



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAЕ

Let us make space

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(by <http://www.osservatoreromano.va>)

In order to respond to the mystery of Christ and of the Church, Christians must live with lowliness, meekness, and generosity. This was the focus Pope Francis' homily during Mass at the Casa Santa Marta on Friday, 21 October. Continuing his reflection from the previous day's homily, the Holy Father spoke about unity, which is at the heart of the "mystery of the Church", and which is accomplished through "the bond of peace". As he often does, the Pontiff spoke on this theme in the context of the daily lives of all Christians. In order to respond in a way that is "worthy" of the "call of mystery", he said, we need to learn how to live with "lowliness", with the "meekness" which helps us "bear with one another", and with a "generosity" which opens our hearts to everyone.

Francis drew his meditation from the day's first reading from the Ephesians (4:1-6), in which Paul "seeks to explain, to help the Ephesians understand the mystery of the Church". It is a mystery, the Pope said, that we can understand "only if we are little". Indeed, the day's Gospel acclamation — "Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the Kingdom" — encourages the faithful to ask for "this grace, with the same spirit as yesterday, the spirit of praise, of adoration".

In his letter, "Paul is clear", about what is most important: having a heart which "preserves the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace". The Pontiff added that "the Lord's greeting: 'Peace be with you', is a greeting which creates a bond; a greeting which unites us in order to create the

unity of the spirit". It is therefore precisely this path which "deepens, in the mystery of God, unity". This, in fact, is what "Jesus asked of the Father during the Last Supper: 'that these — my brethren — may be one, as you and I are one'". The Apostle explains this further: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all".

"However", Francis asked, "what creates unity? The bond of peace". In fact, "if there is no peace, if we are incapable of greeting one another in the broadest sense of the word, or have a heart open with the spirit of peace, there will never be unity. Unity in the world, unity in cities, in neighbourhoods, in the family". It is no coincidence that "the spirit of evil sows war, always. Jealousy, envy, conflict, gossip... these are things which destroy peace, and make it so there can be no unity".

In concrete terms, how should Christians conduct themselves in order "to find this unity?". The answer is found in Paul's letter: "Conduct yourselves in a worthy manner, with all lowliness, meekness and generosity".

The Pope then elaborated on lowliness: "One cannot give peace without lowliness. Where there is pride, there is always war, always the desire to defeat the other, to believe in one's own superiority. Without lowliness, there is no peace, and without peace, there is no unity". Then, there is "meekness, that is, clemency". And here, the Pontiff remarked, "it might be a slight exaggeration, but I dare to say it: We have forgotten how to speak with meekness; we speak by shouting. Or speaking ill of others... there is no meekness. And the core of meekness is the ability to forbear one another". Indeed, Saint Paul writes about "forbearing one another". We therefore require much "patience: to forbear the faults of others, the things we do not like", the Pope added.

Finally, there is "generosity". This refers to having a "great heart, an ample heart which has the capacity for everyone, and which does not condemn, does not shrink amid trifles", nor does it succumb to gossip, such as: "who said this" or "I heard that". Above all, it is a heart in which "there is room for everyone. And this creates the bond of peace; this is the worthy manner of conducting ourselves in order to make the bond of peace and create unity". The one who creates unity, Francis explained, "is the Holy Spirit"; however, certain attitudes "foster, prepare for the creation of unity".

Towards the end of his meditation, the Pontiff invited the faithful to read Corinthians, Chapter 13, in which "Paul continues this catechesis on the mystery of the Church" and "teaches how to make space for the Spirit, with our attitudes, in order that he might create unity". He also teaches us "how to make bonds of peace among ourselves, in order that the Spirit might create unity".

The Pope concluded by inviting everyone to pray that the Holy Spirit might grant us the grace to

understand and live the mystery of the Church which, he said, “is the mystery of the body of Christ: ‘One faith, one baptism’, ‘one God and Father of us all’, who works ‘through all and in all’: this is the unity which Jesus asked of the Father for us, and which we must help to create, this unity, with the bond of peace. And the bond of peace grows with lowliness, with meekness, with each other’s support, and with generosity”.