



POPE FRANCIS STRESSES PATIENCE AND CONSTANCY WHEN PRAYING FOR OTHERS

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VATICAN CITY -

The Holy Father Pope Francis has stressed the importance of patience and constancy when prayer to God for other people. The pope made this reflection during his homily at the celebration of the Mass at Casa Santa Marta, the Vatican, recently. He reflected on the power of prayer, starting with the dialogue between God and Moses. "If you're praying for someone, be ready to argue for what you want. This is intercessory prayer", says the Pope.

The Pope declared: "If you've agreed to pray for someone, don't settle for a quick Our Father and Hail Mary, instead, be ready to "argue" for your petitions because, when God sees a person who continually prays for something, He is moved." The Holy Father added: "Courage and patience are the two lynchpins of prayer, which must be raised up to God in freedom, like children."

In reference to the first reading of the Mass from the Book of Exodus, which dwelt on the conversation between the Lord and Moses regarding the apostasy of God's people, Pope Francis noted that the prophet tries to dissuade the Lord from acting on his "blazing wrath" against His people, who "had forsaken the glory of the living God to worship a golden calf." In Moses' bold dialogue, he reminds God of all He had done for his people, bringing them out of slavery in Egypt, and of the faithfulness of Abraham and Isaac.

In this “face-to-face” encounter, the Pope said, Moses’ preoccupation and love for God’s people is evident. He is not afraid to tell the truth and does not enter into the “deviation game.” “God appreciates this,” said Pope Francis. “When God sees a person who continually prays for something, He is moved.”

He emphasized that patience is needed in intercessory prayer. “We cannot promise someone we will pray for them, pray only an Our Father and a Hail Mary, and then leave it at that. No. If you agree to pray for someone else, you must take this [other] path. And patience is needed.”

Scripture, Pope Francis said, is full of good examples of constancy and the capacity to be patient, such as the Canaanite woman and the blind Bartimaeus of Jericho. “Two things are needed for intercessory prayer: courage, or parrhesia, and patience. If I want the Lord to listen to my requests, I must return, and return again, to knock at the door of God’s heart, since my own heart is committed to [this petition]! But if my heart is not concerned for this need, or the person for whom I am praying, neither will it be capable of courage and patience.”

Finally, Pope Francis pointed out the “path of intercessory prayer.” He said it means being concerned for others and willing to fight, strive, and fast for them.