

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 180912b

Wednesday 12.09.2018

General Audience

Catechesis of the Holy Father

Greetings in various languages

This morning's General Audience took place at 9.25 a.m. in Saint 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, continuing his cycle of catechesis on the Commandments, focused on the theme: *The day of rest, prophecy of freedom* (Bible passage: from the Book of Deuteronomy, 5: 12-15).

After summarising his catechesis in several languages, the Holy Father addressed special greetings to the groups of faithful present.

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!

In today's catechesis we return again to the *third commandment*, on the day of rest. The Decalogue, promulgated in the Book of Exodus, is repeated in the Book of Deuteronomy in an almost identical way, with the exception of this Third Word, where there appears a precious difference: while in Exodus the reason for rest is the *blessing of creation*, in Deuteronomy instead it commemorates the *end of slavery*. In this day the slave must rest like the master, to celebrate the memory of the Pasch of liberation.

Indeed, slaves by definition cannot rest. But many types of slavery exist, both exterior and interior. There are external constrictions such as oppressions, lives sequestered by violence and by other types of injustice. Then there exist inner prisons, such as psychological obstacles, complexes, limits of character and so on. Does rest exist in these conditions? Can a man who is imprisoned or oppressed remain free? And can a person tormented by inner difficulties be free?

In fact, there are people who, even in prison, experience a great freedom of mind. Think, for example, of Saint Maximilian Kolbe, or Cardinal Van Thuan, who turned dark oppressions into places of light. Just as there are people marked by great inner fragility but know the repose of mercy and know how to transmit it. God's mercy frees us. And when you encounter God's mercy, you have a great inner freedom and are also capable of transmitting it. This is why it is so important to open up to God's mercy, so as not to be slaves to ourselves.

What then is true freedom? Does it reside in the freedom of choice? Certainly this is a part of freedom, and we make an effort to ensure it is guaranteed to every man and woman (cf. Vatican Ecumenical Council II, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 73). But we know that being able to do what you want is not enough to be truly free, nor even happy. True freedom is much more.

Indeed, there is a slavery that binds more than a prison, more than a panic attack, more than an imposition of any kind: the slavery to one's own ego^[1]. Those people who spend all day looking at themselves to see their ego. And their own ego has a greater stature than the body. They are slaves to their ego. The ego can become a tyrant who tortures man wherever he is and procures for him the most profound oppression, which is "*sin*", which is not a trivial violation of a code, but a failure of existence and the condition of slaves (cf. *Jn* 8: 34)^[2]. Sin is, in the end, the speech and action of the ego. "I want to do this and I don't care if there is a limit, if there is a commandment, I don't even care whether there is love".

The ego, for example, let us think of human passions: the greedy, the lustful, the miserly, the angry, the envious, the lazy, the proud are slaves of their vices, which tyrannize them and torment them. There is no respite for the greedy, as greed is the hypocrisy of the stomach, which is full but makes us believe it is empty. The hypocritical stomach makes us greedy. We are slaves to a hypocritical stomach. There is no respite for the greedy and the lustful who must live with pleasure; the anxiety of possession destroys the miser, who must always accumulate money, harming others; the fire of anger and the worm of envy ruin relationships. Writers say that envy turns the body and soul yellow, like when a person has hepatitis: he or she becomes yellow. The envious have a yellow soul, because they can never have the freshness of the health of the soul. Envy destroys. The sloth that avoids any effort makes one incapable of living; haughty egocentrism – the ego of which I spoke – digs a deep hole between oneself and others.

Dear brothers and sisters, who is therefore the true slave? Who is he who knows no rest? He who is not able to love!

The third commandment, which invites us to celebrate liberation in repose, is for us Christians the prophecy of the Lord Jesus, who breaks down the interior slavery of sin to make man capable of loving. True love is true freedom: it detaches from possession, reconstructs relationships, knows how to welcome and value others, transforms every effort into a joyful gift and makes us capable of communion. Love even makes the imprisoned free, even if they are weak and limited.

