



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAЕ

The 'all' or 'nothing' of Christians

Monday, 17 June 2013

(by *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly ed. in English, n. 26, 26 June 2013)

“Nothing’ is the seed of war, always; for it is the seed of egoism. 'All', that great one, is Jesus”. Meekness and magnanimity are founded on the right understanding this pair that distinguishes Christians. Pope Francis said this on Monday morning, 17 June, at Mass in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae. Among the concelebrants was Cardinal Attilio Nicora, president of the Vatican’s Financial Information Authority, as well as a group of his collaborators and staff of the Vatican Museums.

Commenting on the day's readings — drawn from St Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians (6:1-10) and the Gospel of Matthew (5:38-42) — the Pontiff lingered on the significance of what he defined “a classic” of the Gospel teachings: that is, the meaning of what Jesus says regarding the strike on the cheek, to which the Christian responds by offering the other cheek. This is something that goes against the world's logic, the Pope said. Such a logic responds to an offence with an equal and adverse reaction, because “we must defend ourselves, we must fight, we have to defend our ground. And if someone strikes us once, we will strike them twice and so defend ourselves. That is the thinking, it's normal, right?”

Yet, Jesus goes beyond this and says that after we have been struck, one ought to pause for a while together with the other person, to dedicate some time to the person, the Pontiff said. And if

he asks for something, we ought to give him even more. This is Jesus' law: "the justice that delivers is another justice, totally different from 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth'". Then the Holy Father called attention to the phrase with which Paul concludes the passage read in the Liturgy. For, he explained, "he gives us an expression that may help us to understand the meaning of the blow to the cheek and other such things. In fact, he ends with these words: 'as [people] having nothing, and yet possessing everything'".