramental Preparation program for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. Typically beginning in 1st grade, the first year is referred to as CFF 1. This year begins general religious education and must be completed first before moving on to the next year. CFF 2 is the second year of the program, and this is when immediate formation towards the reception of these two sacraments takes place. Please see CFF A for all the details.

CFF B is designed for children in grades 3rd thru 6th grade. We combine 3rd and 4th graders into CFF 3/4 and 5th and 6th graders into CFF 5/6. This time of formation is approximately 3 years long and focuses on the history of our local church, our diocese, the global Church, and moral formation of our children.

CFF C is our junior high school Bible Study program. Youth in *6th, 7th, 8th, and *9th grades are invited to participate in this three year program which begins with "Introduction to the Bible" by learning about Old and New Testament Biblical figures. The next two years covers Old Testament and New Testament respectively. *If your child participates in CFF 5/6 in 6th grade, then he or she will begin the three year course in 7th grade and continues through to 9th grade; however, if you choose, you may begin Bible Study in 6th grade and end in 8th grade.

For more information or to answer any questions you might have, please contact Dottie Farewell, Director of Religious Education at dfarewell@stjosephparish.org or 206-965-1652.

FAITH JUSTICE



St. Joseph Winter Shelter

The St. Joseph Winter Shelter opened Wednesday, October 1st. There are 3 groups of volunteers that keep the shelter going.

'Hosts' spend the night with the men once a month.

'Meal Providers' make a meal bag for each man to take with them for the day. Scheduled once a month or every 6 weeks.

'Daily Prep' – this is new. I am hoping to find 2 or 3 people that would take turns organizing the shelter for the night Hosts. It takes about an hour.

The shelter is open Tuesday – Saturday and can be done anytime between 7:30 am – 6:00 pm. It involves making juice, putting a meat / cheese tray together etc. If you are interested in volunteering look for the sign-up table in the vestibule after Mass. Or contact: Taffy McCormick- taffymccormick@comcast.net

Of special need are volunteers for the first Saturday of the month. Please consider helping this vital ministry!

Cornerstone Conference

October 24th & 25th

The Bishops of Washington State are sponsoring the Cornerstone Conference to inspire and educate Catholics. This is a statewide conference sponsored by our Catholic bishops and the line-up of speakers is truly impressive:

- Archbishop Sartain, Bishop Elizondo, Bishop Cupich, and Bishop Tyson
- Immaculee Ilibagiza (Rwandan genocide survivor)
- Abby Johnson (former Planned Parenthood director)
- Serrin Foster (President of Feminists for Life)
- Vicki Thorn (national founder of Project Rachel)
- Bishop Robert McElroy (frequent contributor to Catholic media on caring for the poor)
- Clare Halpine (World Youth Alliance)

To register visit www.seattlearchdiocese.org

Mission Sunday - October 19th

The weekend of Oct. 18th/19th the Church Celebrates "Mission Sunday" and here at St. Joseph's we will highlight one of our Outreach Partners: **CHIEF SEATTLE CLUB**. At all the masses that weekend we will collect new/used: sleeping bags, rain gear, blankets and winter jackets. Next weekend there will be a full description of Chief Seattle Club in the bulletin. For information, contact Deacon Steve at stevew@stjosephparish.org or 965-1646.

Shirts Across America & St. Joseph's The Voice are Building up New Orleans

Information Night - Tuesday, Oct. 7 - 7 pm
Seattle Preparatory Theatre

The tenth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina takes place in August 2015. There are still thousands of families trying to move home. Shirts Across America (SAA) decided to step up, but we need your help. Come be 4 NOLA!

Shirts Across America is a nonprofit organization started right here at St. Joe's and is committed to building homes in New Orleans. SAA has sent over 1,450 volunteers to the Gulf Coast—including hundreds of St. Joseph's The Voice students and parents—and has helped rebuild over 120 homes. SAA has also fully funded the rebuilding of 14 homes over the last seven years.

If you or your son/daughter are interested in going on the 2015 spring break trip, we invite you to attend the Spring Break Kick Off Event. This information event will take place at Seattle Prep's Theater on Tuesday, October 7th, at 7 pm. This is a mandatory meeting, for all students and their parents interested in going on the trip to New Orleans in April 2015. Parents and students will receive a snapshot of past trips, hear directly from Collins Tuohy from the movie "The Blind Side," and learn about the application process for the trip. If you have questions, please contact Lindsey Dvorak at (206) 212-1055 or LindseyD@shirtsacrossamerica.org. More information available at www.ShirtsAcrossAmerica.org.

FAITH JUSTICE

We Need You!

Volunteers & Food Needed!
Thanksgiving Meal at Recovery Café
Saturday November 15th - 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

We are looking for help in preparing, delivering and serving a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner for 150 guests as part of OPEN MIC night at the Recovery Café. We will need cooked/sliced turkeys and hams, mashed potatoes, stuffing, vegetables, rolls, pumpkin pie and apple cider. This is a great opportunity to show your Thanksgiving culinary specialty! Can you roast the perfect bird, bake the perfect pie, is your stuffing a family favorite? If interested, please contact Deacon Steve at 965-1646 or stevev@stjosephparish.org



Cabrini Ministry Training

We are all called to minister by virtue of our **BAPTISM**. If you feel a desire to respond to God's call in a new way, please prayerfully discern your participation in Cabrini Ministry. You will be welcomed warmly, empowered to be a competent pastoral care minister, and nurtured by the prayerful, loving Cabrini Ministry community.

