



The Holy See

HOLY MASS

HOMILY OF POPE LEO XIV

Pontifical Parish of Saint Thomas of Villanova (Castel Gandolfo)

Sunday, 13 July 2025

[Multimedia]

Brothers and sisters,

I have the joy of celebrating this Eucharist with you. I greet all those present, the parish community, the priests, and His Eminence, the Bishop of the Diocese, and the civil and military authorities.

In this Sunday's Gospel, we have heard one of Jesus' most beautiful and moving parables. We all know the parable of the Good Samaritan (*Lk 10:25-37*).

That parable constantly challenges us to think about our own lives. It troubles our dormant or distracted consciences, and warns us about the risk of a complacent faith that is satisfied with the outward observance of the law but incapable of feeling and acting with the same merciful compassion as God.

The parable is really about compassion. True, the Gospel story speaks of the compassion that moved the Samaritan to act, but it first speaks of how others regarded the wounded man lying on the roadside after being attacked by robbers. We are told that a priest and a Levite "saw him and passed by" (v. 32). Of the Samaritan, however, the Gospel says, "he saw him and had compassion on him" (v. 33).

Dear brothers and sisters, how we look at others is what counts, because it shows what is in our

hearts. We can *look and walk by*, or we can *look and be moved with compassion*. There is a kind of seeing that is superficial, distracted and hasty, a way of seeing while pretending not to see. We can see without being touched or challenged by the sight. Then too, there is seeing with the eyes of the heart, looking more closely, empathizing with the other, sharing his or her experience, letting ourselves be touched and challenged. This way of seeing calls into question the way we live our life and the responsibility we feel towards others.

The parable speaks to us first about God's way of seeing us, so that we in turn can learn how to see situations and people with his eyes, so full of love and compassion. The Good Samaritan is really a figure of Jesus, the eternal Son whom the Father sent into our history precisely because he regarded humanity with compassion and did not walk by. Like the man in the Gospel who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, humanity was descending to the depths of death; in our own day too, we have to confront the darkness of evil, suffering, poverty and the riddle of death. Yet God has looked upon us with compassion; he wanted to walk our same path and come down among us. In Jesus, the Good Samaritan, he came to heal our wounds and to pour out upon us the balm of his love and mercy.

Pope Francis, who often reminded us that God is mercy and compassion, once referred to Jesus as "the compassion of the Father toward us" (Angelus, 14 July 2029). Saint Augustine tells us that, as the Good Samaritan who came to our aid, Jesus "wanted to be known as our neighbor. Indeed, the Lord Jesus Christ makes us realize that he is the one who cared for the half-dead man beaten by robbers and left on the side of the road (*De Doctrina Christiana*, I, 30.33).

We can understand, then, why this parable is so challenging for each of us. If Christ shows us the face of a compassionate God, then to believe in him and to be his disciples means allowing ourselves to be changed and to take on his same feelings. It means learning to have a heart that is moved, eyes that see and do not look away, hands that help others and soothe their wounds, shoulders that bear the burden of those in need.

In today's first reading, we hear the words of Moses, who tells us that obeying the Lord's commandments and turning our minds and hearts to him does not involve multiplying outward acts, but rather looking to our own hearts and discovering that there God has written his law of love. If we realize deep down that Christ, the Good Samaritan, loves us and cares for us, we too will be moved to love in the same way and to become compassionate as he is. Once we are healed and loved by Christ, we too can become witnesses of his love and compassion in our world.

Brothers and sisters, today we need this "revolution of love." Today, the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Jericho is the road travelled by all those who descend into sin, suffering and poverty. It is the road travelled by all those weighed down by troubles or hurt by life. The road travelled by all who fall down, lose their bearings and hit rock bottom. The road travelled by all those peoples

that are stripped, robbed and pillaged, victims of tyrannical political systems, of an economy that forces them into poverty, and of wars that kill their dreams and their very lives.

What do we do? Do we look and walk by, or do we open our hearts to others, like the Samaritan? Are we content at times merely to do our duty, or to regard as our neighbor only those who are part of our group, who think like us, who share our same nationality or religion? Jesus overturns this way of thinking by presenting us with a Samaritan, a foreigner or heretic, who acts as a neighbor to that wounded man. And he asks us to do the same.

The Samaritan, wrote [Benedict XVI](#), “does not ask how far his obligations of solidarity extend. Nor does he ask about the merits required for eternal life. Something else happens: his heart is wrenched open... If the question had been ‘Is the Samaritan my neighbor, too?’ the answer would have been a pretty clear-cut no, given the situation at the time. But Jesus now turns the whole matter on its head: the Samaritan, the foreigner, makes himself the neighbor and shows me that I have to learn to be a neighbor deep within and that I already have the answer in myself. I have to become like someone in love, someone whose heart is open to being shaken up by another’s need” (*Jesus of Nazareth*, 197).

Looking without walking by, halting the frantic pace of our lives, allowing the lives of others, whoever they may be, with their needs and troubles, to touch our heart. That is what makes us neighbors to one another, what generates true fraternity and breaks down walls and barriers. In the end, love prevails, and proves more powerful than evil and death.

Dear friends, let us look to Christ, the Good Samaritan. Let us listen again today to his voice. For he says to each of us, “Go and do likewise” (v. 37).

Words of the Holy Father at the end of Holy Mass

At this moment, I would like to present a small gift to the Parish Priest of this pontifical parish, in memory of our celebration today. The paten and chalice with which we celebrate the Eucharist are instruments of communion, and they can be an invitation to all of us to live in communion, and truly to promote this fraternity, this communion that we live in Jesus Christ.