



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

The way of peace

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May the world once again find the way of peace right here “at the threshold of this Jubilee of Mercy”. The Pope voiced this hope on Thursday morning during Mass at Santa Marta.

“Jesus wept”, said Francis, beginning his homily from the day’s passage of the Gospel according to Luke (19:41-44). Indeed, as “he drew near Jerusalem”, the Lord “wept at the sight of the city”. Why? Jesus himself provides the answer to this question: “Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace! But now they are hid from your eyes”. Thus he “wept because Jerusalem did not know the way of peace and chose the way of hostility, of hatred, of war”.

Today, Pope Francis recalled, “Jesus is in heaven, watching us”, and “he will come to us here, on the altar”. But “today too, Jesus weeps, because we have chosen the way of war, the way of hatred, the way of hostility”. This is even more glaring now that “we are approaching Christmas: there will be lights, there will be celebrations, trees lit up, even nativity scenes... all decorated: the world continues to wage war, to wage wars. The world has not comprehended the way of peace”.

And yet, the Pontiff repeated, “last year we commemorated the centenary of the Great War”. And “this year other commemorations for the anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to name only

two". And "everyone laments", saying: "What awful stories!".

Remembering his visit to the Redipuglia Military Memorial on 13 September 2014 during the centenary of World War I, the Pope quoted the words of Benedict XV as he spoke of the "useless slaughter" that took the lives of "millions and millions of men". However, he added, "still we do not comprehend the way of peace". And "it doesn't end there: today, in the newspaper, in the press, we see that in those parts there have been bombings" and we hear that "that is war". But "there is war everywhere today, there is hatred". We even reach the point that we console ourselves by saying: "Well yes, it's a bombing, but thank God only 20 children were killed!". Or we tell ourselves: "Not too many people died, many were abducted...". But in doing so "even our way of thinking becomes irrational".

Indeed, the Pontiff asked, "what remains of a war, of the one that we are experiencing now?". What remain are "ruins, thousands of uneducated children, the deaths of so many innocent people: so many!". And also "so much money in the pockets of arms dealers".

It is a crucial issue. Once, the Pope recalled, "Jesus said: 'no one can serve two masters: either God or wealth'". And, he continued, "war is choosing wealth: 'let's make weapons, this way the economy will balance out somewhat', and we continue with our interests". In this regard, Francis stated, "there is a horrible word of the Lord: 'accursed', because 'he said: blessed are the peacemakers!'", So those "who work for war, who wage wars, are accursed, they are criminals".

A war, the Pontiff explained, "can be justified — in quotation marks — with many, many reasons. But when the whole world, as it is today, is at war — the whole world! — it is a world war being fought piecemeal: here, there, there, everywhere". And "there is no justification. God weeps. Jesus weeps".

Thus again we hear Lord's words before Jerusalem, expressed in the Gospel according to Luke: "would that even today you knew the things that make for peace!". Today "this world is not a peacemaker". And "while arms dealers do their work, there are poor peacemakers who, simply in order to help one person, and another and another, give their life". And they carry out this mission by taking as their model "a symbol, an icon of our times: Teresa of Calcutta". In fact "with the cynicism of the powerful it could be said: but what did that woman do? She lost her life helping people to die?". The issue is that today, "the way of peace isn't comprehended". Indeed, "Jesus' proposal of peace has not been heard". And "this is why he wept looking at Jerusalem and he weeps now".

"It will be good for us too", the Pope said, "to ask for the grace to weep for this world which does not recognize the way of peace, which lives to wage war, while cynically claiming not to do so". And, he added, "let us ask for a conversion of heart". In conclusion, right "at the threshold of this Jubilee of Mercy", Francis expressed the hope "that our jubilee, our joy may be the grace so that

the world may once again find the capacity to weep for its crimes, for what it does with wars”.

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