



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO TURIN

EUCARISTIC CONCELEBRATION

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Piazza Vittorio

Sunday, 21 June 2015

[Multimedia]

In the Opening Prayer, we prayed: “Give your people, Father, the gift of living always in veneration and love for your Holy Name, so that Your grace may not be deprived from those whom you have established on the rock of your love”. The readings that we have heard show us *how* God’s love for us *is*: it is a *faithful* love, a love that *re-creates everything*, a *stable and secure* love.

The Psalm invites us to give thanks to the Lord for “his love is everlasting”. Thus, a *faithful love, fidelity*: it is a love that does not disappoint, it never fails. Jesus embodies this love, He is the Witness. He never tires of loving us, of supporting us, of forgiving us, and thus He accompanies us on the path of life, according to the promise He made to the disciples: “I am with you always, to the close of the age” (Mt 28:20). Out of love He became man, out of love He died and rose again, and out of love He is always at our side, in the beautiful moments and in the difficult ones. Jesus loves us always, until the end, without limits and without measure. And He loves us all, to the point that each one of us can say: “He gave his life for me”. For me! Jesus’ faithfulness does not fail, even in front of our infidelity. St Paul reminds us of this: “If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself” (2 Tim 2:13).

Jesus remains faithful, even when we have done wrong, and He waits to forgive us: He is the face of the Merciful Father. This is a faithful love.

The second aspect: *the love of God re-creates everything*, that is He makes all things new, as we are reminded in the Second Reading. To recognize our limits, our weaknesses, is the door that

opens the forgiveness of Jesus, to his love that can deeply renew us, that can re-create us. Salvation can enter in the heart when we open ourselves to the truth and recognize our mistakes, our sins; now let us make an experience, that beautiful experience of He who has come not for the healthy, but for the sick, not for the just ones, but the sinners (cf. Mt 9:12-13); let us experience his patience, his tenderness, his will to save all. And what is the sign? The sign that we have become "new" and that we have been transformed by the love of God is to strip off the worn out and old clothes of grudges and enmities to wear the clean robes of meekness, goodness, service to others, of peace in the heart, of children of God. The spirit of the world is always looking for something new, but it is only the faithfulness of Jesus that is capable of true innovation, of making us new men, of re-creating us.

Finally, *the love of God is stable and secure*, as the rocky shores that provide shelter from the violence of the waves. Jesus manifests this in the miracle recounted in the Gospel, when He calms the storm, commanding the wind and the sea (cf. Mk 4:41). The disciples are afraid because they realize that they will not make it, but He opens their hearts to the courage of faith. In front of the man who shouts: "I can't do it anymore", the Lord meets him, offers the rock of his love, to which everyone can cling, assured of not falling. How many times we feel that we can't do it anymore! But He is near us, with his outstretched hand and open heart.

Dear brothers and sisters of Turin and Piedmont, our ancestors knew well what it means to be a "rock", what "solidarity" means.

Our famous poet gives a beautiful witness: "Straight and true, they are as they appear: square of head, steady of hand and healthy of liver, they speak little but know of what they speak, although they walk slowly, they go far. People who spare not time nor sweat — Our free and headstrong local race — The whole world knows who they are and, when they pass ... the whole world watches them".

We may ask ourselves if today we are firm on this rock that is the love of God. How do we live God's faithful love toward us. There is always the risk of forgetting that great love that the Lord has shown us. Even we Christians run the risk of letting ourselves be paralyzed by fears of the future and looking for security in things that pass, or in a model of a closed society that tends to exclude more than include. Many Saints and Blesseds who grew up in this land received the love of God and spread it around the world, free and headstrong Saints. In the footsteps of these witnesses, we too can also live the joy of the Gospel by practicing mercy; we can share the difficulties of so many people, of families, especially those who are weakest and marked by the economic crisis. Families are in need of feeling the Church's motherly caress to go forward in married life, in the upbringing of children, in the care of the elderly and also in the transmission of the faith to the younger generations.

Do we believe that the Lord is faithful? How do we live the newness of God that transforms us

everyday? How do we live the steady love of the Lord, that is placed as a secure barrier against the wakes of pride and false innovation? May the Holy Spirit help us to always be aware of this “rocky” love that makes us stable and strong in the small and great sufferings, may we not close ourselves in front of difficulties, to confront life with courage and look to the future with hope. As in the Sea of Galilee, also today in the sea of our existence, Jesus overcomes the forces of evil and the threats of desperation. The peace that He gives us is for all; also for so many brothers and sisters who flee from war and persecution in search of peace and freedom.

My dear ones, yesterday you celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Consolation, *la Consolà*, “who is there: low and solid, without pomp: like a good Mother”.

Let us entrust to our Mother the civil and ecclesial path of this earth: May She help us to follow the Lord so that we may be faithful, so as to be renewed and remain firm in love. So be it.