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Pope on Easter: End 'Hurricane Of Violence and Destruction'

Vatican City (NC) — Pope John Paul II on Easter urged the people of the world to turn to Christ and put an end to "the hurricane of violence and destruction caused by war."

He also offered seasonal greetings in 47 languages.

The pope's traditional "Urbi et Orbi" message to the City of Rome and to the world marked the end of Holy Week ceremonies during which the pope led the Way of the Cross through the ruins of ancient Rome on Good Friday, heard confessions in St. Peter's Basilica, and celebrated an Easter vigil service that culminated in an alleluia sung by an estimated 25,000 people.

After celebrating Easter Sunday Mass on the steps of St. Peter's, the pope gave the traditional talk and blessing from the central balcony of the church. About 250,000 people listened in the warm spring sunshine in the square below, and the message was televised in more than 30 countries.

The pope recalled Christ's resurrection and the empty tomb he left behind. For nearly 2,000 years, the pope said, mankind has paused to reflect on the meaning of that empty tomb.

"Before every tomb humanity questions itself. It questions itself especially when the tombs are the legacy of the hurricane of violence and destruction caused by war," the pope said.

He recalled the painful lessons of World War II, which he said was "unleashed by a mad imperialist ideology." For more than five years, the pope said, humanity saw tens of millions of people massacred and put to death in concentration camps, populations destroyed, the Jews "condemned to extinction", and, finally, "the terrifying revelation of the first atomic explosions."

Many of those who defended their free way of life became victims, the pope said, but they were also "martyrs and heroes" for affirming the rights and freedoms of all men. Postwar efforts, he said, aimed at protecting those rights and putting an end to war.

"Forty years ago the war ended. Has peace, as the result of a just order, been truly affirmed?" the pope asked. In response, he said it must be "painfully" recognized that in too many places around the world "human rights are denied or violated under the form of the most stringent oppression."

In too many places, he said, "torture, segregation camps and camps of inhuman labor continue to reap innumerable victims, often silenced and forgotten."

Millions of people are left to die because of hunger and want, he said, and numerous wars continue "to sow ruin and drench with blood various parts of the world."

"Ideologies that instill hatred, violence and aggression do not cease to deceive or poison societies," the pope said, while "the armaments race increases the threat of total destruction."

Some nations, the pope said, were still awaiting recognition of their sovereign rights "because they have not yet recovered them or because they have lost them." The pope did not specify which nations he meant.

The pope appealed to the world's young people to transform the "mechanisms" that promote selfishness and oppression, and to "bring to birth new structures inspired by truth, solidarity and peace." He recalled the Palm

Sunday meeting March 31 with hundreds of thousands of youths in St. Peter's Square, and said he hoped that the encounter can be repeated every year, "giving origin to World Youth Day on Palm Sunday."

Among those in the square were about 50,000 people who had marched through Rome to promote food relief for Africa, where drought has resulted in the deaths of thousands in recent months.

The pope opened a series of Easter-time events Holy Thursday, April 4, with a morning Mass at which he said that all Catholics participate in the church's "Messianic strength."

At the Mass he also blessed the oils and chrism to be used in sacraments and religious ceremonies during the year.

"The chrism, the oil and unction speak to us of the penetration in man of that divine strength given by the Holy Spirit," Pope John Paul said in his homily.

At the Holy Thursday evening Mass, the pope said that the events from Christ's Last Supper through his death and resurrection form "a reality which continues" through the Eucharist.

"The Eucharist comes from love and gives birth to love," he said.

"From now on, love and death walk together throughout human history" because they have been linked by Christ, the pope said.

The evening Mass was held at Rome's St. John Lateran Basilica.

During the Mass the pope washed and kissed the feet of 12 priests living in Rome. The ceremony commemorates Christ's act of washing the feet of his apostles, as a sign of humility.

On Good Friday night, April 5, Pope John Paul left the Vatican to lead the traditional prayers before the 14 Stations of the Cross that recall Christ's suffering, death and burial. The pope carried a wooden cross along a path that led from the ancient Roman Colosseum past spilt ruins of the Forum.

Pilgrims from around the world filled St. Peter's for Easter vigil services on Holy Saturday, April 6, which celebrated the end of Lent with the traditional lighting of the paschal candle. During the three-hour service, Pope John Paul baptized 24 converts to Catholicism from 11 countries.

"You are a sign of how Christ called his apostles from all the peoples and nations of the earth," the pope said.

Earlier April 6 the pope received small samples of the type of ointments used to anoint Christ's body after his crucifixion. Italian Minister of Culture Antonino Gullotti and two scientists who prepared the substances met with the pope briefly. One of the scientists said afterward that the ointments were prepared according to processes recently discovered by Israeli archaeologists.



Karen M. Franz New Courier Editor

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the appointment of Karen M. Franz as the new editor of the Courier-Journal. The appointment is effective Wednesday, April 10. Franz, who formerly worked for Wolfe Publications, Inc., is a graduate of Syracuse University's S. I. Newhouse School of Public Communications.

Further staffing announcements will be made in upcoming issues of the Courier-Journal.

While at Syracuse University, Franz worked for Equal Time in Syracuse as staff reporter and columnist; as reporter and assistant copy editor for The Daily Orange, university newspaper; the Onondagan, university yearbook, and the Syracuse New Times where she did reporting, editing, proofreading and other editorial tasks.



KAREN M. FRANZ

She was associate features editor of the Brighton-Pittsford Post from October 1983 to July 1984 and then copy editor up to the present time.

Pope John Paul II bows at the altar as he celebrates a Mass of the Chrism in St. Peter's. Chrism is a mixture of olive oil and balsam used primarily in the sacraments of baptism and confirmation and the consecration of bishops. (NC Photo)