



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

Into the abyss of the mystery

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(by: www.osservatoreromano.va)

“Enter the mystery of Jesus” by looking to the Crucifix and thus “letting yourself go” into the “abyss” of his mercy. In the invitation Pope Francis made during Mass at Santa Marta on Tuesday morning, 24 October, lies the indication of a “journey” for all Christians toward the true “centre” of their own life, in which every word disappears, and what remains is only contemplation of the love of the One who “gave his life” for the salvation of mankind.

The Pontiff’s meditation was inspired by the day’s first reading (Rom 5:12, 15, 17-19, 20-21), in which it seems almost as if Paul is unable to “express what he wants to say”. It is a passage in which the Apostle uses a series of “juxtapositions”, as five times he speaks of “one man” and of “another man”; he ponders the concepts of “sin, trespass, disobedience, grace, righteousness, forgiveness”; and he also correlates “increase with abundance”, and “righteousness” with “forgiveness”. In seeking to help the reader understand, the Pope explained, the Apostle uses a method that is not “studied” but is “what comes from his heart”. Above all, Paul feels incapable of “explaining what he wants to explain”.

In reality, Francis said, behind this whole discourse is “the history of salvation; there is creation; there is the history of sin, of the fall of man. There is the ‘re-creation’, that is, the redemption that the Church says is more wondrous than creation; it is more powerful”. The language Paul uses is justified by the fact that, effectively, “there are no words” that can “explain Christ”. Therefore, as he

perceives this impossibility, “he pushes us; he leads almost up to the abyss and pushes us; even more: he hurls us, so we fall into the mystery”. Into the “mystery of Christ”.

Thus, the Pontiff said, all “these words, these contrasts, these descriptions are only steps along the journey”, so we may “sink into the mystery of Christ”.

The saints understood all of this, the Pope explained. “Not only the canonized saints”, but the “many saints hidden in everyday life. So many humble, simple people who put their hope only in the Lord. They have entered into the mystery of Jesus Christ”.

Each case, the Pontiff continued, deals with a difficult journey, because “we are not used to entering into the mystery. When we come to Mass, yes, we go to pray, it’s true; we know that Jesus comes; we also know that he is in the Word of God, that he comes into the community”. But “this is not enough”. Indeed, “entering the mystery of Jesus Christ is more: it is letting yourself go into the abyss of mercy where there are no words: only the embrace of love. The love that led him to death for us”.

To make the concept more readily understood, the Pope offered the example of the Sacrament of Reconciliation: “When we go to confess because we have sinned”, what do we do? “We go, we tell our sins to the confessor and we are peaceful and content”. But “in this way, we do not enter into the mystery of Jesus Christ”. Instead, “if I go, I go to meet Jesus Christ, to enter into the mystery of Jesus Christ, to enter that embrace of forgiveness that Paul speaks of; that of freely given forgiveness”.

Thus, this is a question for every Christian: “Who is Jesus for you?”. In response, the Pope suggested that one helpful thing is “Christian piety”, in particular practicing the Via Crucis, which is “beautiful” to practice at home, contemplating the moments of the Lord’s passion”.