



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
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General Audience

Catechesis of the Holy Father

Greetings in various languages

Appeal of the Holy Father

This morning's General Audience took place at 9.20 in St. Peter's Square, where the Holy Father Francis met with groups of pilgrims and faithful from Italy and all over the world.

In his address in Italian the Pope began a new cycle of catechesis on the Commandments, focusing his reflection on the desire for a full life (Bible passage: from the *Gospel of Mark* 10: 17-21).

After summarising his catechesis in several languages, the Holy Father addressed special greetings to the groups of faithful present. He then launched an appeal for the 2018 World Cup championship which begins tomorrow in Russia.

The General Audience concluded with the recital of the *Pater Noster* and the Apostolic Blessing.

Catechesis of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

Today is the feast of Saint Anthony of Padua. Who among you is called Anthony? An applause to all the

“Anthonies”. Today we will begin a new itinerary of catechesis. It will be on the theme of the Commandments. The Commandments of the law of God. To introduce it, let us take as a starting point the passage we have just heard: the encounter between Jesus and a man, he is a young man, who, on his knees, asks Him how he can inherit eternal life (cf. *Mk 10: 17-21*). And in that question there is the challenge of every existence: ours too: the desire for a full, infinite life. But how can we arrive at this? What path should we take? To live truly, to live a noble existence. How many young people seek to “live” and then destroy themselves in the pursuit of ephemeral things.

Some think that it is better to extinguish this impulse, the impulse to live, because it is dangerous. I would like to say, especially to the young: our worst enemy is not concrete problems, however serious and dramatic they may be: the greatest danger in life is a poor spirit of adaptation that is not meekness or humility, but rather *mediocrity, pusillanimity*. [1] Is a mediocre young person a young person with a future, or not? No! He stays there, he doesn't grow, he will not be successful. Mediocrity or pusillanimity. Those young people are afraid of everything: “No, I am this way...” These young people will not go ahead. Meekness, strength and no pusillanimity, no mediocrity. Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati – who was a young man – used to say that it is necessary to live, not to get by. [2] The mediocre get by. Live with the strength of life. We must ask the heavenly Father, for the young people of today, the gift of a healthy *restlessness*. But at home, in your houses, in every family, when you see a young person who stays seated all day, at times the mother and father thing, “But he is ill, he has something”, and they take him to the doctor. The life of the young person is about going ahead, being restless, healthy restlessness, the capacity not to settle for a life without beauty, without colour. If young people are not hungry for authentic life, I wonder, where will humanity end up? Where will humanity end up with quiet young people who are not restless?

The question of that man in the Gospel passage we have heard is within each one of us: how do we find life, life in abundance, happiness? Jesus answers: “*You know the Commandments*” (19), and cites a part of the Decalogue. It is a pedagogical process, by which Jesus wishes to lead to a precise place: indeed it is already clear from his question that the man does not have a full life, he seeks more and he is restless. What must he therefore understand? He says: “Teacher, all these I have kept since I was a boy” (v. 20).

How do we pass from youth to maturity? When we begin to accept our own limits. One becomes an adult when one becomes relative and aware of what is missing (cf. v. 21). This man is compelled to acknowledge that everything he can “do” does not go beyond a roof, it does not go beyond a margin.

How good it is to be men and women! How precious our existence is! And yet there is a truth in the history of recent centuries that man has often refused, with tragic consequences: the truth of his limits.

Jesus, in the Gospel, says something that can help us: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them” (*Mt. 5: 17*). The Lord Jesus gives fulfilment, He came for this. That man had to arrive at the threshold of taking a leap, where there opens up the possibility of stopping living for oneself, one's own works, one's own goods and, precisely because full life is lacking, leave all to follow the Lord. [3] Seemingly in Jesus' final invitation – immense, wonderful – there is not the offer of poverty, but of wealth, of the true kind: “One thing you lack... Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me” (v. 21).

Who, given the choice between the original and a copy, would choose the copy? Here is the challenge: to find the original of life, not the copy. Jesus does not offer surrogates, but *true* life, *true* love, *true* wealth! How can the young follow us in faith if they do not see us choose the original, if they see us addicted to half measures? It is bad to find Christians of half measures, if I may permit myself the word, “dwarf” Christians; they grow up to a certain point and no further; Christians with a shrunken, closed heart. It is bad to find this. There needs to be the example of someone who invites me “beyond” to “more”, to grow a little. Saint Ignatius called it the “magis”, “the fire, the fervour of action that rouses the dormant”. [4]

The road of what is missing passes for what there is. Jesus did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets but to fulfil. We have to start from reality to make the jump to “what is missing”. We must scrutinize the ordinary to

open ourselves to the extraordinary.

