



The Holy See

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY

OPENING OF THE "HOLY DOOR OF CHARITY" AND CELEBRATION OF HOLY MASS

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Caritas Hostel in Via Marsala, Rome

Friday, 18 December 2015

[Multimedia]

God comes to save us. He finds no better way to do so than to walk with us, living our life, and at the moment of choosing the way to live his life, he didn't choose a great city of a great empire; he did not choose a princess or a countess for his Mother, an important person; he didn't choose a luxurious palace. It seems as if everything was intentionally done in near obscurity. Mary was a girl of 16 or 17, no older, in a faraway village on the outskirts of the Roman Empire, and certainly no one knew of that village. Joseph was a youth who loved her and wanted to marry her. He was a carpenter who earned his daily bread. All in simplicity, all in obscurity. And even the rejection — because they were betrothed, and in such a small village, you know how gossip is, it spreads. Joseph realized that she was pregnant, but he was a just man. Everything was hidden despite the calumny and gossip. The Angel explained the mystery to Joseph: "the child that your bride bears is the work of God, the work of the Holy Spirit". When Joseph awoke from his sleep he did what the Angel of the Lord had commanded him, and he went to her and married her (cf. Mt 1:18-25). All was hidden, all was humble. The great cities of the world knew nothing about it....

This is how God is among us. If you want to find God, seek him in humility, seek him in poverty, seek him where he is hidden: in the neediest, in the sick, in the hungry, in the imprisoned. And when Jesus preaches life to us he tells us how we will be judged. He will not say to you come with Me because you made so many fine offerings to the Church, you are a benefactor of the Church, come, come to Heaven. No. The entrance to Heaven is not bought with money. He will not say: you are very important. You have studied so much and received so many honours. Come to Heaven. No. Honours do not open the doors to Heaven.

What will Jesus say to open the doors of Heaven to us? “I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was homeless and you gave me a home; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me” (cf. Mt 25:35-36). Jesus exists in humility.

Jesus’ love is great, so today in the opening of this Holy Door I would like the Holy Spirit to open the heart of all the people of Rome, to make them see what is the way of salvation. There is no luxury, it is not the way of great riches, it is not the way of power. It is the way of humility. The poorest, the sick, the imprisoned.... But Jesus says more: if the greatest sinners repent, they will go before us to Heaven. They have the key. Those who give alms and those who let themselves be embraced by the Lord’s mercy.

Today we open this door and we ask for two things. First: that the Lord open the door of our heart, of everyone. We are all in need. We are all sinners. We all need to hear the Lord’s word and need the Lord’s Word to come. Second: that the Lord make us understand that the way of presumption, the way of wealth, the way of vanity, the way of pride are not the way to salvation. May the Lord make us understand that his fatherly caress, his mercy, his forgiveness is when we approach those who suffer, those discarded by society: Jesus is there. May this door, which is the Door of Charity, the door where so many, so many of the rejected are assisted, make us understand that it will also be good for every one of us, every person of Rome, every Roman to feel discarded, and feel the need of God’s help. Today let us pray for Rome, for all the inhabitants of Rome, for each one, beginning with me, that the Lord may give us the grace to feel rejected because we are unworthy. He alone gives us mercy and grace. And to receive this grace we must approach those who have been discarded, the poor, those in great need, because we will all be judged on how we draw close to them.

In the opening of this door may the Lord give that grace to the whole of Rome, to every inhabitant of Rome in order to go forward in the embrace of Mercy, where the Father supports the wounded Son, but the Father is the One who is wounded: God is wounded by love, and this why he can save us all. May the Lord give us this grace.