Individuals who complete the Cabrini Ministry Training receive the gift of:

- Increased self awareness
- Stronger command of pastoral helping skills, renewed relationship with God
- Contributing to the community and world, by serving others
- Pastoral leadership skills
- Helping others see where God is working in their lives
- Trained lay minister, giving skills to live out the BAPTISMAL call

For more information and applications visit our website or call (206) 760-0583. Patt Reade – Executive Director
Email: info@cabriniministry.org website: www.cabriniministry.org

No Time for Ordinary: Discovering Our Prophetic & Mystical Vocation

Saturday, October 18th - 9:00 am - 2:30 pm
Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 7000 35th Ave SW
Seattle, WA 98126

- Explore how to harvest the wisdom of your life to be a co-creator in these evolutionary times
- Experience new ways to contribute to a more just and peaceful world
- Expand the dimensions of your creativity and spirituality to form new stories for the common good

Jan Phillips is a catalyst for original thinking and inspired action. Jan is a visionary creator, speaker, artist, activist and musician. \$20 if pre-registered by October 10th, 2014 either through Brown Paper Tickets or download and mail our registration form PDF. \$25 at the door if space is available.

Donors Will Match Your Gift To St. Vincent de Paul

Today you can double your money when you make a contribution to our parish St. Vincent de Paul Society Conference. Two generous donors came forward to offer a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$1,600.00. This means we have the potential to raise a total of \$3,200.00 for the month of October to support the poor in our neighborhood.

As autumn arrives, we typically get additional requests for help. Colder weather brings requests for assistance with heating bills. Wind and rain brings requests for jackets and other clothing to fend off the chills and damper climate as the leaves fall and the clouds empty out the inevitable rainfall. Thanks to your donations we are able to help with these and other needs of adults and kids, many living in poverty, many who work but who just don't bring in enough to make ends meet.

Thank you for your support and to these caring donors who have come forth with the matching money. All we collect will go to help people in need.





ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH MEN'S WEEKEND RETREAT

"WHO ARE OUR SAINTS"



October 24-26, 2014

Friday evening through Sunday morning: Beautiful Camp Casey on Whidbey Island

RETREAT ANIMATORS: Rob Carroll, George Kunz, Stuart Rowe, Bill Herkes & Joe Anderton

Retreat begins Friday evening at 8:00 pm and ends 11 am on Sunday.

Cost: \$125.00 per person (includes two nights lodging & four meals - double occupancy)

Partial scholarships available.

Cost does not include transportation. We will help organize carpooling.

Accommodations are simple and rustic! All rooms sleep two.

Join us for a weekend away on the shores of Puget Sound, where we hope to provide time to relax, feel rejuvenated and inspired, get connected with ourselves and other men from our parish. Eat, pray & play!

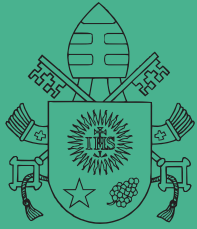
To register fill out form and e-mail/drop it off/mail. We need a minimum of 25 guys to go and a max of 35.

Sign-up on first come, first pay basis.

Questions? Call Steve at 965-1646 or stevew@stjosephparish.org

NAME _____ PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

WILL YOU DRIVE? YES _____ NO _____ Do you need a ride? YES _____ NO _____



POPE-POURRI

An excerpt from the homily of Holy Father Francis on St. Francis of Assisi

Francis began the Canticle of the Creatures with these words: “Praised may you be, Most High, All-powerful God, good Lord... by all your creatures (FF, 1820). Love for all creation, for its harmony. Saint Francis of Assisi bears witness to the need to *respect all that God has created* and as he created it, without manipulating and destroying creation; rather to help it grow, to become more beautiful and more like what God created it to be. And above all, Saint Francis witnesses to respect for everyone, he testifies that each of us is called to protect our neighbour, that the human person is at the centre of creation, at the place where God – our creator – willed that we should be. Not at the mercy of the idols we have created! Harmony and peace! Francis was a man of harmony and peace. From this City of Peace, I repeat with all the strength and the meekness of love: Let us respect creation, let us not be instruments of destruction! Let us respect

each human being. May there be an end to armed conflicts which cover the earth with blood; may the clash of arms be silenced; and everywhere may hatred yield to love, injury to pardon, and discord to unity. Let us listen to the cry of all those who are weeping, who are suffering and who are dying because of violence, terrorism or war, in the Holy Land, so dear to Saint Francis, in Syria, throughout the Middle East and everywhere in the world.

We turn to you, Francis, and we ask you: Obtain for us God’s gift of harmony, peace and respect for creation!

