



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

Open our hearts to compassion

Tuesday, 18 February 2020

[[Multimedia](#)]

Reflecting on the day's Gospel passage from Mark in which Jesus rebukes the disciples for their hardened hearts as they worry over the shortage of bread, during his homily for Holy Mass at Santa Marta on Tuesday, 18 February, Pope Francis spoke about hearts that have become hardened. "Have you eyes and cannot see, have you ears and cannot hear?", Jesus asks the disciples as he reminds them of the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. The Lord wants us to have a compassionate heart like his. He wants mercy, not sacrifice. Indeed, the Holy Father stressed, a heart without compassion is an idolatrous and self-sufficient heart that is sustained by its own selfishness and becomes strong only with ideologies. He gave the example of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes and the Zealots whose hearts had become hardened in fulfilling a project which was not of God as it lacked compassion.

Memory is like a medicine against a hardened heart, Pope Francis continued. It is a grace that "keeps hearts open and faithful". When hearts become hardened, he explained, one forgets about the grace of salvation and gratuitousness and we are led to quarrel, war and selfishness. Indeed, he stressed God's greatest message of salvation is God's compassion for us, as the Gospel often repeats. "Jesus is the compassion of the Father" and he is the "slap to every hardness of heart".

We shall be judged on our compassion for others at the Last Judgment, not on our ideologies.

Humility, the memory of our roots and our salvation will help us to be compassionate. Because we all have something that is hardened within our hearts, we should ask the Lord to give us a righteous and sincere heart. The Pope concluded by reminding the faithful that the Lord cannot enter hardened and ideological hearts but only hearts that are open and compassionate like his.

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