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KOREA: LAST LETTER OF BISHOP SAINT DAVELUY RELEASED

The last letter of Bishop St. Antoine Daveluy written just before his martyrdom in 1866 was made public on December 3, 2009 at Baithi Martyrs' Shrine in Cheongju diocese. The event followed a Mass commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Yange-up Research Institute for Korean Church History. The letter written in Korean contained Bishop Daveluy's teaching addressed to the faithful at that time, exhorting them to follow Christ and to strive to be His true disciples. Bishop Daveluy was a native of Amiens, France. A missionary of the Parish Foreign Missions Society, he came to Korea in 1845, did pastoral work and was later installed as the 5th Vicar Apostolic of Korea. He was canonized in 1984 along with 102 other Korean martyrs. (CBCK NEWSLETTER)

KOREA: GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING THE CHURCH'S CULTURAL HERITAGE PUBLISHED

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea (CBCK) Committee for Culture has published the "Guidelines for the Presentation and Maintenance of Cultural Heritage of the Catholic Church in Korea" on November 29, 2009. The Guidelines were prepared to facilitate initiatives to conserve, protect and promote the Church's cultural heritage. The committee has started working on the Guidelines in 2005, which were approved by the CBCK Permanent Council on September 7, 2009. The Guidelines were prepared in accordance with the advice of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church. (CBCK NEWSLETTER)

STATUE FROM NAGASAKI REMINDS OF NUCLEAR THREAT

Archbishop Joseph Mitsuaki Takami of Nagasaki, Japan brought along the scorched head of Mary's statue to a Mass he concelebrated on May 2 at St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York. This was the day before he issued a joint message with Bishop Joseph Atsumi Misue of Hiroshima to the United Nations calling on world leaders to abolish nuclear weapons in the world. The month-long UN Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons began on May 3. The scorched head of Mary is all that remains from the statue that had once graced the main altar of Nagasaki's Urakami Cathedral before it was destroyed when the second atomic bomb was dropped killing about 75,000 people and bringing an end to World War II. Archbishop Takami hopes that the statue would focus attention to the destructive power and inhumanity of nuclear weapons and on the importance of working toward their elimination. (CN)



FABC-OSC HAS A NEW EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Father Raymond Ambroise, 65, was appointed executive secretary of the FABC-Office of Social Communication (OSC) from April 2010 for a period of four years. The priest-native of India has a rich experience in Church and communication, having served beside others as director of Amruthavani Communication Centre in Hyderabad and FABC consultant for the Manila-based Radio Veritas Asia for many years. He was involved in projects especially for planning and management. FABC-OSC is one of nine offices of the Federation. It coordinates the communication work of the Church in Asia. Based in Manila, the office is directed by a five-member executive board of Bishops from different parts of Asia.

INDIA: COMMUNICATION BISHOP, THE NEW CBCI HEAD

Mumbai Archbishop Oswald Cardinal Gracias was elected president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) on March 1 during the 29th general meeting of CBCI in Guwahati. The prelate is concurrently president of the Conference of Catholic Bishops' of India-Latin Rite, and former chairman of the CBCI Commission for Social Communications. He was succeeded in the latter post by Divine Word Bishop Chacko Thottumarickal of Indore diocese. Cardinal Gracias is a member of the five-bishop executive board of the FABC-Office of Social Communication.

SINGAPORE: CATHOLICS SHOULD WELCOME NEW TRANSLATION

The new English translation of the Roman Missal should be "a refreshing welcome" for Catholics, said Father Ignatius Yeo, liturgy professor at St. Francis Xavier Major Seminary. He said the translation shows that the Mass and the liturgy are "not dead but (are) dynamic and alive." These prayers were "crafted to be artistically beautiful... to reflect the beauty and glory of God," the priest said. Pope Benedict XVI received the bound English Missal on April 28 from members of the Vox Clara Committee, an international group of bishops established to advise the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments about the translation of the Roman Missal into English. He welcomed the news that the English translation would soon be ready for general publication. Committee members expect the Missal to be in parishes by the beginning of Advent 2011. (CN/NCR)

SRI LANKA: BISHOPS SLAM ATTACK ON MEDIA FIRM

Catholic bishops in Sri Lanka have condemned a violent attack on one of the country's leading media companies, calling it "lawless behavior." A group of protestors pelted Sirasa Media's offices with rocks before trying to storm the building on March 22 in Colombo. The attack, which injured four people, was to protest the company's sponsorship of a proposed concert featuring Senegalese-American R&B singer Akon. A music video by the singer, called "Sexy Chick," features scantily clad women dancing in front of a Buddha statue. The video has sparked outrage in Sri Lanka among people who say it desecrates their religion. Akon's concert scheduled for April 24 was cancelled. (UCANEWS)

NEPAL: CHRISTIAN MEDIA NETWORK LAUNCHED

Christians working in print, radio and television have launched the “Nepali Christian Media Network” after a two-day meeting in Kathmandu March 1-2. The two dozen or so participants working in secular and Christian media said the group will provide support for Christian communications in the country, organizing meetings and seminars between media persons and Church leaders. They will affiliate with other popular groups like the Federation of Nepali Journalists. A bigger gathering will be held in July to develop the group further. There are now 7,500 Catholics in Nepal and more than 1 million Christians of other denominations among the country’s 28.5 million people, mostly Hindus. Over 200 local FM stations broadcast programs like “Back to the Bible,” and “Voice of the Martyrs.” Other groups like the Seventh Day Adventists also air programs regularly. A Christian website, NepalChurch.com, receives 2,000 hits daily. None of Nepal’s Catholic parishes have newsletters. The two-day meeting was organized by the evangelical group, Micah Network Nepal. (CNUA)

