



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAЕ

Alone towards Jerusalem

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(by: www.osservatoreromano.va)

Reflecting on the journey of Jesus towards Jerusalem and the Cross, Pope Francis invited the faithful to “ask Jesus for the grace to follow him more closely”, in order to leave him not alone, and to overcome the temptation of looking only towards ourselves and our own interests.

The Holy Father referred to the day’s Gospel passage (Lk 9:51-56) which depicts Our Lord in Gethsemane in the moments leading up to his passion and pointed out that, faced with his Cross, Jesus did two things: “he made the resolute decision to undertake his journey” and he announced to his disciples that “he was determined to accept the will of the Father until the end”. “It is your will, I am here to obey; you do not want sacrifices, but you want obedience and I obey and move forward”, the Pope continued. “Only once did he allow himself to ask the Father to remove this cross a little”. Jesus “is obedient to what the Father wants: resolute and obedient and nothing else”.

The Lord’s journey was “not only an example of a journey of suffering and dying on the Cross, but also of a journey of patience”, Pope Francis explained. Thus, “faced with this firm decision which he made, he communicated to his disciples that the time was drawing closer”. However, as many Gospel accounts describe, the disciples “did not understand what he said or did not want to understand because they were afraid”. Indeed at times, they concealed the truth, “they spoke about their own affairs which were wholly removed from what Jesus was saying” or, as we can

read in today's Gospel: "they searched for an alibi so as not to think about what was awaiting" the Lord.

The disciples' attitude led them "not to question and not to understand", Pope Francis explained. Perhaps they believed that "it was better not to ask about this". Thus, when Jesus said to them : "Let us go to Jerusalem, the Son of Man is to be crucified", the disciples did not understand as they were busy "carving up the cake" of the future Kingdom of God. "They were ashamed because they had spoken of who among them was the greatest". Meanwhile, Jesus was all alone. He was "unaccompanied in this decision because no one understood the mystery of Jesus, the loneliness of Jesus on his journey towards Jerusalem: alone!". It was like this until the very end. "The Gospel tells us that only one angel appeared in the sky to comfort him in the Garden of Gethsemane. Only that company. Alone!".

In this light, the Pope invited the faithful "to take some time today to think: Jesus loved us so much and was misunderstood by his companions"; to take time to "think about Jesus alone, on his way to the Cross, resolute in the midst of incomprehension..... and to thank him"; to take the time to say "thank you Jesus for having been obedient for having been courageous". Thus, the Holy Father concluded, "take a little time today, a few minutes – five, ten, fifteen – perhaps before the crucifix, or with the imagination, to 'see' Jesus walking resolutely towards Jerusalem and ask for the grace to have the courage to follow him closely".