



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAЕ

The one treasure

Monday, 23 November 2015

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The Church's "one treasure" is Christ, and she risks becoming "lukewarm, mediocre and mundane" if she places her security "in other realities". Thus, the Pope celebrated Mass at Santa Marta on Monday morning with a call to repeat: "Come Lord Jesus!".

Francis began his homily by referring to "both of the Readings of the day's Liturgy", one from the Book of the Prophet Daniel (1:1-6, 8-20) and the other from the Gospel according to Luke (21:1-4), which "speak to us about needy people, particularly in the tradition of Israel: the stranger and the widow". And, he continued, "the third needy person is the orphan".

Explaining the First Reading, Pope Francis said that "these young people who had been brought to Babylon were strangers: they were far from their homeland and decided to remain faithful to their traditions, to the Law of the Lord". However, "the character that draws the most attention in this Gospel is the widow". In the Bible, the Pope affirmed, "widows appear many times, so many times, both in the Old and New Testaments". A widow, Francis continued, "is a woman who is alone, she does not have a husband to protect her; a woman who must make do as she can, who lives on public charity".

In particular, he said, “the widow of this passage of the Gospel, whom Jesus shows us, was a widow whose only hope was in the Lord”. And “when Jesus saw those who put in offerings at the temple, he saw this woman who put in only two coins and he said: ‘this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all the living that she had’”.

“In the widows of the Gospel”, the Pope said, “I like seeing the image of the ‘widowhood’ of the Church who is awaiting Jesus’ return”. Indeed, “the Church is the bride of Jesus, but her Lord has left, and her one treasure is her Lord”. And “the Church, when she is faithful, leaves everything while she waits for her Lord. However, when the Church is not faithful, when she is not very faithful or does not have much trust in her Lord’s love, she too seeks to make do with other things, with other securities, more from the world than from God”.

“The widows of the Gospel”, the Pontiff continued, “tell us a beautiful message of Jesus about the Church”. Similarly there is the woman “leaving Nain with her son’s casket: crying alone”. Yes, “very kind people accompanied her, but her heart was alone!”. It is “the widow Church that cries when her children die to the life of Jesus”.

There is then the other woman “who, in order to protect her children, goes to the evil judge: she makes his life impossible, knocking on his door every day, saying ‘do justice for me!’”. And “in the end”, that judge “does justice”. And “it is the widow Church who prays, who intercedes for her children”.

But “the heart of the Church is always with her Bridegroom, with Jesus. He is above. Our soul too, according to the fathers of the desert, is very much like the Church”, said the Pope. And “when our soul, our life, is closer to Jesus it is separated from many worldly things, useless things, which do not help and which separate us from Jesus”. Thus, “it is our Church that seeks her Bridegroom, that awaits her Bridegroom, that waits for that meeting, that cries for her children, fights for her children, and gives all that she has because her interest is her Bridegroom alone”.

“In these final days of the liturgical year”, Pope Francis said, “it will be good for us to ask ourselves whether our soul is like this Church that wants Jesus, whether our soul turns to its Bridegroom and says: ‘Come Lord Jesus! Come!’”. And whether “we set aside all these things that aren’t useful, aren’t helpful to faithfulness, as the youths in the First Reading set aside those meals that did not help their faithfulness”.

“The ‘widowhood’ of the Church”, the Pope explained, “refers to the fact that the Church is waiting for Jesus, this is one reality: she can be a Church faithfully anticipating, trustfully awaiting her husband’s return, or a Church unfaithful to this ‘widowhood’, seeking security anew in other realities.... The lukewarm Church, the mediocre Church, the worldly Church”. And, Pope Francis offered in conclusion, “let us also think about our soul: does our soul seek security in the Lord

alone or does it seek other securities that do not please the Lord?”. Thus, “in these final days, it will be good for us to repeat that last verse of the Bible: “Come Lord Jesus!”.