



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT TO THE ROMAN PARISH
SACRED HEART OF JESUS IN CASTRO PRETORIO

HOMILY OF POPE FRANCIS

Sunday, 19 January 2014

[Video](#)

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This passage from the Gospel is beautiful. John was baptizing; and Jesus, who had been baptized prior to this — some days before — was coming towards him and came before John. And John felt the power of the Holy Spirit within him to bear witness to Jesus. Looking at him, and looking at the people around Him, he said: “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world”. And he bore witness to Jesus: this is Jesus, this is the One who has come to save us; this is the One who will give us the power of hope.

Jesus is called the Lamb: He is the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. Someone might think: but how can a lamb, which is so weak, a weak little lamb, how can it take away so many sins, so much wickedness? With Love. With his meekness. Jesus never ceased being a lamb: meek, good, full of love, close to the little ones, close to the poor. He was there, among the people, healing everyone, teaching, praying. Jesus, so weak, like a lamb. However, he had the strength to take all our sins upon himself, all of them. “But, Father, you don’t know my life: I have a sin that..., I can’t even carry it with a truck...”. Many times, when we examine our conscience, we find some there that are truly bad! But he carries them. He came for this: to forgive, to make peace in the world, but first in the heart. Perhaps each one of us feels troubled in his heart, perhaps he experiences darkness in his heart, perhaps he feels a little sad over a fault.... He has come to take away all of this, He gives us peace, he forgives everything. “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away sin”: he takes away sin, it’s root and all! This is salvation Jesus brings about by his love and his meekness. And in listening to what John the Baptist says, who bears witness to Jesus as the

Saviour, our confidence in Jesus should grow. Many times we trust a doctor: it is good, because the doctor is there to cure us; we trust in a person: brothers and sisters can help us. It is good to have this human trust among ourselves. But we forget about trust in the Lord: this is the key to success in life. Trust in the Lord, let us trust in the Lord! “Lord, look at my life: I’m in the dark, I have this struggle, I have this sin...”; everything we have: “Look at this: I trust in you!”. And this is a risk we must take: to trust in Him, and He never disappoints. Never, never! Listen carefully, young people, who are just beginning life now: Jesus never disappoints. Never. This is the testimony of John: Jesus, the good One, the meek One, will end as a lamb, who is slain. Without crying out. He came to save us, to take away sin. Mine, yours and that of the whole world: all of it, all of it.

And now I invite you to do something: let us close our eyes, let us imagine the scene on the banks of the river, John as he is baptizing and Jesus who is approaching. And let us listen to John’s voice: “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world”. Let us watch Jesus and in silence, each one of us, say something to Jesus from his heart. In silence. (*Pause for silence*).

May the Lord Jesus, who is meek, who is good — he is a lamb — who came to take away sin, accompany us on the path of our life. So be it.