

Pope: Reconsider the development of lethal autonomous weapons

As religious leaders from across the world gather to discuss “AI Ethics for Peace” in Hiroshima, Japan, on 9 and 10 July, Pope Francis sends a message, pointing out that discussing peace and artificial intelligence in the city that still suffers the consequences of the atomic bomb that almost destroyed it completely in August 1945, “is of great symbolic importance”.

AI and Peace

Artificial intelligence and peace, he says, are two issues of supreme importance. The Pope recalled his most recent appeal on this matter to the political leaders of the G7 as they gathered in Puglia, Italy. During that meeting Pope Francis emphasised the importance of keeping decision-making in human hands rather than relying on machines, explaining that “the machine makes a technical choice among several possibilities based either on well-defined criteria or on statistical inferences. Human beings, however, not only choose but in their hearts are capable of deciding”.

True decisions

He says that true decisions require human wisdom and evaluation and an over-reliance on artificial intelligence could undermine human dignity.

This is precisely what we saw in Hiroshima and continue to see today, and “among the current conflicts impacting our world – including the hatred of war – we hear more and more about this technology”, he adds.

It is crucial, the Pope continues, that, “united as brothers and sisters, we remind the world that in light of the tragedy that is armed conflict, it is urgent to reconsider the development and use of devices like the so-called ‘lethal autonomous weapons’ and ultimately ban their use”. Reiterating his plea, at the heart of many his appeals throughout his pontificate, he repeats: “No machine should ever choose to take the life of a human being”.

Contribution of all to a just regulation

Bringing his message to an end, Pope Francis asks that as we look at the complexity of the issues before us, “we recognise the contribution of the cultural riches of peoples and religions in the regulation of artificial intelligence”. This, he emphasises, “is key to the success of your commitment to the wise management of technological innovation”.

Finally, Pope Francis expresses his hope that the gathering might “bear fruit in bringing about fraternity and cooperation”, before praying that “each of us may become instruments of peace for the world”.

Source: [vaticannews.va](https://www.vaticannews.va)

Called to be Peacemakers

Called to be Peacemakers is a document of the International Affairs department of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales that presents a Catholic approach to arms control and disarmament.

It argues that if Catholics are to take up the call to stand as peacemakers in our troubled world, an integral part of this mission involves working to limit the proliferation of weapons and to advance the cause of global disarmament. *Culled from <https://www.cbcew.org.uk>*



The Church’s Mission

In commissioning the Apostles in today’s Gospel, Jesus gives them, and us, a preview of His Church’s mission after the Resurrection.

His instructions to the Twelve echo those of God to the twelve tribes of Israel on the eve of their exodus from Egypt. The Israelites likewise were sent out with no bread and only one set of clothes, wearing sandals and carrying a staff (see Exodus 12:11; Deuteronomy 8:2-4). Like the Israelites, the Apostles are to rely solely on the providence of God and His grace.

Perhaps, also, Mark wants us to see the Apostles’ mission, the mission of the Church, as that of leading a new exodus—delivering people from their exile from God and bringing them to the promised land, the kingdom of heaven.

Like Amos in today’s First Reading, the Apostles are not “professionals” who earn their bread by prophesying. Like Amos, they are simply men (see Acts 14:15) summoned from their ordinary



jobs and sent by God to be shepherds of their brothers and sisters.

Again this week, we hear the theme of rejection: Amos experiences it, and Jesus warns the Apostles that some will not welcome or listen to them. The Church is called not necessarily to be successful but only to be faithful to God’s command.

With authority and power given to her by Jesus, the Church proclaims God’s peace and salvation to those who believe in Him, as we sing in today’s Psalm.

This word of truth, this Gospel of salvation, is addressed to each of us, personally, as Paul proclaims in today’s Epistle. In the mystery of God’s will, we have been chosen from before the foundation of the world—to be His sons and daughters, to live for the praise of His glory.

Let us, then, give thanks for the Church today, and for the spiritual blessings He has bestowed upon us. Let us resolve to further the Church’s mission—to help others hear the call to repentance and welcome Christ into their lives.

Scott Hann



English Martyrs
Vale of White Horse
Pastoral Area

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ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, Wallingford

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15TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME YEAR B (III)

Entrance Antiphon: Ps 16:15

As for me, in justice I shall behold your face; I shall be filled with the vision of your glory.

First Reading: Prophet Amos 7:12-15

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 84

Let us see, O Lord, your mercy,
and give us your saving help.

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14

Gospel Acclamation: Jn 6:63,68

Alleluia, alleluia!!

Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life; you have the message of eternal life. **Alleluia!**

Gospel: Mark 6:7-13

Communion Antiphon: Jn 5:57

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him, says the Lord.

