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News in brief

Rome encounters Moscow

Around one hundred priests from the Pope's diocese, Rome, will go from 29 April to 3 May to Moscow and other neighbouring towns, accompanied by the cardinal vicar, Angelo De Donatis, Fr. Germano Marani, professor at the *Russicum*, and Michelina Tenace, professor of theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. The visit, organized by *Opera Romana Pellegrinaggi*, coincides with the Orthodox Easter and has as its motto "Consolidating priestly brotherhood. Knowledge and contact with Russian Orthodox spirituality".

The trip will include cultural visits, prayer events and meetings with representatives of the local Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, including Patriarch Kirill in the Lavra of Saint Sergius. "With this pilgrimage, we want to deepen the knowledge of the orthodoxy and its millenarian spiritual and artistic tradition", affirms Cardinal De Donatis. "These days will be an auspicious opportunity to nurture the priestly communion among us, that sustains us in the desire to bear witness to the Gospel",

"Nation, State, Nation-State", theme of the Plenary of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences

The Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences will hold from 1 to 3 May its Plenary Assembly during which experts and academics from all over the world will discuss the theme "Nation, State, Nation-State", endeavouring to understand why nationalism became important in one specific phase in human history, what are the presuppositions and consequences were, why after World War II supranational institutions became increasingly powerful, and why in the last years there has been a backlash against internationalism and a resurgence of nationalism.

"The Church", according to a press release from the Pontifical Academy, "draws on two inseparable principles that are bedded in the very dynamic of human history and go much ahead of current political practices, namely: the unity of humankind and the universal destination of the goods of the earth. These principles do not contradict but illustrate the fundamental Christian view according to which the human person and not the ethnic group or the nation or the national state is considered as the ultimate reference of all social organization. In the present

stage of its development, humanity disposes of all possible technical means to organize itself in a cooperative and peaceful way. Yet minds are still shaped by stereotypes of exclusion of the 'other'. We witness a worrying tendency of nations or nation states to close themselves, insisting on their supposed interests. Globalization and migrations inspire the fear that nations could lose their cultural identity and their political independence".

In the Plenary Assembly, historic case studies, systematic issues, and the challenge of the future will be interwoven with the lectures of the conference, which will be inaugurated by the president of the Academy, the Italian economist Stefano Zamagni and the chancellor, Archbishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo.
