



The Holy See

MORNING MASS IN THE CHAPEL OF THE

DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHA HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS "His consolation is close, true and opens the doors of hope"

Friday, 8 May 2020

[\[Multimedia\]](#)

Introduction

Today is the World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day. Let us pray for those people who work in these meritorious institutions. May the Lord bless their work that does so much good.

Homily

This conversation between Jesus and the disciples again takes place at the table, during Supper (see *Jn* 14:1-6). Jesus is sad, and all His followers are sad: Jesus said that He would be betrayed by one of them (see *Jn* 13:21) and they all perceive that something bad would happen. Jesus begins to console them, because one of the tasks, the jobs of the Lord is *to console*. The Lord consoles His disciples and here we see Jesus's way of consoling. We have many ways of consoling, from the most authentic, from the closest, to the most formal, such as telegrams of condolences: Profoundly saddened by... That does not console anyone, it is false, the consolation of formality. But how does the Lord console? It is important to know this, because when we go through sad moments in our life, we too learn to perceive what is the true consolation of the Lord.

And in this Gospel passage we see that the Lord always consoles with His *closeness*, through *truth* and *hope*. They are the three paths of the consolation of the Lord.

In *closeness*, never distant: I am here. These beautiful words: I am here. I am here, with you. And very often, in silence. But we know that He is there. He is always there. That closeness that is

God's style, even in the Incarnation, making Himself close to us. The Lord consoles in closeness. And He does not use empty words; on the contrary, He prefers silence. The strength of closeness, in presence. He speaks little, but He is close.

A second path of Jesus's closeness, of Jesus's way of consoling, is the *truth*: Jesus is truthful. He does not say formal things that are lies: No, be calm, everything will pass, nothing will happen, it will pass, things come to an end... No. He tells the truth. He does not hide the truth. Because He Himself in this passage says, I am the truth (see *Jn* 14:6). And the truth is, I will go, that is, I will die (see vv. 2-3). We are faced with death. It is the truth. And He says it so simply and gently, without causing harm. But we are right before His death. He does not hide the truth.

And this is the third way. Jesus consoles with *hope*. Yes, this is a bad moment, but do not let your hearts be troubled. Have faith also in me (v. 1). I will tell you something, Jesus says, in my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? (v. 2). He is the first to go and open the doors, the doors to that place, through which we will all pass, at least we hope. I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be (v. 3). The Lord returns every time that one of us is departing from this world. I will come, I will take you with me: hope. He will come and take us by the hand, and bring us with Him. He does not say, No, you will not suffer, it's nothing No. He tells the truth: I am near you. This is the truth: it is a bad moment, of danger, of death. But do not let your heart be troubled, stay in that peace, that peace that is the basis of every consolation. Because I will come and I will take you by hand when I will be.

It is not easy to allow ourselves *to be comforted* by the Lord. Very often, in bad moments, we get angry with the Lord and we do not allow Him to come to speak to us like this, with this tenderness, with this closeness, with this gentleness, with this truth and with this hope.

Let us ask the grace to learn to let ourselves be comforted by the Lord. The consolation of the Lord is true, it does not deceive. It is not anaesthesia, no. But He is close, He is true, and He opens the doors to hope.

Spiritual Communion

Those who cannot receive Communion can now make a spiritual communion:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if you were already there, and I unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.

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