



The Holy See

POPE FRANCISMORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

For great and small things

Thursday, 10 May 2019

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In his homily on Friday, 10 May, the Holy Father reflected on the conversion of Saint Paul on the road to Damascus, as recounted in the day's first reading. Paul's conversion, the Pontiff explained, marked such a change "in the history of salvation", that it is mentioned several times in the New Testament. Indeed, it is like "opening the door to pagans, to Gentiles, to those who were not Israelites", the Pope pointed out. This "Church of pagans" was such a great novelty that it "disconcerted the disciples", so much so, that "they did not know what to do and the Holy Spirit had to intervene with powerful signs". Paul's conversion "is a bit like an open door towards the universality of the Church".

Pope Francis identified two of Saint Paul's traits as examples that Christians can embody in order to embrace this open-door Church: openness and docility. "We know that Paul was a strong man, a man who was enamoured of the law, but he was honest; he was consistent". Even his persecution of Christians prior to his conversion was a result of "the zeal he had for the purity of the House of God, for the Glory of God".

Saint Paul's coherence was enriched by his docility. Although "he had a stubborn temperament", the Pope explained, "his soul was not stubborn; he was open to God's guidance". After hearing the Lord's voice, Paul became "childlike", and allowed himself to be led; he "allowed himself to be catechised like a child; he allowed himself to be baptized like a child".

The Holy Father then addressed the sisters of Saint Joseph Cottolengo who were celebrating their

50th anniversary. After thanking them for listening to the voice of God and for their docility — without which, “you would have been unable to do what you have done” — Pope Francis thanked all the courageous men and women of today who risk their lives to find new paths for the Church. “Real changes in the Church are made with people who know how to fight” for small things and great things, without considering anything too big or too small, because small things and great things “go together”. The Holy Father concluded by asking that we may all have the grace of docility and an open heart and the “grace not to be afraid to do great things, to go forward, as long as we have the sensitivity to care for the small things”.