



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

In the little things

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“It’s all there in the ‘littleness’”. In the Mass at Santa Marta on Tuesday morning, the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, Pope Francis focused on the manner of God, who acts in small ways but opens vast horizons for us.

Referring to the text of the Collect recited moments before, which asked the Lord for “the grace of unity and peace”, the Pontiff focused on two verbs considered in his homilies of the previous few days: to reconcile and to make peace. God, he said, “reconciles: he reconciles the world to himself through Christ”. Jesus, brought to us by Mary, makes peace, “gives peace to two peoples, and of two peoples he makes one: Hebrews and Gentiles. One people. He makes peace. Peace in their hearts”. But, asked the Pope, “how does God reconcile?”. In what “manner” does he do this? Does he perhaps “make a great assembly? Does everyone come to an agreement? Do they sign a document?”. No, he answered. “God uses a specific method to make peace: he reconciles and makes peace in the little things and on the journey”.

Francis’ reflection thus began from the concept of “littleness”, the “littleness” which was spoken of in the First Reading (Mic 5:1-4): “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are little...”. In other words, the Pope explained: you are “so little: but you will be great, because your ruler will be born

from you and he will be peace. He himself will be peace”, because from that littleness “comes peace”. This is the manner of God, who chooses “little things, humble things, to do great works”. The Lord, explained the Pope, “is the Great One” and we “are the little ones”, but the Lord “advises us to make ourselves little like children to be able to enter the Kingdom of Heaven”, whereas “the great ones, the powerful, the arrogant, the proud cannot enter”. God, however, “reconciles and makes peace in littleness”.

The Pontiff then addressed the second concept, according to which the Lord also reconciles “on the journey: walking”. He then explained: “The Lord does not want to make peace and reconcile with a magic wand: today — boom! — all done! No. He journeys with his people”. An example of this action of God is found in the day’s Gospel (Mt 1:1-16, 18-23). The passage regarding Jesus’ lineage may seem somewhat repetitious: “This one begot that one, that one begot this one, this one begot that one.... It’s a list”, Francis noted. Yet, he explained, “it is God’s journey: God’s journey among men, good and bad, because on this list there are saints and there are sinful criminals”.

Thus, it is a list which even contains “much sin”. However, “God is not afraid: he journeys. He walks with his people. And on this journey he makes hope grow in his people, hope in the Messiah”. This is the “closeness” of God. Moses said it to his own: “Think about it: what nation has a God as close as ours?”. Thus, “this journeying in littleness, with his people, this walking with the good and bad gives us our way of life”. In order “to walk as Christians”, in order to “make peace” and “reconcile” as Jesus did, we have the path: “With the Beatitudes and with the protocol by which we will all be judged. Matthew, 25: ‘Do likewise: little things’”. This means “in littleness and by journeying”.

The Pope then added a third element. The people of Israel “dream of being set free”, they have “this dream because it was promised to them”. Even Joseph dreams and his dream “is somewhat like a summary of the entire history of God’s journey with his people”. However, Francis added, “not only does Joseph have dreams: God dreams. God our Father has dreams, and he dreams beautiful things for his people, for each of us, because he is Father and as Father he thinks and dreams of the best for his children”.

In conclusion, “this great and almighty God teaches us to do great works of peacemaking and of reconciliation in littleness, by walking, and by not losing hope, with the capacity” to dream “great dreams”, to have “vast horizons”.

For this reason the Pontiff invited everyone — in this commemoration of the beginning of a crucial phase of salvation history, the birth of Our Lady — to seek “the grace that we asked for in prayer, that of unity, of reconciliation, and of peace”. To be “always on the path, close to others” and “with great dreams”. With the manner of ‘littleness’, the littleness, he recalled, which is found in the Eucharistic celebration: “a little piece of bread, a little bit of wine...”. In “this ‘littleness’ there is

everything. God's dream is there, his love is there, his peace is there, his reconciliation is there, Jesus is there".