SATURDAY 13th July ... St Henry

9:30 am Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot ... Bethany Pinheiro/Fr Dominic ... Thanksgiving

11:00 noon Baptism of Gabriela Miazga in Didcot

4:30 pm Adoration & Confessions will take place prior to the Vigil Mass at St John’s Wallingford

5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John’s ... Deceased Clifford Family RIP (Noel Clifford)

5:50 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot

6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs, Didcot ... Imogen Davies ... Good Health (Armelle Belcher)

SUNDAY 14th July ... 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs, Didcot ... Uchenna Victor Umekwe RIP (Joy Ekekwe)

11:00 noon Mass St John’s Wallingford ... Imogen Davies ... Good Health (Armelle Belcher)

MONDAY 15th July ... NO MASS ... St Swithun

TUESDAY 16th July ... Our Lady of Mt Carmel

12:00 noon ... Adoration before mass in St John’s Wallingford ... Bridie McNamee RIP (Brian McNamee)

WEDNESDAY 17th July ... St Bonaventure

9:30 am at English Martyrs, Didcot ... Clive O. Ede RIP (Mrs Ede)

THURSDAY 18th July

9:30 am Mass at St John’s Wallingford ... Bridie McNamee RIP (Brian McNamee)

FRIDAY 19th July

9:30 am at English Martyrs, Didcot ... Bridie McNamee RIP (Brian McNamee)

SATURDAY 20th July ... St Apollinaris

9:30 am Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot ... Teresa Rozario RIP (Rodrick Fly)

4:30 pm Adoration & Confessions will take place prior to the Vigil Mass at St John’s Wallingford

5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John’s

5:50 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot

6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs, Didcot

SUNDAY 21st July ... 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs, Didcot

11:00 noon Mass St John’s Wallingford

In your prayers, please remember: Jenny Evans, Mary Guinan, Ann Tomline, Joan Walker, Joan Russell, Joan Turner, Nina Oakes, Jacob Oakes, Pat McLoughlin, Barry Molloy, David Woodley, Ann Furlong and all the sick and housebound of our churches.



DEATH/FUNERAL NOTICE

Delfina Pani (96) ... Requiem Mass at the English Martyrs, Didcot, July 16th @ 11 am



Baptism

We rejoice with the parents and godparents of Alexander Broom who through the sacrament of Baptism, will be made a member of the body of Christ next weekend. In your prayers, remember Alexander Broom. We invoke God's blessings on him as he grows.



Mercy for Life Africa

Isaac and Nathaniel Kershaw are planning on travelling to Uganda, *Mercy for Life Africa* in Kampala to help in the school and orphanage next February 2025. You might remember Joseph going there in 2023. The children and the carers in the orphanage experienced our shared humanity and concerns. Please consider supporting our two boys nearer the time. They will be putting up activities to raise funds for this experience. Please help yourself with the flyer and give to family and friends. Use the QR code.



Used Laptops or Educational Devices Needed For Children

Do you have unwanted used laptop in fairly good condition? Do you have Amazon Fire 7 or any other device that of no importance to you but other children can use? Father Dominic is collecting. If you wish to give them way, we can arrange to wipe them clean of any of your data, re-program or re-condition them for children in need. They are sure to go to good homes and safe hands. Please speak to or send an email to Father Dominic ... dadeiza@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.



Weekday Evening Masses to Begin September

The Liturgy Group meet and decided on an extra weekday mass to be celebrated in the evening in the English Martyrs Church, Didcot, as no where in the pastoral area are masses celebrated weekday evenings. This is to meet the spiritual needs of working groups who are unable to attend the daily masses in the mornings, this additional weekday mass will be celebrated at 6 pm on Wednesday, beginning September 4th 2024. This will be reviewed.



Pastoral Area Team to Visit

You will recall the diocese did an extensive consultation leading up to a 10 Year Plan document titled, *You Will Be My Witnesses*. This is to help determine the future of the parishes, pastoral area, the resources available, vocations, human capital and our spiritual growth. This on-going consultations includes Bishop Philip's visit to parishes, pastoral areas and diocesan institutions. We have had parish consultation and our thoughts and concerns shared with the diocese.

Our priests in the Pastoral Area met at the weekend. A team from the Pastoral Area addressed the priests. This team will be visiting to share thoughts with us at a date to be announced. Please plan to be in attendance.

Taking your Prayers with me to Lourdes

Bishop Philip wrote to everyone in the diocese that "Be assured that I constantly keep the people and work of the Diocese in my prayers but I am often asked to pray for people's personal intentions when I go on pilgrimage or visit Holy Places which is why I have arranged with our Lourdes team to help me do this on our Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. If you would like me to offer a prayer for your intention at the Grotto in Lourdes this July, please email your petition in confidence to lourdespetition@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk. At this address you will also be able to find out how to donate to the Lourdes fund and make a donation that will enable a candle to be lit at Lourdes for your intention.



