



POPE FRANCIS PREACHES LOVE AND SPEAKS ON IMPORTANCE OF MASS

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VATICAN CITY -

The Holy Father, Pope Francis has described the love of Christ for humanity as one of attitudes and actions from the heart and not premised on sentiments. The Pope made this remark recently at the Vatican, while commenting on the Gospel reading of the sixth Sunday of the Easter Season; which premised on God's love for man.

Pope Francis therefore encouraged the faithful to live in the "current of God's love," receiving with "gratitude the love that comes from the Father." Noting that it is "difficult but not impossible" to avoid putting our egotism and pride in the way of this current; the Holy Father reminded the faithful that Christ's love is "not a superficial sentiment but a fundamental attitude of the heart," which is manifested in living as He lived. It's lived in "attitudes and actions," he said, not in "words, words, words."

The Catholic Pontiff stated that this love is to be shared with our neighbours and with every brother and sister, "regardless of who he or she is, and of what condition he or she is in — starting with those who are close to me, in my family, in my community, at my work, in my school." The pope also explained that this love isn't to be "reserved

for special occasions,” but should be the “constant of our existence.”

He continued: “That’s why we are called to revere the elderly “with love, as a precious treasure,” even if they “create economic problems or inconveniences.” He added: “we should also give the sick every assistance possible, also in the last stage of life,” he said. And “this is the reason that unborn children are always welcome,” he continued, because “life should always be protected and loved, from conception until its natural end.”

The Pope noted that we are all loved by God in Jesus, who asks us to love others as he loves us,. He however stressed that “we can’t do that unless we have his heart; and that’s why we are called to go to Mass every Sunday, since Mass is to form in us the heart of Christ”.

And in his reflection on the Eucharist during the general audience in St. Peter’s Square, Pope Francis reiterated that Mass is a sacred celebration, not a show, and called on the faithful to re-live the Paschal mystery of Jesus. He urged his listeners to reflect on going to Mass and on their relationship to Christ saying: “If during Mass, we are going to Calvary—let’s use our imagination—and we know that that man [on the cross] is Jesus, would we allow ourselves to chat, to take photos, and to make a bit of a show?” “No! Because that’s Jesus! We would surely be in silence, in tears, and also full of joy because we are saved.”

The Pope continued: “When we enter a church to celebrate the Mass, let us think like this: ‘I am arriving at Calvary, where Jesus gives His life for me.’ And in this way, the show disappears, the chattering disappears, [along with] the comments and all those things that distance us from this beautiful thing which is the Mass, Jesus’ victory.” He explained that what we commemorate in the Mass is how Jesus “with His passion, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, brought the Passover to completion.”

Stressing the importance of Sunday Mass the Pope said: “for Christians, it is vital to participate in the Eucharist, especially on Sundays, since it allows us to unite ourselves with Christ, taking part in His victory over death, and to enjoy the fruits of the resurrection.” He added that the Eucharist also strengthens our interpersonal and social relationships. “The Lord Jesus wants to give us in the Eucharist His Paschal love so we can love God and our neighbor as He loved us, giving up His own life;” he concluded.