



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAЕ

Persecuted by the prince of the world

Saturday, 4 May 2013

(by *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly ed. in English, n. 19, 8 May 2013)

Christians are persecuted today more than at the start of Christianity. The originating cause of every persecution is the hate of the prince of the world for those who have been saved and redeemed by Jesus through his death and resurrection. The only weapon by which we can defend ourselves is the Word of God, humility and meekness. On Saturday 4 May, Pope Francis pointed to the path we must take to disentangle ourselves from the snares of the world. These snares, he explained in his homily at Mass in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, are works of the devil who is the prince and spirit of the world.

“So many Christian communities are persecuted around the globe. More so now than in the early times.... Why? Because the spirit of the world hates”. Persecution usually comes after a long road. “Think,” urged Pope Francis, “how the prince of the world tried to trick Jesus in the desert”, tempting especially his vanity. “Jesus never answered this prince with his own words but with the word of God”. The Pope said the message for man today is: “you cannot dialogue with the prince of the world”. Dialogue is “necessary between us”, he explained, “necessary for peace” and we must always maintain it. But “with that prince, there is no dialogue; you can only answer him with the Word of God who who defends us”. The prince of the world, Francis warned, “hates us. And what he did with Jesus, he will do with us”. With a little word here, a trifle there, “he will lead us

down a path of injustice". It begins with the little things, "softening us" to the point that "we fall into the trap. Jesus tell us 'I send you like lambs in the midst of wolves'. Be prudent, but simple."

Jesus is meek and humble of heart. Let us reflect over the weapons that we have to defend ourselves: "let us remain like lambs forever, because then we will always have a shepherd to defend us".

Concelebrating with the Pope was Bishop Santiago Olivera of Cruz del Eje, Argentina. Among those present were a second group of the Pontifical Swiss Guard, accompanied by the Commandant Daniel Rudolf Anrig and the Chaplain Mons. Alain de Raemy.