
Pope Francis: audience, the Church, “though persecuted, misunderstood and chained, never tires” of being a “house open to all hearts in search”

The Church, “though persecuted, misunderstood and chained, never tires of welcoming every man and woman with a motherly heart to proclaim to them the love of the Father who has made himself visible in Jesus”. The Pope concluded his catechesis today - the last one dedicated to the Acts of the Apostles - with this image that describes the Church as a “house open to all hearts in search”. “Luke ends his Book not with Paul’s death, but by showing us the dynamism of a Word that cannot be chained”, Pope Francis told the 7,000 faithful attending his General Audience in the Paul VI Hall. “After a first informal meeting which finds the favour of the Jews, a more official meeting follows during which, for an entire day, Paul proclaims the kingdom of God and tries to open his interlocutors to the faith in Jesus, starting ‘from the Law of Moses and the Prophets’, as he says”, the Pope recalled. “Since not everyone is convinced, he denounces the hardening of the heart of God’s people, the cause of their condemnation, and celebrates with passion the salvation of nations which show themselves to be sensitive to God and capable of listening to the Word of the Gospel of life”. “Paul does not have the freedom to move, but he is free to speak because the Word is not chained, but is a Word ready to be sown with full hands by the Apostle”, Pope Francis pointed out. “Paul - the Pope stressed - does this ‘with all frankness and without impediment’ in a house where he welcomes those who want to receive the proclamation of the kingdom of God and to know Christ”. “This house open to all hearts in search is the image of the Church which, though persecuted, misunderstood and chained, never tires of welcoming every man and woman with a motherly heart to proclaim to them the love of the Father who has made himself visible in Jesus”, Pope Francis concluded. We, he said, should all be “courageous and joyful evangelisers”, capable of “filling our homes with the Gospel and making them cenacles of fraternity, where we can welcome the living Christ, who comes to meet us in every man and in every age”.

M.Michela Nicolais