Fanning the Flame Event Returns

For our young people, the ever popular Fanning the Flame event returns to St Cassian's Centre, Kintbury ... www.fanningtheflame.co.uk
KINTBURY 19th - 23rd AUGUST
FOR AGES 11-21

The camp is run by the Dominican Sisters of St. Joseph and an experienced team of volunteers who have been running FTF events for over 20 years.

The Celebrate Trust are returning to a national event CELEBRATE JOY 22-24 September in Birmingham. They are planning a weekend that you will want to bring your friends and family to, where you will be refreshed in the love and joy of God!



Our Church To Open Daily for Private Prayers July 21

The Church of St John the Evangelist will be open all day beginning July 21st. This is to thank all the lovely people who put their names down to open and close St John the Evangelist Church in Wallingford. A huge enthusiasm greeted this initiative. We commit the volunteers to the Lord in prayers and all who will walk through our doors. Please come in now and again to pray yourselves. Thank You!

Catholic Retreats and Pilgrimages

The summer holidays are a good opportunity to spend some days with fellow Catholics, growing in your faith and deepening your relationship with God. There are several to look out for in this short outline.
New Dawn 5-9 August www.newdawn.org

It's all about renewal. Join with hundreds of believers for five days of prayer, worship, community and inspiration. Be a part of the renewal of the faith here in England.
New Dawn in the Church in the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Walsingham, Norfolk. Camping and residential options. Children's and youth streams also.

In addition, this year, New Dawn will have a Pericardium Relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis coming from Assisi to Walsingham for New Dawn 2024. Monsignor Anthony Figueiredo, STD, will give an inspirational talk on Blessed Carlo and offer veneration of his relic on Wednesday 7th August.

Youth 2000 Summer Festival

The annual Youth 2000 Summer Festival will take place from Friday 23rd August - Monday 26th August 2024 in the beautiful surroundings of Ampleforth Abbey, North Yorkshire.

This festival is an opportunity for young people (aged 16-35) from across the UK to grow in their relationship with God, form friendships and be inspired to live out their faith! The programme will include input from incredible speakers, a wonderful variety of workshops, and loads of opportunities to be with Jesus and encounter His love. Tickets (which include food and accommodation) can be purchased from www.youth2000.org/events. Tickets are also available for priests, religious, families and groups. If you have any questions, please email events@youth2000.org.



Are You Considering a Vocation to the Priesthood?

'Adoremus', which you will have read about elsewhere in this issue, is the National Eucharistic Congress which will be held on Saturday 14th September. However, on the following day, Sunday 15th September, 10am-5.30pm, the Bishops' Conference is hosting a national discernment event called 'Invocation at Adoremus', also at St Mary's College, Oscott (Birmingham).

This is a fantastic opportunity for any discerners to gather with the seminarians and meet others from right across the country. There will be workshops, keynote speakers, Adoration, opportunities to speak to people to discern their vocation. Please get in touch with our Diocesan Vocations Promotion Team if you would like to be considered as a delegate to attend this free event. vocations@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk



Our Lady of Walsingham Raised to the Rank of Feast

The Vatican has granted permission for Our Lady of Walsingham to be celebrated as a new Feast in the dioceses of England, starting this year on 24 September.

Cardinal Arthur Roche, Prefect of the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, wrote to Cardinal Vincent Nichols, president of the Bishops' Conference, in response to his request last year that the Obligatory Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Walsingham be raised to the rank of Feast.

He explained that normally it wouldn't be moved but an exception would be made. He said:

"Given the historic importance of this shrine for the Church in England and Wales, dating back just over one thousand years, and given the growing devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham to which you attest, the Dicastery has decided that, by way of exception, your request may be granted."

The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham was established in 1061, according to the text of the Pynson Ballad, when devout noblewoman Richeldis de Faverches asked in prayer for inspiration so that she could carry out a special work in honour of Our Lady.

The Pynson Ballad says that Our Lady appeared to Richeldis and showed her in spirit the House of the Annunciation where the Angel greeted Mary in Nazareth, and asked her to build a replica in Walsingham as a perpetual memorial of the Annunciation.

Cardinal Roche said he hoped that the new Feast day would strengthen the faithful:

"May this yearly celebration be a source of renewed grace and evangelical endeavour for the Church in England and Wales, as, imitating Mary, the faithful may ever more become disciples of her Son, receive the message of the Gospel, treasure it in their hearts and reflect on it in their minds".

