



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

The art of loving our enemies

Tuesday, 18 June 2013

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Loving our enemies, those who persecute us and cause us suffering, is difficult and neither is it a “good deal” because it drains us. Yet, this is the path pointed out and taken by Jesus for our salvation. Pope Francis spoke of this in his homily at morning Mass on Tuesday, 18 June, in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae. Among others, Cardinal Giuseppe Versaldi, president of the Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See, concelebrated Mass and was accompanied by collaborators of the dicastery. Also present were some staff of the Vatican Museums.

The Pontiff recalled that the liturgy offers for our reflection in these days the parallelisms between “the old law and the new law, the law of Mount Sinai and the law of the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount”. Confronting the specifics of the readings — from St Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians (8:1-9) and from the Gospel according to Matthew (5:43-48) — the Holy Father dwelt on the difficulty of loving our enemies and asked himself how it could be possible to forgive: “Even we, all of us, have enemies — all of us. Some are weak enemies, some strong. So often we too become the enemies of others; we do not love them. Jesus tells us that we must love our enemies”.

This is no easy matter, and in general, “we think that Jesus is asking too much of us. We think: ‘Let’s leave this to the cloistered sisters who are holy, a few holy souls!’”. But this is not the right attitude. “Jesus says that you must do this, otherwise you are like the Publicans, like the pagans, and you are not Christians”. In fact, how can we love “those who decide to bomb and kill so many people? How can we love who for love of money do not allow medicines to get to those who are in need, to the elderly and let them die?”. And once again: “How can we love people who seek only their interests and power and do so much evil?”.

This “is the mystery of salvation: with forgiveness, with love for our enemy, we become poorer. But this poverty is a seed bearing fruit for others, as Jesus’ poverty became grace for us all, salvation”.