



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAЕ

Disciples of the Lord and not of ideology

Thursday, 17 October 2013

(by *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly ed. in English, n. 43, 25 October 2013)

Pope Francis commented on the Gospel passage of the day from St Luke (11:47-54), which recounts the Lord's warning to the doctors of the law: "Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering".

The Pontiff associated the image of the key to a "closed Church" that "passers-by cannot enter" and that "the Lord who is within cannot leave", and he likened lawyers to "Christians who have the key in hand but carry it away" or worse, "who stand at the door but let no one enter".

He explained that Christians who adopt this "pocketed key, closed door mentality... make the faith pass through an alembic" transforming it into "an ideology". However, the Pope continued, "Jesus is not present in ideologies. Jesus is tenderness, love and meekness, whereas ideologies of whatever sort are always rigid". So much so, he added, that they risk making a Christian "a disciple of a particular way of thinking" rather than "a disciple of Jesus".

This is not a "new illness", the Pope said. The Apostle John speaks of "Christians who lose their faith and prefer ideologies" in his First Letter. And the Lord's warning is still timely, the Pope

added, since even today “ideologies drive people away and put the Church at a distance from the people”.

We must ask what causes these attitudes to grow into the hearts of Christians? According to Pope Francis, the illness is caused by "a lack of prayer" since “without prayer the door of the heart closes”. Therefore “the key to opening the door to faith is prayer”.

Pope Francis concluded by saying that the Lord invites us "to never stop praying so that we might never lose the faith" and “to remain humble” so that we might never “close the way to the Lord”.