



SHARING THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL. Pope Francis traveled to Kenya, Uganda and the Central African Republic in November, on a continent where Catholicism is rapidly spreading. Here, he meets with youth in Kassarani Stadium in Kenya on Nov. 27. Sipa via AP Images



CONFRERES. Pope Francis embraced Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI outside of the holy doors at St. Peter's Basilica at the Dec. 8 ceremony that kicked off the Jubilee of Mercy. L'Osservatore Romano



RESOLUTION REACHED. Pope Francis meets with the leaders of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, which agreed to follow the reform procedures recommended by the Holy See, on April 16. L'Osservatore Romano

Synod, Saints, Stewardship and Mercy

2015 IN REVIEW

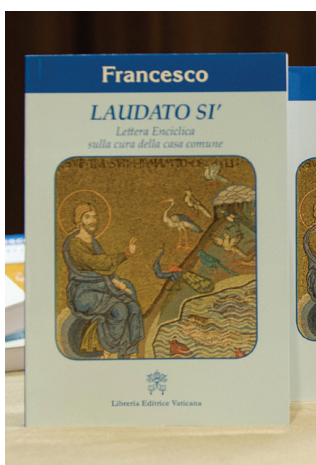
The restoration of the family and stewardship of God's creation were the two main messages Pope Francis sought to impart in a very eventful year at the Vatican. October's Ordinary Synod of Bishops on the Family played a central role, as did the release of the Holy Father's second encyclical, which stressed care for God's creation. The two-week synod, which came after the Holy Father's groundbreaking voyage to the United States, seemed to leave more questions than answers, as contentiousness among the synod fathers threatened to detract from the main reason for the meeting. Pope Francis brought stewardship to the fore with the June 18 release of his encyclical *Laudato Si* (Care for Our Common Home). The Pope continued his reform of the Roman Curia, creating two new dicasteries: the Secretariat for Communications and the Secretariat for Laity, Family and Life. A second "Vatileaks" scandal resulted in the dismissal of two members of the Pope's financial reform commission; and a former archbishop, Josef Wesolowski, died before the Vatican could prosecute him for sexual abuse. Francis also issued new norms for how dioceses conduct investigations into the nullity of marriage with *Mitis Iudex, Dominus Iesus* (Lord Jesus, the Just Judge), a document issued *motu proprio* (on the Pope's own initiative) on Aug. 15. Pope Francis' busy travel schedule included trips to South America, Cuba, the United States and Africa. And on Dec. 8, the Holy Father marked the 50th anniversary of the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council with Mass, and he inaugurated the Jubilee of Mercy, which will run through Nov. 20, 2016.



CUBAN CAULDRON. Pope Francis' visit to communist Cuba was a breath of fresh air in a country mired in economic and spiritual depression. Here, he meets with President Raul Castro at the Palace of the Revolution in Havana, Cuba, on Sept. 20. L'Osservatore Romano

ECO ENCYCLICAL.

Pope Francis followed his predecessors in promoting human ecology and stewardship of the earth with his encyclical *Laudato Si* (Care for Our Common Home). Copies of the document are displayed at a press conference in Paul VI Hall in Vatican City on June 18. L'Osservatore Romano



FRACTIOUS FORTNIGHT. Cardinals and bishops gather on Oct. 21 during the Ordinary Synod of Bishops on the Family. The majority of synod fathers sought to restore the stability of marriage and the family, while others seemingly sought to water down Church teaching in the name of charity. L'Osservatore Romano



DOCTOR ON CALL. St. Gregory of Narek, the 10th-century Armenian monk and philosopher, was named the newest doctor of the Church on Feb. 21. He authored a mystical interpretation of Song of Songs, among his numerous poetic writings. His *Book of Lamentations*, written around 977, is another of his major works. Wikipedia

2015 Saints

Following are the newest saints, as declared by the Church, including the day on which they were canonized and their feast days:

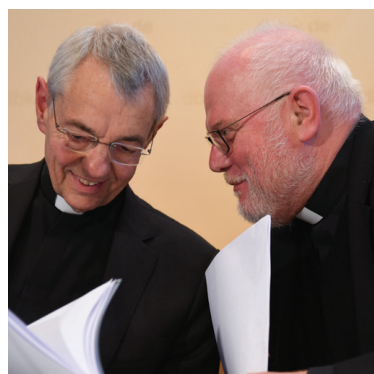
- Jan. 14: St. Joseph Vaz (1651-1711), Jan. 16
- *Feb. 21: St. Gregory of Narek (951-1003), Feb. 27
- May 17: St. Émilie de Villeneuve (1811-1854), Oct. 3
- May 17: St. Maria Cristina of the Immaculate Conception (1856-1906), Jan. 20
- May 17: St. Mariam Baouardy (1846-1878), Aug. 26
- May 17: St. Marie-Alphonsine Danil Ghattas (1843-1927), March 25
- Sept. 23: St. Junípero Serra (1713-1784), July 13
- Oct. 18: Sts. Louis (1823-1894) and Zélie Martin (1831-1877), July 12
- Oct. 18: St. Vincenzo Grossi (1845-1917), Nov. 7
- Oct. 18: St. Maria de la Purísima Salvat Romero (1926-1998), Oct. 31

*Proclaimed a doctor of the Church



GOING THEIR OWN WAY? Cardinal Reinhard Marx (r), head of the German bishops' conference, shown with Archbishop Ludwig Schick of Bamberg, said the Church in Germany is 'not a subsidiary of Rome' and seemed to move the Church into a position that would allow divorced-and-remarried Catholics to receive the Eucharist. Arne Dederer/picture-alliance/dpa/AP Images

COMING 'HOME.' The first Latin-American pope returned to the continent of his upbringing in July, as he visited Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay. Religious sisters await the Holy Father on July 6 in Independence Square in Quito, Ecuador. AP photo/Ana Buitron



SAINTS FOR THE FAMILY. A tapestry showing Louis and Zélie Martin, parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, hangs from a balcony of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Oct. 18, when Pope Francis canonized the Catholic Church's first married couple in modern times. AP photo/Alessandra Tarantino/Wikipedia