



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 31 October 2021

[[Multimedia](#)]

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*

In today's liturgy, the Gospel presents a scribe who approaches Jesus and asks him: "Which commandment is the first of all?" (*Mk* 12:28). Jesus responds by citing Scripture and stating that the first commandment is to love God; from this one then derives the second, as a natural consequence: to love one's neighbour as oneself (cf. vv. 29-31). Hearing this response, the scribe not only recognises that he is right, but in doing so, in recognising that he is right, he repeats the same words Jesus had said: "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that... to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices" (vv. 32-33).

We can ask ourselves, in giving his assent, why did that scribe feel the need to repeat Jesus' same words? This repetition seems to be more surprising if we think that this is the Gospel of Mark, who has a very concise style. So, what could this repetition mean? This repetition is a teaching for all of us who are listening. For the Word of the Lord cannot be received as any other type of news. The Word of the Lord should be repeated, made one's own, safeguarded. The monastic tradition of the monks, uses an audacious but very concrete term. It goes like this: the Word of God must be "ruminated". "To ruminate" the Word of God. We could say that it is so nutritious that it must reach every aspect of life: to involve, as Jesus says today, the entire heart, the entire soul, the entire mind, all of our strength (cf. v. 30). The Word of the Lord must resound, echo and re-echo within us. When there is this interior echo that repeats itself, it means that the

Lord dwells in the heart. And he says to us, just as he did to that good scribe in the Gospel: “You are not far from the kingdom of God” (v. 34).

Dear brothers and sisters, the Lord does not seek skilled commentators of the Scriptures, as much as he seeks docile hearts that, welcoming his Word, allow themselves to be changed within. This is why it is so important to be familiar with the Gospel, to always have it at hand — even a small-sized Gospel in our pockets, in our purses to read and reread, to be passionate about it. When we do this, Jesus, the Word of the Father, enters into our hearts, he becomes intimate with us and we bear fruit in Him. Let us take for example today’s Gospel: it is not enough to read it and understand that we should love God and our neighbour. It is necessary that this commandment, which is the “great commandment”, resound in us, that it be assimilated, that it become the voice of our conscience. This way, it does not remain a dead letter, in the drawer of the heart, because the Holy Spirit makes the seed of that Word germinate in us. And the Word of God works, it is always in motion, it is living and active (cf. *Heb 4:12*). So each one of us can become a living, different and original “translation”, not a repetition but a living, different and original “translation” of the one Word of love that God gives us. This is what we see in the lives of the Saints for example. None of them is the same as another. They are all different, but with the same Word of God.

Today, therefore, let us take the example of this scribe. Let us repeat Jesus’ words, making them resound in us: “To love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind and with all our strength and my neighbour as myself”. And let us ask ourselves: does this commandment truly orient my life? Does this commandment resonate in my daily life? It would be good this evening, before going to sleep, to make an examination of conscience on this Word, to see if we have loved the Lord today and if we have done a little good to those we happened to meet. May every encounter bring about a little bit of good, a little bit of love that comes from this Word. May the Virgin Mary, in whom the Word of God was made flesh, teach us to welcome the living word of the Gospel in our hearts.

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, in various parts of Vietnam, the strong, prolonged rains of these last weeks have caused vast flooding, with thousands of people evacuated. My prayer and my thought go to the many families who are suffering, along with my encouragement to all those leaders of the country and the local Church who are working to respond to the emergency. And I am near to the people of Sicily hit by bad weather.

I am also thinking of the people of Haiti who are living in extreme conditions. I ask the leaders of nations to help this country, not to leave it on its own. And all of you, when you return home, look for news about Haiti and pray, pray a lot. I was watching on the program *A Sua Immagine* (In His

Image), the testimony of that Camillian missionary from Haiti, Father Massimo Miraglio — the things that he was saying ... of all the suffering, all the pain that there is in that land, and how much abandonment. Let us not abandon them!

Yesterday in Tortosa, Spain, Francisco Sojo López, Millán Garde Serrano, Manuel Galcerá Videllet and Aquilino Pastor Cambero, priests of the Fraternity of Diocesan Worker Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, were beatified. All of them were killed in hatred of the faith. Zealous and generous pastors during the religious persecution of the 1930s, they remained faithful to their ministry even at the risk of their lives. May their witness be an example, especially for priests. A round of applause for these new Blesseds!

Today, in Glasgow, Scotland, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP26, is beginning. Let us pray that the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor may be heard; that this meeting may provide effective responses, offering concrete hope to future generations. In this context, the photographic exhibition *Laudato Si'* is being inaugurated today in Saint Peter's Square, the work of a young photographer originally from Bangladesh. Go see it!

I greet all of you faithful from Rome and pilgrims from various countries, in particular those who have come from Costa Rica. I greet the groups from Reggio Emilia and Cosenza; the children from the Profession of Faith of Bareggio, Canegrate and San Giorgio su Legnano; as well as Serra International Italia, whom I thank for their dedication in promoting priestly vocations, and the youth of the Immacolata.

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