



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 1st September 2024

[Multimedia]

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

Today, in the Gospel of the liturgy (cf. *Mk* 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23), Jesus speaks about the pure and the impure. It was a matter that was very dear to his contemporaries, and that was chiefly linked to the observance of rites and rules of behaviour, in order to avoid any contact with things or persons considered unclean and, if contact happened, to erase the “stain” (cf. *Lev* 11-15). Purity and impurity were almost an obsession for some religious of those times.

Some Scribes and Pharisees, strict observers of such norms, accuse Jesus of allowing his disciples to eat without washing their hands. And Jesus uses the Pharisees’ reprimand to his disciples as an opportunity to speak to talk about the meaning of “purity”.

Jesus says that purity is not connected to external rites, but is first and foremost, about inner dispositions. Therefore, there is no use in washing one’s hands several times to be pure, if one then harbours evil thoughts in their heart such as greed, envy or pride, or evil intentions such as deceit, theft, betrayal and slander (cf. *Mk* 7:21-22). Jesus draws attention to the need to beware of ritualism, which does not make one grow in goodness. On the contrary, it can sometimes lead one to neglect, or even to justify, one’s choices and attitudes or those of others, that are uncharitable, that wound the soul and close the heart.

And this, brothers and sisters, is important for us too. One cannot, for example, leave Holy Mass,

and then, while still in front of the church, engage in mean and merciless gossip on everything and everyone. That chatter ruins the heart and it ruins the soul. We must not do this! If you go to Mass and then do these things, it is a bad thing! Or appearing to be pious in prayer, and then returning home and treating family members with indifference and detachment, or neglecting elderly parents, who need help and company (cf. *Mk 7:10-13*). This is a double life, and one cannot do this. And this is what the Pharisees did. External purity, without good attitudes, merciful attitudes towards others. One cannot be very decent to everyone outwardly, and perhaps even do a bit of volunteer work and a few philanthropic gestures, but then nurture hatred towards others within, despise the poor and the least, or behave dishonestly at work.

By acting this way, the relationship with God is reduced to external gestures, and one remains impervious to the purifying action of his grace, indulging in thoughts, words and behaviours empty of love.

We were made for something else. We were made for purity of life, for tenderness, for love.

Let us ask ourselves, then: do I live my faith in a consistent manner, that is, what I do in Church, do I try to do outside in the same spirit? Do my sentiments, words and deeds make what I say in prayer tangible in closeness and respect for my brothers and sisters? Let us think about this.

May Mary, Mother most pure, help us to make our life, in heartfelt and practised love, a worship that is pleasing to God (cf. *Rom 12:1*).

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, Ján Havlík, a seminarian of the Congregation of the Mission, founded by Saint Vincent de Paul, was beatified in *Šaštín*, Slovakia, yesterday. This young man was killed in 1965, during the regime's persecution of the Church in what was then Czechoslovakia. May his perseverance in bearing witness to faith in Christ encourage those who still suffer similar trials. A round of applause for the new Blessed!

I have learned with sorrow that hundreds of people, including women and children, were killed and many others injured in a terrorist attack in the municipality of Barsalogho, Burkina Faso, on Saturday, 24 August. In condemning these heinous attacks against human life, I express my closeness to the nation as a whole, and my heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims. May the Virgin Mary help the beloved people of Burkina Faso regain peace and security.

I also pray for the victims of the accident that occurred in the Sanctuary of *Nossa Senhora da Conceição*, in the city of Recife, Brazil. May the Risen Lord comfort the injured and their relatives.

And I am always close to the martyred Ukrainian people, hard hit by attacks on the energy infrastructure. In addition to causing deaths and injuries, they have left over a million people without electricity and water. Let us remember that the voice of the innocent is always heard by God, who does not remain indifferent to their suffering!

Once again I turn my thoughts with concern to the conflict in Palestine and Israel, which risks spreading to other Palestinian cities. I appeal for negotiations to continue, for an immediate ceasefire, for the release of hostages, and for relief for the people of Gaza, where many diseases are also spreading, such as poliomyelitis. May there be peace in the Holy Land, may there be peace in Jerusalem! May the Holy City be a place of encounter where Christians, Jews and Muslims feel respected and welcomed, and where no-one questions the Status Quo in the respective Holy Places.

Today, we celebrate *World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation*. I hope that everyone, institutions, associations, families and every person, may make a concrete commitment to our common home. The cry of the wounded Earth is becoming increasingly alarming, and calls for decisive and urgent action.

Tomorrow I will begin an Apostolic Journey in several countries in Asia and Oceania. Please pray that this journey may bear fruit!

I greet you all, people of Rome and pilgrims! In particular, I greet the young people of Lucca, accompanied by Archbishop Paolo Giulietti and several priests; I greet the good young people of the *Immacolata* and the youth of Campocroce in Mirano.

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