



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

Knowing Jesus

Thursday, 26 September 2013

(by L'Osservatore Romano, Weekly ed. in English, n. 40, 2 October 2013)

In order to truly know Jesus we need to speak with him, we need to talk to him as we follow him along the path of his ways. Pope Francis focused on knowing Jesus in his homily at Mass on Wednesday morning, 26 September, in the Chapel of Santa Marta. The Pontiff drew inspiration from the passage in St Luke's Gospel (9:7-9) in which Herod asks himself who this Jesus is, this man about whom he has heard so much. The person of Jesus, the Pope noted, often prompted questions of this sort: "Who is he? Where does he come from? We think of Nazareth, for example, when Jesus went to the synagogue of Nazareth for the first time: where did he learn these things? We know him well; he is the carpenter's son. We think of Peter and the apostles after that storm, that driving wind that Jesus silenced: who is this that even the heavens and the earth, the wind, the rain and even the storms obey him? Who is he?"

As the Holy Father explained, these questions may be asked out of curiosity or for the sake of having some assurance about how to act before him. However, the fact remains that whoever knows Jesus asks himself these questions. Indeed, "there were some people," the Pope continued, returning to the Gospel passage, "who began to be afraid of this man, since he could have led them into a political conflict with the Romans". Therefore, they considered not giving any further thought to "this man who creates so many problems".

And why, Pope Francis asked, does Jesus create problems. “You cannot know Jesus”, he responded, “without having problems”. You cannot know Jesus “by sitting in first class” or “in the calm”, much less “in the library”. We only come to know Jesus on the daily path of life.

We can also come to know him in the Catechism, the Holy Father affirmed. “It is true! The Catechism”, he continued, “teaches us many things about Jesus, and we should study it, we should learn it”. However, the fact remains that knowing about Jesus through the Catechism “is not enough”: knowing him with the mind is a step in the right direction, but “in order to know Jesus, we need to enter into a dialogue with him. By talking with him, in prayer, on our knees. If you don't pray, if you don't talk to Jesus,” he said, “you don't know him”.

Lastly, there is a third way to know Jesus: “It is by following him, by going with him, by walking with him, by travelling along the road of his ways”. If you know Jesus with these three languages: of mind, heart and action, then you can say that you know Jesus”. Therefore, in order truly to know him, it is necessary to read “what the Church tells us about him, to speak with him in prayer and to walk along the path of his ways with him”. This is the road, he concluded, and “everyone has a decision to make”.