



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

Honey drops Thursday, 10 January 2019 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

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During his homily at Mass on Thursday, 10 January, Pope Francis identified three “signs” of behaviour that can help us discern our capacity to love others and God: our willingness to pray for our neighbours, including those we do not like; to refrain from “feelings of jealousy and envy”; and, above all, to avoid gossip.

Referring once more to the First Letter of the Apostle John (4:19-5:4), Pope Francis warned that the spirit of the world is a liar, “a spirit of appearances”, whereas the spirit of God “is true”. Indeed, “he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen” (v. 20). The Pope explained if you cannot love God “concretely”, then you do not love God”.

The Holy Father suggested we ask ourselves some questions to help us discern the three “signs” that can indicate our capacity to love our brothers and sisters: ‘Do I pray for my brother, including my enemies?’. ‘Do I feel jealous and envious of them and wish them harm?’. And lastly, ‘do I gossip?’, which, he said, can taste sweet like “honey drops”, which may seem like a good thing but instead cause destruction. Gossiping, he stressed, is the “most mundane sign that I do not love my neighbour” and thus that I do not love God.

The “spirit of the world”, he concluded, “is defeated by this spirit of faith: believing that God is in my brother, in my sister”. Only faith, Pope Francis repeated, “will give us the strength not to gossip, to pray for everyone, ... and to prevent feelings of jealousy and envy from growing”.

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