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A special prayer for Gabon and the memory of Blessed Bukowinski

After the Angelus prayer, the Pope called for special prayers for Gabon, which is experiencing a period of extreme political crisis, and he entrusted to the Lord the riot victims and their families. "I join with the bishops of this beloved African country to invite the parties to reject any form of violence and always to keep the common good as their objective. I encourage all, especially Catholics, to be builders of peace with respect for the law, in dialogue and in fraternity".

Today, in Karaganda, Kazakhstan, the priest Ladislao Bukowinski is beatified. Born in 1904 in Berdyczów, present-day Ukraine, he was condemned to forced labour under the totalitarian regime and persecuted for his faith; he died in 1974. "How much this man suffered!" the Pope exclaimed. "In his life he always showed great love for the weakest and most in need, and his witness appears to us as a distillate of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy".

After greeting various groups of pilgrims, including those from Romania, Italian cyclists from Borgo Val di Taro and various boys and girls preparing for confirmation, he wished a good Sunday and a good lunch to all, and asked them to pray for him.