



# SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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## General Audience

### Catechesis of the Holy Father

### Greetings in various languages

This morning's General Audience took place at 9.30 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 continued his cycle of catechesis on the Commandments, focusing on the theme "*Do not commit adultery*" (cf. Bible reading: from the Gospel according to Mark, 10: 2-9).

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 our itinerary of catechesis on the Commandments, today we arrive at the Sixth Word, which relates to the emotional and sexual dimension, and states: "Do not commit adultery".

The immediate demand is that of fidelity, and in effect no human relationship is authentic without fidelity and

loyalty.

One can not love only as long as “it is convenient”; love manifests itself beyond the threshold of one’s own advantage, when everything is given without reserve. As the Catechism states: “Love seeks to be definitive; it cannot be an arrangement ‘until further notice’” (1646). Fidelity is the characteristic of a free, mature, responsible human relationship. Even a friend proves himself authentic because he remains such in all circumstances, otherwise he is not a friend. Christ reveals true love, He who lives of the boundless love of the Father, and by virtue of this He is the faithful Friend who welcomes us even when we make mistakes and always wants what is good for us, even when we do not deserve it.

The human being needs to be loved unconditionally, and those who do not receive this acceptance carry within them a certain incompleteness, often without knowing it. The human heart tries to fill this void with surrogates, accepting compromises and mediocrity that have only a vague flavour of love. The risk is calling unripe and immature relationships “love”, with the illusion of finding the light of life in something that is at best only a reflection of it.

In this way we overestimate, for example, physical attraction, which is in itself a gift of God but is intended to prepare the way for an authentic and faithful relationship with the person. As Saint John Paul II said, the human being is “called to the full and mature spontaneity of relations” which is “the gradual fruit of discernment of the impulses of one’s heart”. It is something that is conquered, from the moment that every human being “must with perseverance and consistency learn the meaning of the body” (cf. *Catechesis*, 12 November 1980).

The call to married life requires, therefore, an accurate discernment of the quality of the relationship and a time of engagement to verify it. To enter the Sacrament of Marriage, the engaged couple must ripen the certainty that in their bond there is the hand of God, Who precedes them and accompanies them, and will allow them to say: “With the grace of Christ I promise to always be faithful to you”. They can not promise fidelity “in joy and pain, in sickness and in health”, and to love and honour each other every day of their lives, only on the basis of good will or hope that “the thing works”. They need to build on the solid ground of God’s faithful love. And for this, before receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony, we need careful preparation, I would say a catechumenate, because we stake our whole life in love, and one does not joke with love. Three or four meetings in the parish can not be defined as a “preparation for marriage”; no, this is not preparation: this is a false preparation. And the responsibility of those who do this falls on him, on the parish priest, on the bishop who allows these things. The preparation must be mature and it takes time. It is not a formal act: it is a Sacrament. But one must prepare with a true catechumenate.

Fidelity is indeed a way of being, a style of life. One works with loyalty, one speaks with sincerity, one remains faithful to the truth in one’s own thoughts, in one’s own actions. A life woven in fidelity is expressed in all dimensions and leads us to be men and women who are faithful and trustworthy in every circumstance.

But to arrive at having such a beautiful life, our human nature is not enough; it is necessary for God’s faithfulness to enter into our existence, to spread to us. This Sixth Word calls us to turn our gaze to Christ, Who with His fidelity can take from us our adulterous heart and give us a faithful heart. In Him, and only in Him, is there love without reserve or changes of mind, complete giving without parentheses and the tenacity of full acceptance.

Our fidelity derives from His death and resurrection; constancy in relations derives from His unconditional love. From communion with Him, with the Father and with the Holy Spirit, derives communion among us and the ability to experience the bonds between us in fidelity.

### Greetings in various languages

### ***French***

I am pleased to greet the pilgrims from France and the various Francophone countries, in particular the pilgrims of Rennes, Coutances and Bayeux-Lisieux, with their bishops Msgr. D'Ornellas, Msgr. Le Boulc'h and Msgr. Boulanger; the young people present, members of the Indian Catholic Tamil chaplaincy of France, the Bayard Press group, the Sève movement, and pilgrims from Switzerland and Quebec. In Jesus Christ, and only in Him, do we find love without reserve, the total gift without parentheses, the perseverance of acceptance to the end. May communion with Him, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, increase communion among us and knowledge of how to live in fidelity! God bless you!

### ***English***

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's audience, especially those from England, Scotland, Ireland, Norway, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Canada and the United States of America. Upon all of you, and your families, I invoke the Lord's blessings of joy and peace. God bless you!

### ***German***

I greet German-speaking pilgrims with affection, especially the many young people here. Where there is charity among us, accord and forgiveness also grow. May the Lord bless you and your loved ones.

### ***Spanish***

I cordially greet Spanish-speaking pilgrims from Spain and Latin America, and in particular the participants in the Meeting on the Social Doctrine of the Church, organized by the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross. Let us ask the Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our mother, to help us all, and especially young people, to discover and live the beauty of human love as a call to surrender and total self-giving, free of selfishness and superficialities. May the Lord bless you. Thank you.

### ***Portuguese***

With great affection I greet the Portuguese-speaking pilgrims, especially those of the diocese of Januária, accompanied by their bishop, Mgr. José Moreira da Silva, and those of the parish of *Nossa Senhora de Fátima of Jundiaí*. May the Virgin Mary watch over your path and help you to be a sign of trust and hope among your brothers. May God's blessing descend upon you and your families.

### ***Arabic***

I cordially greet Arabic-speaking pilgrims, especially those from the Holy Land and the Middle East. "Do not commit adultery" is the invitation to maintain fidelity and to guard love from the wound of betrayal. Only love based on the rock of faith in God and trust in the other can resist the wind of temptations, the storms of changes of mood and the seductions of the world. The words "I love you", in reality, contains in themselves the promise of permanent fidelity. May the Lord bless you all and protect you from the evil one!

### ***Polish***

I welcome Polish pilgrims. I especially greet the teachers and students of the "Norvid" Lyceum of Stargard, promoters of the "Charter of Peace" initiative. It is a call for peace, drawn up after a careful study on the teaching of the popes of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, which, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the independence of Poland, will be sent to the heads of all the countries of the world. Next Sunday, the Church in Poland celebrates the tenth "Day of Solidarity with the persecuted Church", organized by the "Aid to the Church in Need" Papal Foundation, together with the Polish Episcopal Conference. Economic support will be given this

year to Christians in Pakistan. Thank you for these initiatives of peace and solidarity. God bless you!

### ***Italian***

I extend a cordial welcome to Italian-speaking pilgrims.

I am pleased to welcome the Capitulars of the Little Sisters of the abandoned elderly and the Religious who are taking part in the meeting promoted by the Union of Major Superiors of Italy (USMI).

I greet the parish groups; young people from the diocese of Faenza-Modigliana, with their bishop, Msgr. Mario Toso; the pilgrimage of the Daughters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (Ravasco Institute); the Haemodialysis and Transplant group from Chioggia-Padova and the school institutes, in particular the Professional-Technical Institute of Lugo and the Comprehensive Institute of Ripi.

I address a special thought to the young, the elderly, the sick and the newlyweds.

Dear friends, Christ's Gospel message does not ask us to do extraordinary things, but rather to let God act in our lives. He told us: "Apart from me you can do nothing" (*Jn* 15: 5). The Christian life is the meeting of our weakness with the strength of God's grace, which allows us to live a full and joyful life every day, where charity means doing everything with joy and humility, for the glory of God and for the good of men.

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