



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS **GENERAL AUDIENCE** St Peter's Square

Wednesday, 26 June 2019 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

The fruit of Pentecost, the powerful outpouring of the *Spirit of God upon the first Christian community*, was that many people felt their heart pierced by the Good News — the *kerygma* — of salvation in Christ, and they freely adhered to him, converting, receiving baptism in his name and in turn, welcoming the gift of the Holy Spirit. About 3,000 people joined that fraternity which is the *habitat* of believers and is the ecclesial leaven for the work of evangelization. The warmth of the faith of these brothers and sisters in Christ makes their lives the *landscape of God's work* which, through the Apostles, is manifested with miracle and signs. What is extraordinary becomes ordinary, and *everyday life becomes the site of the manifestation of living Christ*.

The evangelist Luke narrates this to us by showing us *the Church of Jerusalem as the paradigm for every Christian community*, as the icon of a fraternity which attracts and should neither be idealized nor minimized. The narrative in the *Acts of the Apostles* allows us to look within the walls of the *domus* where the first Christians gather as *God's family*, the space for *koinonia*, that is, of the communion of love among brothers and sisters in Christ. We can see that they live in a very precise way: they “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42). The Christians listen assiduously to the *didaché*, the apostolic teaching; they apply a high level of quality in their interpersonal relationships also through sharing spiritual and material goods; they remember the Lord through the “*breaking of bread*”, that is, the Eucharist, and they dialogue with God in *prayer*. These are the attitudes of a Christian, the four marks of a good Christian.

Unlike human society which tends to follow its own interests regardless or even to the detriment of others, the community of believers rejects individualism in favour of sharing and solidarity. There is no room for egoism in a Christian's soul: if your heart is selfish you are not Christian, you are worldly and only seek your own favour, your own advantage. And Luke tells us that the believers are *together* (cf. Acts 2:44). Closeness and unity are the style of believers: close, concerned for

each other, not to speak ill of the other, no, but to help, to get closer.

The grace of Baptism thus reveals the intimate bond between the brothers and sisters in Christ who are called to *share*, to empathize with others and to give “as any had need” (Acts 2:45), that is, generosity, charity, concern for the other, visiting the sick, visiting those in need who need comforting.

And this fraternity, precisely because it chooses the way of communion and attention to the needy, this fraternity that is the Church can live an *authentic and true liturgical life*. Luke says: “And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favour with all the people” (Acts 2:46-47).

Lastly, the narrative in the Acts of the Apostles reminds us that the Lord guarantees the growth of the community (cf. 2:47); the believers’ perseverance in a genuine covenant with God and with their brothers and sisters becomes an attractive force that fascinates and wins over many (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 14), a principle that, thanks to which, the community of believers of all times lives.

Let us pray to the Holy Spirit that he make our communities places in which to gather and exercise the new life, works of solidarity and of communion, places in which liturgies are an encounter with God that becomes communion with brothers and sisters, places that are open doors to the heavenly Jerusalem.

Special Greetings

This Audience, the last before the summer break, is taking place with two groups: you who are here in the Square and a group of sick people who are in the Paul VI Hall and are following along on the jumbo screen, because it is very hot and it is better that the sick stay indoors. Let us greet the group of sick people!

I welcome all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today’s Audience, especially those from England, Scotland, Wales, Australia, Japan, Guam and the United States of America. I greet in particular those taking part in the course on translating Latin liturgical texts sponsored by the Pontifical Atheneum of St Anselm. Upon all of you I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

I offer a special greeting to *young people, the elderly, the sick and newlyweds*. On Friday, we will celebrate the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I invite everyone to look to that heart and imitate its most authentic sentiments. Pray for all Priests and for my Petrine Ministry, so that all pastoral actions may bear the imprint of the love that Christ bears for each human being.

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