



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square

Sunday, 22 July 2018

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today's Gospel passage (Mk 6:30-34) tells us that after their first mission, the Apostles returned to Jesus and told him "all that they had done and taught" (v. 30). After the experience of the mission, which was undoubtedly thrilling but also arduous, they needed to rest. And understanding this well, Jesus wished to give them some relief and said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest for a while" (v. 31). But Jesus' intention could not be fulfilled this time because the crowd, guessing the location of the lonely place where he would take the disciples by boat, ran there and got there ahead of them.

The same can happen today. At times we are not able to complete our projects because something urgent and unexpected occurs, disrupting our plans and [this] requires flexibility and being available to the needs of others.

In these situations, we are called to imitate what Jesus did: "As he landed he saw a great throng, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things" (v. 34). With this brief sentence, the Evangelist offers us a *flash* of singular intensity, taking a snapshot of the eyes of the divine Master and his teaching. Let us observe the three verbs in this frame: *to see*, *to have compassion*, *to teach*. We can call them the Shepherd's verbs. The *gaze* of Jesus is not a neutral one — or worse, a cold and detached one because Jesus always looks with the eyes of the heart. And his heart is so tender and filled with *compassion*, that he is able to understand even the most hidden needs of people. Moreover, his

compassion does not simply suggest an emotional response toward people in situations of distress. It is much more. It is God's attitude and predisposition toward mankind and its history. Jesus appears as the fulfillment of God's concern and care for his people.

Because Jesus was moved when he saw all those people in need of guidance and help, we would now expect him to perform some miracles. Instead, he began *teaching* them many things. This is the first bread that the Messiah offers to the starving and lost crowd; the bread of the Word. We all need the Word of truth to guide and illuminate our way. Without the truth which is Christ himself, it is not possible to find the right direction in life. When we distance ourselves from Jesus and his love, we become lost and life is transformed into disappointment and dissatisfaction. With Jesus by our side, we can proceed with confidence and overcome all trials, advancing in love toward God and neighbour. Jesus gave himself for others, thus becoming an example of love and service for each of us.

May Mary Most Holy help us to bear the problems, suffering and difficulties of our neighbours with an attitude of sharing and service.

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, in recent weeks we have heard the tragic news of the shipwrecks of boats laden with migrants in the waters of the Mediterranean. I express my grief before such tragedies and I assure my thoughts and prayers for the deceased and their families. I direct a heartfelt appeal to the international community to act decisively and promptly, in order to avoid similar tragedies from being repeated and to guarantee the safety and the respect of the rights and dignity of all.

I greet all of you people of Rome and pilgrims. I extend a special greeting to the faithful from the Diocese of Rio Do Sul, Brazil, the youth from the Diocese of Seville, Spain and those from the Diocese of Pelplin, Poland, who have come here from Assisi in a "relay of prayer" for the next Synod of Bishops.

I greet the parish groups and associations, the very young group from Piazzola sul Brenta, Diocese of Vicenza.

I wish everyone a pleasant Sunday and please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch.
Arrivederci!