



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

From gossip to love for others

Friday, 13 September 2013

(by *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly ed. in English, n. 38, 18 September 2013)

Gossip kills more than weapons do. Pope Francis returned to this topic on Friday morning, 13 September, at Mass in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae. Commenting on the day's Readings, taking from the Letter of Timothy (1:1-2, 12-14) and from the Gospel of Luke 6: 39-42), the Pope stressed how the Lord — after setting forth in the past few days the attitudes of meekness, humility and magnanimity — “speaks to us today of the contrary”, of the “hateful attitude to one’s neighbour” that happens when one “judges one’s brother”.

Pope Francis recalled the Gospel story in which Jesus rebukes those who pretend to remove the speck from the other’s eye without seeing the beam in their own. This behaviour, feeling perfect and qualified to judge the defects of others, is contrary to the meekness and humility which the Lord compares to “that light which is so beautiful and which is found in forgiving”. Jesus uses “ a strong word: hypocrite — those live judging their neighbour, speaking evil of their neighbour. They are hypocrites because they don’t have the strength, the courage to look at their own defects. The Lord doesn’t say too much about this. Then, later he was to say: he who has hate in his heart for his brother is a murderer. He says this. The Apostle John says this very clearly in his first Letter: who hates his brother walks in darkness. He who judges his brother is a murderer”. Therefore, “everytime we judge our brother in our hearts or worse when we speak badly of them with others,

we are murdering Christians.”

Recalling how in these days there is talk of wars in the world that kill so many, especially children and are forcing so many to flee to refuge, Pope Francis asked whether it is possible to have “the right to kill”, speaking evil of others, triggering “this daily war of gossip”. Actually, “slander always moves in the direction of crime. There is no such thing as innocent slander. And this is Gospel truth”. Therefore “in this time when we are imploring for peace perhaps an act of conversion is necessary”. To all the “no”s of every kind of weapon, let’s say “‘no’ to this weapon too”, the weapon of slander because it is “deadly”.

The Pontiff concluded invoking, “for us, for all the Church, the grace of conversion of the crime of slander in humility, in mildness and in magnanimity of love for others”.