This is the freedom we receive from our Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ.

[1] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1733: "The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to the slavery of sin".

[2] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1739: “Man's freedom is limited and fallible. In fact, man failed. He freely sinned. By refusing God's plan of love, he deceived himself and became a slave to sin. This first alienation engendered a multitude of others. From its outset, human history attests the wretchedness and oppression born of the human heart in consequence of the abuse of freedom”.

Greetings in various languages

French

I cordially greet Francophone pilgrims from France, Belgium and other countries, especially young rural Belgians. Dear friends, ask with faith that the Lord help you free yourselves from all the slavery of life, making you ever more able to love. God bless you!

English

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's audience, especially those from England, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Nigeria, Australia, Malaysia, Canada and the United States of America. In particular I greet the International Young Catholic Students meeting in Rome in preparation for the forthcoming Synod on Young People. I also greet the journalists and teachers taking part in a seminar organized by the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross. I welcome too the members of the Green Affordable Housing Project from the United States. Upon all of you, and your families, I invoke the Lord's blessings of joy and peace. God bless you!

German

I greet with affection German-speaking pilgrims, especially the many young people here. I hope that your stay in Rome will provide you with some inner repose, so that, when you get back home, you can fulfil your daily tasks in the family, in school and at work with increasing dedication. May the Lord bless you and your loved ones.

Spanish

I cordially greet the Spanish-speaking pilgrims from Spain and Latin America, and in particular the group of Venezuelan priests accompanied by Cardinal Baltazar Porras. Today we celebrate the feast of the Holy Name of Mary. Let us ask our Mother in Heaven to help us to live the Sunday rest as a privileged time of encounter with the Lord and with others, allowing the love of Jesus to free us from all our slavery. May the Lord bless you. Thank you very much.

Portuguese

Dear pilgrims from Portugal, Brazil and other Portuguese-speaking countries, I extend a cordial welcome to you, especially to the faithful of Tomar, Pernes and the group of Brazilian magistrates. Let us live the Sunday Eucharist with a spirit of faith and prayer, knowing that the flesh of Jesus strengthens us in our true freedom as children of God. May the Lord's blessing descend upon you and your communities. Thank you.

Arabic

I extend a cordial welcome to Arabic-speaking pilgrims, especially those from the Middle East. Dear brothers and sisters, “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free” (*Gal* 5: 1). We are called to always find in him the rest of mercy and of the truth that make us free. The Lord bless you!

Polish

I cordially greet the Polish pilgrims. Today in the liturgy we celebrate the memory of the Most Holy Name of Mary. In the history of the world the fortunes, hopes and tears of many people have intertwined with her name. Even today, she unites in prayer the millions of hearts that pay homage to her, implore her intercession, her help and her succour. Our Lady defends the faith and the Church in danger. By venerating the name of Mary, we give thanks for her presence in the life of the Church and of each one of us. By entrusting you to the Mother of God, I bless you from the heart.

Italian

I extend a cordial welcome to Italian-speaking pilgrims.

In particular I greet the Franciscans of the Immaculate Conception; the Servants of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the parish groups, especially those of San Siro in Sanremo, with their bishop, Msgr. Antonio Suetta, of Santa Lucia in Uzzano and of the Saints Giacomo and Filippo in Merone.

I greet the participants in the National Meeting of journalists accompanied by the bishop Msgr. Carlo Bresciani; the Italian Dog Sports Federation; the ACLI group of the Province of Brescia, the Federation of Third Age Associations and the Italian Association of Medical Oncology.

I address a special thought to the young, the elderly, the sick and newlyweds. To newlyweds, I say that they are courageous, as in this time it takes courage to get married. And for this they are good. Today is the liturgical memorial of the Most Holy Name of Mary. All of us as Christians are invited to grasp in the name of Mary, the great project that God had for this supreme creature, and, at the same time, the response of love that, as a Mother, she gave to her Son Jesus, collaborating without reserve in his work of salvation.
