



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

Waiting with hope

Tuesday, 21 October 2014

(by L'Osservatore Romano, Weekly ed. in English, n. 43, 24 October 2014)

Christians are called to be men and women of hope, united by the certainty of a God who does not give up. This was part of the message of Pope Francis' homily during Mass at Santa Marta on Tuesday morning.

Looking at the day's Reading from the Gospel of Luke (12:35-38), in which Jesus calls on his disciples to be as servants, vigilant and awaiting the master's return from a wedding, the Pontiff asked: "Who is this lord, this master, who is coming home from a marriage feast, who is coming late at night?". The answer comes from Jesus himself: "It is I who have come to serve you, to gird my loins, to seat you at the table, to serve you".

St Paul, too, in the Letter to the Ephesians (2:12-22), reiterates that it is Jesus who has "come to serve, not to be served". And the first gift that we received from him is that of an identity. Jesus has given us "citizenship, membership in a commonwealth, a first and last name". Taking up the words of the Apostle, who reminds the pagans that when they were separated from Christ they were "alienated from the commonwealth", Francis highlighted: "Without Christ we have no identity".

Thanks to Him, indeed, from being separated we have become one “people”. We were “enemies, without peace”, isolated, but Jesus, “united us with his blood”. This theme also comes from St Paul, who writes in the Letter to the Ephesians: “For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall”. We all know, the Bishop of Rome recalled, that “when we are not at peace with people, there is a wall that divides us”. But Jesus “offers us his service to knock down this wall”. Thanks to Him “we are able to meet each other”.

From a people broken apart, comprised of men isolated from one another, Jesus, with his service, “has brought everyone near, has made us one body”. And He has reconciled everyone in God”. Thus, “from enemies” we have become “friends”, and from “strangers” we can now feel we are “children”.

“But what is the condition” through which from “strangers”, from “sojourners” we are able to become “fellow citizens with the saints”? To have confidence, the Pope answered, in the master’s return from the wedding feast, in Jesus. It is necessary to “await Him” and to be ever ready: “Those who do not await Jesus, close the door to Jesus, don’t allow Him to do this work of peace, of community, of citizenship; moreover: of name”. That name that reminds us who we truly are: “children of God”.

This is why “a Christian is a man or a woman of hope”, because he or she “knows that the Lord will come”. And when this happens, although “we don’t know when”, no longer will “we find ourselves isolated, enemies”, but rather as He, through his service, has made us: “friends, neighbours, at peace”.

For this reason, Pope Francis concluded, it is important to ask ourselves: “How do I await Jesus?”. But above all: “Do I or do I not await” Jesus? Many times, in fact, even we Christians “behave like pagans” and “live as if nothing could happen”. We must be careful not to be like a “selfish pagan”, who acts as though he himself “were a king” and thinks: “I can manage on my own”. Those who behave in this manner come to no good, end up nameless, with no one close, without citizenship. Each one of us must instead ask ourselves: “Do I believe in this hope, that He will come?”. And: “Do I have an open heart to hear the sound, when He knocks at the door, when He opens the door?”.