INDIA: BISHOPS BARES PLAN TO USE NEW MEDIA TO REACH YOUNG PEOPLE

Some 157 bishops gathered at the 29th general meeting of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India (CBCI) in Guwahati February 24 to March 3. The meeting with the theme “Youth for Peace and Harmony” aimed at addressing issues concerning the youth given that by 2020, the average age in India would be less than 30 years old. It happened during the silver jubilee celebration of the International Year of the Youth (1985-2010). Joining the bishops were CBCI commission secretaries, national youth centre directors, and 51 youth delegates from the 13 regions of the country. In their final statement, the participants committed to use “the reach and power of technology and media for wider and creative engagement with youth.” This will help towards better integrating youth ministry into Church ministry, strengthening pastoral care initiatives for young people as well as empowering youth with Church teachings and enjoining them in Church-led social and environmental campaigns. (SAR NEWS)

SINGAPORE: PARENTS IN THE WORLD OF VIDEO GAMES

A one-day seminar for parents was held at CANA on video games conducted by Dr. Angeline Khoo of the National Institute of Education Psychological Studies Academic Group. The 20, mostly parents, participants were engaged in digital gaming, a craze among young people today. Dr Khoo highlighted positive effects of video gaming such as social interaction, satisfying social needs, developing patience, delaying gratification as well as developing strategic planning and thinking. Yet, she did not downplay the negative effects like possible addiction, aggressive thoughts and feelings. She also warned of the threats of cyber-bullying and cyber-predators. Dr Khoo recommended kids to be taught how to manage their time to avoid “pathological gaming.” Teenagers should spend less than 20 hours a week on video games and for young children, not more than 2 hours a day, she added. Parents should also take an interest to understand what their kids are playing and warn them of possible dangers. (CN)

Music is “capable of opening minds and hearts to the dimension of the spirit and of leading persons to raise their gaze on High...” - Pope Benedict XVI, after a concert in his honor on April 19 celebrating the fifth anniversary of his election to the See of Peter

DIGITAL DIRECTORY OF CATHOLIC MEDIA LAUNCHED

The Pontifical Council for Social Communications in collaboration with the Bishops’ Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAM) and Signis, has recently opened the site www.intermirifica.net, a digital directory of Catholic Media world wide. In the form of “wiki” web 2.0, the site enables users and professional communicators to consult resources and contribute to the collective construction of the database. Accessible to all on the Internet, the site makes it possible to consult Catholic media (radio, television and audiovisual producers) in all parts of the world, using names or geographical locations as basis for searching, and to obtain information like telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and websites. To keep it up-to-date, users will be able to send their own comments, make requests or correct the information provided. (CBCISITE)

INDONESIA: SEMINARIANS PUBLISH GOVERNOR’S WRITINGS

Dominican seminarians and Catholic students plan to publish this month the writings of Johannes Chrisostomus Oevaang Oeray, former Catholic governor of West Kalimantan province who helped improve the lives of Dayak tribal people. “We want to publish the book so that students in elementary and secondary schools may have a textbook on the real history of West Kalimantan,” Dominican Father Andrei Kurniawan said. Born on August 18, 1922 in Tanjungkuda, Oeray studied at St. Paul Minor Seminary in Nyarumkop. He was West Kalimantan governor (1960-1966), and a member of the House of Representatives (1977-1982). Oeray helped Dutch missionaries become Indonesian citizens. He also kept mission hospitals and schools as Church assets when the local government tried to nationalize Dutch colonial properties following independence. He died on July 17, 1986 in the provincial capital, Pontianak. (UCANEWS)

TAIWAN: ‘QUIET’ CHURCH LEADERS SHOULD SPEAK MORE

The local Church needs to speak out more on social problems to bring about a gradual change in public attitudes, Catholic scholar Richard Lee Chia-tung said. “In Taiwan, there is weight in what the Church says. It wastes its influence if it does not speak out,” the former president of the Catholic-run Providence University said. Lee challenged the Church over its silence on various social issues, including the death penalty. In a recent issue of Taipei Archdiocese’s Catholic Weekly, Lee wrote in a commentary on the death penalty that the Church often speaks of forgiveness. “At this critical moment, it is a good chance for the Church [to speak out],” he said, “but it remains silent.” He understands that it is not easy for Taiwan people to give up the concept of “a life for a life” overnight. However, “no one would say Jesus’ teaching of forgiveness is wrong,” he stressed. (UCANEWS)

INDIA: JOURNALISM WORKSHOP AT SAVS, ORISSA

A five-day Journalism workshop was organized by St. Arnold Vikas Sanchar (SAVS), the regional communication center for Orissa Bishops’ Council, at Jharsuguda, 18-22 April 2010. Twenty seven enthusiasts from four religious congregations and three dioceses of Orissa participated. The five-day programme helped them update themselves with new methods and technology. Besides becoming aware of the present media tactics, it also helped them to become good writers, reporters and critical analyzers of the media. (CBCISITE)