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Homily of the Holy Father at the Holy Mass celebrated for workers in the Vatican Industrial Centre

The following is the text of the homily the Holy Father Francis pronounced this morning during the Holy Mass celebrated for the workers in the Vatican Industrial Centre:

Homily of the Holy Father

First of all, I would like to thank you for the invitation to celebrate this Mass with you, workers. Jesus comes, He knows what work is, He understands us well. He understands us very well. I would also like to say a prayer for our beloved Sandro [Mariotti]. Yesterday his father left us. His father worked here, in the Vatican. He left as the righteous do ... He was with friends at the beach and ...

Let us pray for Sandro's father and for Sandro.

Now I would like to say something to you about the Gospel. Jesus saw a man called Matthew, seated at the tax desk. He was a publican. These people were judged the worst, because they were ... because they collected taxes and sent the money to the Romans. And they would put part of it in their own pockets. They gave it to the Romans: they sold the freedom of the homeland, and that is why they were hated. They were traitors of the homeland. Jesus called to him. He saw him and He called to him. Follow me. Jesus chose an apostle from among those people, the worst. Then this Matthew, invited to lunch, was joyful.

Before, when I used to lodge on Via della Scrofa, I liked to go – now I can't – to the church of San Luigi dei Francesi to look at Caravaggio's *Conversion of Matthew*, he who clung to money like this [gestures] and Jesus, Who points to him with His finger [...] He was attached to money, and Jesus chose him. He invites all the group to lunch, those who betray their homeland, the publicans. Seeing this, the Pharisees who considered themselves righteous, who judged everyone, said: "But how is it that your Teacher keeps this company?" Jesus says: "I came to call not the righteous, but sinners".

This consoles me greatly, because I think that Jesus came for me. Because we are all sinners – all of us. We all

have this degree; we are graduates in this. Each one of us knows where his sin, where his weakness is strongest. We must first of all recognize this: none of us, of us who are here, can say: "I'm not a sinner". The Pharisees said this, and Jesus condemned them. They were arrogant, vain, they believed themselves superior to the others. Instead, we are all sinners. It is our title and it is also the possibility of attracting Jesus to us. Jesus comes to us, He comes to me; He comes to me because I am a sinner.

This is why Jesus came, for sinners, not for the righteous. They have no need. Jesus says: "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice' means. For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners".

When I read this, I feel called by Jesus, and we can all say the same: Jesus came for me – every one of us.

This is our consolation and our confidence: that He always forgives, He always heals the soul, always, always. "But I am weak, I'll fall again ..." It will be Jesus Who raises you, heals you, always [...] This is our consolation. Jesus came for me, to [...] give me strength, to make me happy, to ease my conscience. Do not be afraid. In terrible moments, when we feel the weight of the many things we have done, so many slip-ups in life, so many things, and we feel the weight ... Jesus loves me because I am like that.

There comes to mind a passage of the life of a great saint, Jerome, who had a temper, and tried to be meek, but that temper ... because he was a Dalmatian, and Dalmatians are strong ... He succeeded in controlling his temperament and so he offered many things to the Lord, so much work, and he prayed to the Lord: "What do you want from me?" "You have not yet given me everything." "But Lord, I've given You this, and that and that ..." "One thing is lacking". "What is lacking?" "Give me your sins".

It is beautiful to hear this: "Give me your sins, your weaknesses, I will heal you, go forward".

Today, this first Friday, let us think of Jesus' heart. May He let us understand this beautiful thing, with His merciful heart that only says to us: "Give me your weaknesses, give me your sins, I forgive everything". Jesus forgives everything; He forgives always.

May this be our joy.
