



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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Mass at Swedbank Stadium: we need one another if we are to become saints

This morning Pope Francis celebrated Holy Mass in Swedbank Stadium, situated three kilometres from Malmö and able to hold 18,000 people. In his homily, the Holy Father explained that holiness is not made manifest in great works, but rather in living day by day the requirements of our baptism, and on the Solemnity of All Saints he remembered two Swedish saints: St. Maria Elisabeth Hesselblad, recently canonised, and St. Bridget, Birgitta of Vadstena, co-patroness of Europe; both of them, he said, prayed and worked to forge bonds of unity and communion between Christians. He then went on to refer to one of the Beatitudes, the “identity card” of Christians, emphasising the meekness that “enables us to set aside everything that divides and estranges us”.

The following is the full text of the Holy Father’s homily.

“Today, with the entire Church, we celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints. In doing so, we remember not only those who have been proclaimed saints through the ages, but also our many brothers and sisters who, in a quiet and unassuming way, lived their Christian life in the fullness of faith and love. Surely among them are many of our relatives, friends and acquaintances.

“Ours, then, is a celebration of holiness. A holiness that is seen not so much in great deeds and extraordinary events, but rather in daily fidelity to the demands of our baptism. A holiness that consists in the love of God and the love of our brothers and sisters. A love that remains faithful to the point of self-renunciation and complete devotion to others. We think of the lives of all those mothers and fathers who sacrifice for their families and are prepared to forego – though it is not always easy – so many things, so many personal plans and projects.

“Yet if there is one thing typical of the saints, it is that they are genuinely happy. They found the secret of authentic happiness, which lies deep within the soul and has its source in the love of God. That is why we call the saints blessed. The Beatitudes are their path, their goal towards the homeland. The Beatitudes are the way of life that the Lord teaches us, so that we can follow in His footsteps. In the Gospel of today’s Mass, we heard how Jesus proclaimed the Beatitudes before a great crowd on the hill by the Sea of Galilee.

“The Beatitudes are the image of Christ and consequently of each Christian. Here I would like to mention only one: ‘Blessed are the meek’. Jesus says of Himself: ‘Learn from me for I am meek and lowly in heart’. This is His

spiritual portrait and it reveals the abundance of His love. Meekness is a way of living and acting that draws us close to Jesus and to one another. It enables us to set aside everything that divides and estranges us, and to find ever new ways to advance along the path of unity. So it was with sons and daughters of this land, including St. Mary Elisabeth Hesselblad, recently canonised, and Saint Bridget, Birgitta of Vadstena, co-patroness of Europe. They prayed and worked to create bonds of unity and fellowship between Christians. One very eloquent sign of this is that here in your country, marked as it is by the coexistence of quite different peoples, we are jointly commemorating the fifth centenary of the Reformation. The saints bring about change through meekness of heart. With that meekness, we come to understand the grandeur of God and worship Him with sincere hearts. For meekness is the attitude of those who have nothing to lose, because their only wealth is God.

“The Beatitudes are in some sense the Christian’s identity card. They identify us as followers of Jesus. We are called to be blessed, to be followers of Jesus, to confront the troubles and anxieties of our age with the spirit and love of Jesus. Thus we ought to be able to recognise and respond to new situations with fresh spiritual energy. Blessed are those who remain faithful while enduring evils inflicted on them by others, and forgive them from their heart. Blessed are those who look into the eyes of the abandoned and marginalised, and show them their closeness. Blessed are those who see God in every person, and strive to make others also discover him. Blessed are those who protect and care for our common home. Blessed are those who renounce their own comfort in order to help others. Blessed are those who pray and work for full communion between Christians. All these are messengers of God’s mercy and tenderness, and surely they will receive from him their merited reward.

“Dear brothers and sisters, the call to holiness is directed to everyone and must be received from the Lord in a spirit of faith. The saints spur us on by their lives and their intercession before God, and we ourselves need one another if we are to become saints. Helping one another to become saints. Together let us implore the grace to accept this call with joy and to join in bringing it to fulfilment. To our heavenly Mother, Queen of All Saints, we entrust our intentions and the dialogue aimed at the full communion of all Christians, so that we may be blessed in our efforts and may attain holiness in unity”.
