



The Holy See

MORNING MASS IN THE CHAPEL OF THE

DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHA HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS "The grace of fidelity"

Tuesday, 14 April 2020

[\[Multimedia\]](#)

Introduction

We pray that the Lord might give us the grace of unity among us. In these difficult times, may He allow us to discover the communion that binds us and the unity which is always greater than any division.

Homily

Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost cuts to the heart of people: "He whom you crucified is risen" (see *Acts* 2:36). "When they heard this they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?'" (*Acts* 2:37). And Peter is clear: "Repent. Repent. Change your life. You who received God's promise and you who distanced yourselves from God's Law, because of many of your own things, your idols and many things ... convert yourselves. Return to faithfulness" (see *Acts* 2:38). Converting oneself means returning to faithfulness. Faithfulness, that human attitude that is not very common in people's lives, in our own lives. There are always illusions that attract our attention, and often we follow after these illusions. Faithfulness: in good times and in bad. There is a passage in the Second Book of Chronicles that is very striking to me. It is from the twelfth Chapter, at the beginning. "When the kingdom was consolidated - it reads - King Rehoboam felt secure and abandoned the law of the Lord, and so did all Israel with him" (see *2 Chron* 12:1). This is what the Bible says. It is a historical event, but it is a universal event. Many times, when we feel secure, we begin to make plans and we slowly drift away from the Lord. We do not remain faithful. My security is no longer that which the Lord gives

me. It is an idol. This is what happened to Rehoboam and the people of Israel. He felt secure – a consolidated kingdom – and abandoned the law and began to worship idols. Sure, we might say: “Father, I don't kneel before idols”. No, perhaps you do not kneel, but it is true that you seek them and often adore idols in your heart. Self-assuredness opens the door to idols.

But is feeling secure a bad thing? No, it is a grace: being secure, but being secure in the knowledge that the Lord is with me. But when there is security and I am at the centre, I drift away from the Lord, like King Rehoboam, and I become unfaithful. It is very difficult to preserve faithfulness. The whole history of Israel, and the whole history of the Church, is full of infidelity. Full of it. It is full of egotistical behaviour and self-assuredness that lead the people of God to abandon the Lord, to lose that faithfulness, the grace of faithfulness. Even among us, between people, faithfulness is certainly not a cheap virtue. One is not faithful to another, to another... “Repent, return to faithfulness to God” (see *Acts* 2:38).

And in the Gospel, the icon of fidelity: that faithful woman who had not forgotten all that the Lord had done for her. She was there, faithful before the impossible – a tragedy. Hers is a faithfulness that led her to think she could carry away His body (see *Jn* 20:15) A weak but faithful woman. The icon of fidelity of Mary of Magdalene, apostle of the apostles.

Today let us ask the Lord for the grace of faithfulness: to thank Him when He gives us security, but never to think that these are “my” securities and always to look beyond our securities; the grace to be faithful even before the tomb and the collapse of so many illusions.

A faithfulness that remains always, but that is not easy to maintain. May He, the Lord, preserve it.

Spiritual Communion

At Your feet, O my Jesus, I prostrate myself and I offer You repentance of my contrite heart, which is humbled in its nothingness and in Your holy presence. I adore You in the Sacrament of Your love, the ineffable Eucharist. I desire to receive You into the poor dwelling that my heart offers you. While waiting for the happiness of sacramental communion, I wish to possess You in spirit. Come to me, O Jesus, since I, for my part, am coming to You! May Your love embrace my whole being in life and in death. I believe in You, I hope in You, I love You. Amen.