
Pope at audience: “He who serves money is against God”

“Again this year we will live the Easter celebrations in the context of the pandemic. In many situations of suffering, especially when they are borne by people, families and populations already tried by poverty, disasters or conflicts, Christ’s Cross is like a beacon that indicates the port to ships that are still afloat on stormy seas. Christ’s Cross is a sign of the hope that does not disappoint; and it tells us that not even one tear, not one sigh is lost in God’s plan.” With these words the Pope concluded the catechesis of today’s general audience devoted to the core liturgy of the Holy Week, the second Easter we are preparing to celebrate in the time of Coronavirus, in compliance with the restrictions imposed by the health emergency, sadly still ongoing. “Let us ask the Lord to grant us the grace of serving him and acknowledging him, and of not letting ourselves be paid to forget him”, the final appeal. *“From tomorrow until Sunday we will live the central days of the Liturgical Year, celebrating the mystery of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord”*, Francis said in the opening lines: “we live this mystery every time we celebrate the Eucharist.” The Pope remarked with regard to Holy Thursday:

“When we go to Mass, is as though we were to go to Calvary”.

On the evening of Holy Thursday, as we relive the Mass known as in Coena Domini, “is the evening when Christ left his disciples the testament of his love in the Eucharist. Every time we celebrate the Eucharist we renew this mystery of redemption. It is the evening in which he asks us to love one another by becoming servants to one another, as he did in washing the disciples’ feet, a gesture that anticipates his bloody oblation on the cross.” “It was an oblation of service to us all”, Francis said. “With that service of his sacrifice he redeemed us all. And indeed, the Master and Lord will die the next day to purify not the feet, but the hearts and the entire life of his disciples.”

“Do not forget the crucified of our time”,

is Francis’ invitation to the faithful for Good Friday. Adoring the Cross, **“we will carry in our minds and hearts the sufferings of the sick, the poor, the rejected of this world; we will remember the ‘sacrificed lambs’, the innocent victims of wars, dictatorships, everyday violence, abortions...”**. “Before the image of the crucified God, we will bring, in prayer, the many, the too many who are crucified in our time, who only from Him can receive comfort and meaning in their suffering”, emphasized the Pope, adding in unwritten remarks: “and nowadays there are many: do not forget the crucified of our time, who are the image of Jesus Crucified.” “Ever since Jesus took upon himself the wounds of humanity and death itself, God’s love has irrigated these deserts of ours, he has enlightened our darkness”, is the image portrayed by Francis, adding unscripted: *“Because the world is in darkness. Let us make a list of all the wars that are being fought in this moment; of all the children who die of hunger; of children who have no education; of entire populations destroyed by wars, by terrorism. Of the many, many people who, just to feel a bit better, need drugs, the drug industry that kills ... It is a disaster, it is a desert! There are small ‘islands’ that hold in their heart the desire to be better. But let us tell the truth: in this Calvary of death, it is Jesus who suffers in his disciples.”* **Holy Saturday “is the day of silence”**, but “in the darkness of Holy Saturday, joy and light will break through with the rites of the Easter Vigil and, in the late evening, the festive singing of the Alleluia. It will be an encounter in faith with the Risen Christ, and the joy of Easter will continue throughout the following fifty days, until the coming of the Holy Spirit.” “He who was crucified is risen!”, the Easter announcement: “All questions and uncertainties, hesitations and fears are dispelled by this revelation. The Risen One gives us the certainty that good always triumphs over evil, that life always conquers death, and it is not our end to descend lower and lower, from sorrow to sorrow, but rather to rise up high. The Risen One is the confirmation that Jesus is right in everything:

in promising us life beyond death and forgiveness beyond sins.” **“The disciples doubted, they did not believe. The first to believe and to see was Mary Magdalene; she was the apostle of the resurrection** who went to announce that she had seen Jesus, who had called her by name. And then, all the disciples saw him.” In unscripted remarks, Francis delved into another specific episode related to the Risen Christ. “The guards, the soldiers, who were in the tomb to prevent the disciples from coming and taking his body, they saw him; they saw him alive and risen. His enemies saw him, and then they pretended not to have seen him. Why? Because they were paid.” “Here is the true mystery of what Jesus once said:” - Francis added – ‘There are two masters in the world, two. God and money.

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And here it is money that changed reality. They had seen the wonder of the resurrection, but they were paid to keep quiet.” And still today, “Christian men and women have been ‘paid’ not to acknowledge in practice the resurrection of Christ, and did not do what Christ asked us to do, as Christians.”

M.Michela Nicolais