



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 17 October 2021

[Multimedia]

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*

The Gospel of today's Liturgy (*Mk 10:35-45*) narrates that two disciples, James and John, ask the Lord to one day sit beside him in glory, as if they were "prime ministers", or something like that. But the other disciples hear this, and become indignant. At that point, Jesus patiently offers them a great teaching: true glory is not obtained by rising over others, but by experiencing the same baptism that He would receive just a little later in Jerusalem, that is, the cross. What does this mean? The word "baptism" means "immersion": through his Passion, Jesus immersed himself into death, offering his life to save us. Therefore, his glory, the glory of God, is love that becomes service, not power that seeks to dominate. Not power that seeks to dominate, no! But love that becomes service. Thus, Jesus ends by saying to his disciples and to us as well: "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant" (v. 43). In order to become great, you will have to take the path of service, serving others.

We are in front of two different types of logic: the disciples want to *rise up* and Jesus wants to *immerse Himself*. Let us pause on these two verbs. The first is *to rise up*. It expresses that worldly mentality to which we are always tempted: to experience everything, including relationships, in order to feed our ambition, to climb the ladder of success, to reach important positions. The quest for personal prestige can become a *spiritual malady* masquerading itself even behind good

intentions: for example, when behind the good that we do and preach, we are only seeking ourselves and our own affirmation, that is, getting ahead and climbing up. And we see this even in the Church. How many times, we Christians, who should be servants, try to climb up, to get ahead. We should thus, always evaluate our heart's real intentions, asking ourselves: "Why am I carrying out this work, this responsibility? To offer service or rather to be recognised, praised and to receive compliments"? Jesus contrasts this worldly logic with his own: instead of exalting yourself over others, getting off the pedestal to serve them; instead of rising above others, immersing one's self in the lives of others. I was watching on the program "*A Sua Immagine*" (in His image), on the service provided by *Caritas* to ensure that no one be without food: being concerned about the hunger of others, being concerned about the needs of others. Today, there are many, many people in need, and after the pandemic there are many more. Looking and lowering ourselves in service and not seeking to climb up for one's own glory.

Here then is the second verb: *to be immersed*. Jesus asks us to immerse ourselves. And how should we immerse ourselves? Compassionately in the lives of those we meet. There, [on that programme], we were watching hunger but do we think compassionately about the hunger of so many people? When we have a meal before us, which is a grace from God that we can eat, there are many people who work and are unable to have enough food. Do we think about this? Immersing ourselves with compassion, having compassion. It is not a fact from an encyclopedia... No! They are people. And do I have compassion on people? Compassion for the lives of those we meet, like Jesus did with me, with you, with all of us, he drew near with compassion.

Let us look at the Crucified Lord, completely immersed in our wounded history, and we will discover God's way of doing things. We see that he did not remain above in heaven to look down on us from up there, but he lowered himself to wash our feet. God is love and love is humble, it does not exalt itself, but comes down like the rain that falls to earth and brings life. But how can we adopt the same direction as Jesus, going from raising ourselves up to immersing ourselves, from the mentality of prestige, worldly prestige, to that of service, Christian service? Dedication is needed, but that is not enough. It is difficult alone, but not impossible, for we have a strength within that helps us. It is the strength of Baptism, of that *immersion in Jesus* that all of us have already received through grace that directs us, moving us to follow him instead of seeking our interests, but to put ourselves at the service of others. It is a grace, a fire that the Spirit has kindled in us that needs to be nurtured. Today, let us ask the Holy Spirit to renew the grace of Baptism in us, that immersion in Jesus, in his way of being, to be more like servants, to be servants like he has been with us.

And let us pray to Our Lady: even though she was the greatest, she did not seek to rise up, but was the humble servant of the Lord, and is completely immersed in our service to help us encounter Jesus.

After the Angelus the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, today the foundation “Aid to the Church in Need” has invited parishes, schools, and families to participate in the initiative, “One million children praying the Rosary for Peace and Unity in the World”. I encourage this prayer campaign which this year has been entrusted to the intercession of Saint Joseph in a particular way. Thanks to all the boys and girls participating in it! Many thanks.

Yesterday, in Cordoba, Spain, the priest, Juan Elías Medina and 126 companion martyrs — priests, religious, seminarians and lay people — were killed in hatred of the faith during the violent religious persecution of the 1930s in Spain. May their fidelity grant us all strength, especially persecuted Christians in various parts of the world, the strength to courageously witness the Gospel. A round of applause for the new Blessed!

Last week, various attacks took place in Norway, Afghanistan, England, that caused numerous deaths and wounded. I express my closeness to the families of the victims. I beg you to please abandon the path of violence which is always a losing one and a defeat for everyone. Let us recall that violence begets violence.

I greet all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims from various countries. In particular, I greet the “Medee” Sisters who are holding their General Chapter, the Confederation of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux — Poor Knights of Christ, African businessmen gathered for their international meeting, the faithful from Este, Cavallino and Ca’ Vio (Venice), and the Confirmation candidates from Galzignano.

I greet and bless the “Ecumenical Pilgrimage for Ecological Justice”, made up of various Christian confessions, who departed from Poland and are headed to Scotland for the COP26 climate summit.

And I wish all of you a happy Sunday. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch.
Arrivederci!