



The Holy See

***AUDIO-MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE "KEEPLANT" INITIATIVE
ORGANIZED BY THE PASTORAL CARE FOR THE YOUTH
OF THE PRELATURE OF THE PONTIFICAL SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII***

*Ash Wednesday
10 February 2016*

Dear Boys and Girls,

Jesus said to his disciples, "Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them ... Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you ... Your Father who sees in secret will reward you".

The Word of God guides us in living the Lenten season properly.

When we do something good, at times we are tempted to be appreciated and to seek compensation: human glory. But it is a false compensation because it projects us toward what others think of us.

Jesus asks us to do Good for the sake of the Good. He asks us to be aware that we are always under the gaze of the Heavenly Father and to live in relation to him, not in relation to the judgement of others.

Living in the presence of the Father is a far more profound joy than worldly glory.

Our attitude this Lent must therefore be that of living in secret where the Father sees us, loves us and awaits us. Certainly, even external things are important, but we must always choose and experience them in the presence of God.

Let us do so in prayer, in mortification, and in the fraternal charity that we are humbly able to give before God. We will thus be worthy of the compensation of God the Father.

I wish you a good Lent. May Our Lady of Pompeii accompany you, and please, pray for me.