In these catecheses we will take the two tablets of Moses as Christians, hand in hand with Jesus, to pass from the illusions of youth to the treasure that is in heaven, walking behind Him. We will discover, in each of those laws, ancient and wise, the door opened by the Father Who is in heaven because the Lord Jesus, who has passed through it, leads us into real life. His life. The life of the children of God.

Greetings in various languages

French

I cordially greet the pilgrims from France and Canada, as well as those from other French-speaking countries. I greet in particular the young people of the Paul Mélizan high school in Marseille and the faithful of the Sanctuary of Montligeon. Dear friends, do not be afraid to take Jesus' hand and to follow Him. He will lead you on the path of true life. God bless you!

English

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's audience, particularly those from England, Scotland, Malta, Australia, Indonesia, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, the Philippines, Canada and the United States of America. Upon all of you, and your families, I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

German

A warm welcome to German-speaking pilgrims. In particular, I greet the *Schoenstatt* Movement of Germany. The month of June is dedicated to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, which we invoke in the relative Litany as "desire of the eternal homeland". Let us entrust to Jesus the fulfilment of all our desires. God bless you.

Spanish

I cordially greet Spanish-speaking pilgrims from Spain and Latin America. In particular, I greet the professors and students of the minor seminary of Madrid. Let us ask the Virgin Mary to obtain for us the grace of rediscovering and reliving the Ten Commandments as a way of love that will lead us to the true life, which is Christ. May the Lord bless you. Thank you very much.

Portuguese

I address a cordial greeting to the Portuguese-speaking pilgrims, in particular the Brazilian groups of Anápolis and Palotina, and to the numerous faithful of Lisbon and Porto, especially the "Colégio da Paz" and the "Confraria da Pedra". I ask of God, for all of you, the gift of a healthy restlessness, never to be satisfied with a life without an ideal, without beauty. Stake your life on joyfully giving to others. I gladly bless you and your loved ones!

Arabic

I cordially greet Arabic-speaking pilgrims, especially those from Syria, Lebanon and the Middle East. God has given us life to live it, not in idleness and hesitation, but in fullness and tenacity. He has revealed to us how to achieve this life through His living Word and His sacred Commandments. Whoever accepts this Word and lives according to these Commandments, overcomes the limited human richness and receives the true riches that

only God can give. Thus man finds in God his true happiness and his most precious treasure. May the Lord bless you and protect you from the evil one!

Polish

I welcome Polish pilgrims. Dear brothers and sisters, the pilgrimage to the apostolic roots of Christianity is an opportune moment to look for answers to the essential questions, such as the one we reflect upon today: what good can we do to obtain eternal life? Seek them in the light of the witness of faith, hope and love of the followers of Christ, starting with the Apostles Peter and Paul, up to the saints of our time. Have courage to desire “the treasure in heaven” that Christ has promised us! I bless you from the heart.

Italian

I extend a cordial welcome to Italian-speaking pilgrims.

I am pleased to welcome the new priests of the diocese of Brescia; the Missionaries of Charity; the Missionary Sisters of the Consolata and the Sisters Servants of Mary Ministers of the Sick.

I greet the faithful of the parish of San Pietro in Abbadia di Montepulciano, accompanied by their bishop, Msgr. Stefano Manetti, and those of the Sacred Heart of Marigliano and Grottammare; participants in the Congress promoted by the Italian Society of Paediatrics, and the flag-bearers of the city of Volterra.

A special thought goes to the young, the elderly, the sick and the newlyweds. Today is the memory of Saint Anthony of Padua, Doctor of the Church and patron of the poor. He teaches you the beauty of sincere and gratuitous love; just by loving as He loved, no one around you will feel marginalized and, at the same time, you will always be stronger in the trials of life.

Appeal of the Holy Father

Tomorrow the 2018 World Cup championship will begin in Russia. I wish to send my warmest greetings to the players and the organizers, as well as those who will be following via the social media this event that overcomes all boundaries.

May this important sporting event become an opportunity for encounter, dialogue and fraternity between different cultures and religions, favouring solidarity and peace among nations.

[1] The Fathers spoke of pusillanimità (oligopsychia). Saint John of Damascus defined it as “fear of acting” (*De fide orthodoxa*, II, 15) and Saint John Climacus adds that “pusillanimity is a puerile disposition in a soul that is no longer young” (*The Ladder*, XX, 1, 2).

[2] Cf *Letter to Isidoro Bonini*, 27 February 1925.

[3] “The eye was created for light, the ear for sound, everything for its purpose, and the desire of the soul to hasten towards Christ (Nicholas Kabasilas, *Life in Christ*, II, 90).

[4] *Address to the 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus*, 24 October 2016: “It is a *magis*, that *plus* which leads Ignatius to under take initiatives, to follow them through, and to evaluate their real impact on people’s lives in matters of faith, justice, mercy and charity”.
