



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

Pray for politicians that they govern us well

Monday, 16 September 2013

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A good Christian actively participates in politics and prays that politicians may love their people and serve them with humility. This was the reflection of Pope Francis on Monday morning, 16 September, at the Mass celebrated in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

Commenting on the passage from Luke's Gospel (7:1-10), which speaks of Jesus healing the centurion's servant at Capernaum, the Pope spoke about the "two attitudes of a ruler". Before all else he must "love his people. The elderly Jews say to Jesus: he deserves what he asks for because he loves our people. A ruler who does not love cannot govern. At most he can only make a bit of order, but he cannot govern".

For Pope Francis a ruler must also be humble like the centurion in the Gospel, who could have boasted of his power to get Jesus to come to him, but he "was a humble man and instead said to the Lord: do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. With humility he said: only say a word, and my servant will be healed. These are the two virtues of a ruler, and this is what the word of God inspires in us: to love people and humility".

Thus "every man and woman who assume the responsibility of governing should ask themselves

these two questions: Do I love my people, so that I may better serve them? And am I humble enough to hear the opinions of others so as to choose the best way of governing?”. If they “do not ask themselves these questions, they will not govern well”, the Pope said.

The Holy Father noted that television and newspapers rely primarily on “abusing” politicians. There is hardly anyone reporting that “this leader has done well in this, and this leader has this virtue. He was wrong in this... but in this he did well”. On the contrary people always speak badly of politicians and are always against them. “Perhaps the leader is a sinner, as David was. I have to work with others, with my opinion, with my words, to help amend: I do not agree for this reason or for that. We need to participate for the common good. Sometimes we hear: a good Catholic is not interested in politics. This is not true: good Catholics immerse themselves in politics by offering the best of themselves so that the leader can govern”.

“Let us pray for leaders”, said Pope Francis, “that they govern us well. That they bring our homeland, our nations, our world, forward, to achieve peace and the common good. This word of God helps us to better participate in the common life of a people: those who govern, with the service of humility and love, and the governed, with participation, and especially prayer”.