



The Holy See

MORNING MASS IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAEHOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

"Persevering in service"

Tuesday, 7 April 2020

[[Multimedia](#)]

Introduction

In these days of Lent we have seen the persecution that Jesus suffered, and how the doctors of the Law had it in for Him; He was judged with this dogged fury, even though He was innocent. I would like to pray today for all those people who suffer an unjust sentence as a result of persecution.

Homily

The prophecy of Isaiah which we have heard is a prophecy of the Messiah, of the Redeemer, but also a prophecy on the people of Israel, on the people of God: we can say that it may be a prophecy on each one of us. Substantially the prophecy underlines that the Lord chose His servant from His mother's womb. Twice it says this (*Is 49:1*). From the beginning His servant was chosen, from birth or from before birth. The people of God was chosen before birth, each one of us. too. None of us fell to earth by chance. Each one has a destiny, a free destiny, the destiny of being chosen by God. I am born with the destiny of being a child of God, of being a servant of God, with the task of serving, constructing, building. Right from my mother's womb.

The servant of Yahweh, Jesus, served unto death; it seemed to be a defeat, but it was a way of serving. And this underlines the way of serving that we must also take up in our own lives. To serve is to give of oneself, to give oneself to others. To serve is not about demanding some benefit

for ourselves, other than serving. Serving is glory, and the glory of Christ is to serve up to the point of annihilating oneself, until death, death on the Cross (see *Phil 2:8*). Jesus is the servant of Israel. The people of God are servants, and when the people of God distance themselves from this attitude of service they become an apostate people. They distance themselves from the vocation that God gave them. And when we distance ourselves from this vocation of service, we distance ourselves from God's love. And we build our lives on the basis of other loves, very often idolatrous.

The Lord chose us from our mother's womb. There are falls in life: each one of us is a sinner and can fall, and has fallen. Only Our Lady and Jesus [are without sin]: all the others have fallen, we are sinners. But what is important is my attitude before God, who chose me, who anointed me as a servant. It is the attitude of a sinner who is capable of asking for forgiveness, like Peter, who swore, "I'll never deny You! Never, never, never", and then when the cock crows, weeps and repents (see *Mt 26:75*). This is the path of the servant: when he slips, when he falls, he asks for forgiveness.

Instead, when the servant is not capable of understanding that he has fallen, when passion takes hold of him in such a way that it leads him to idolatry, his heart is open to Satan who enters at night: this is what happened to Judas (see *Mt 27:3-10*).

But let us think today of Jesus the servant, faithful in service. His vocation is to serve, until death on the Cross (see *Phil 2:5-11*). Let us think about each one of us, part of the people of God: we are servants, our vocation is to serve, not to take advantage of our place in the Church. To serve. Always in service.

Let us ask for the grace to persevere in service. At times we slip and fall, but when this happens, let us ask for the grace to weep like Peter.

Spiritual Communion

Those who cannot receive communion can now make a spiritual communion:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if you were already there, and I unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.