



## The Holy See

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POPE FRANCIS *ANGELUS* Saint Peter's Square

Sunday, 28 June 2020 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

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*Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!*

This Sunday, the Gospel (cf. *Mt* 10:37-42) forcefully echoes the invitation to live out our bond with the Lord fully and without hesitation. Jesus asks his disciples to take the demands of the Gospel seriously, even when that requires sacrifice and effort.

The first demanding request that he addresses to those who follow him is that of putting love for him above family affection. He says: “He who loves father or mother... son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me” (v. 37). Jesus certainly does not intend to undervalue love for parents and children, but he knows that if family bonds are put in first place, they can deviate from the true good. We see this: some forms of corruption in governments come about precisely because love for family is greater than love for country, and so they put family members in charge. It is the same with Jesus: when love [for family] is greater than [it is] for him, it is not good. All of us can give many examples in this regard, not to mention those situations in which family affections are intermingled with choices that are contrary to the Gospel. When, instead, love for parents and children is inspired and purified by love for the Lord, it then becomes wholly fruitful and produces good fruits within the family itself and well beyond it. Jesus says this phrase in this sense. Let us also remember how Jesus rebukes the doctors of the law who cause their parents to lack what is necessary to them on the pretext of offering it at the altar, of giving it to the Church (cf. *Mk* 7:8-13). He rebukes them! True love for Jesus requires a true love for parents and children, but if we seek out family interests first, this always leads to the wrong path.

Then, Jesus says to his disciples: “he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me” (*Mt* 10:38). This means following him along the path that he himself trod, without looking for shortcuts. There is no true love without the cross, that is, without a personal price to pay. Many mothers, many fathers who sacrifice a great deal for their children, and bear true sacrifices, crosses, because they love them, say this. And the cross is not frightening when borne with Jesus, because he is always at our side to support us in the hour of the most difficult trial, to give us

strength and courage. Nor is it helpful to get agitated to preserve one's own life through fearful or egotistical behaviour. Jesus admonishes: "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake" — that is, for love, for love of Jesus, love for one's neighbour, for service towards others — "will find it" (v. 39). This is the Gospel paradox. But we have many, many examples of this too, thank God! We see it in these days. How many people, how many people, are bearing crosses to help others; they sacrifice themselves to help others who are in need in this pandemic. But, always with Jesus, it can be done. The fullness of life and of joy is found by giving oneself for the Gospel and for our brothers and sisters, with openness, welcoming and goodness.

In so doing, we can experience God's generosity and gratitude. Jesus reminds us of this: "He who receives you receives me... And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water... shall not lose his reward" (vv. 40, 42). God's generous gratitude takes into account even the smallest gesture of love and service given to our brothers and sisters. In these days, I heard from a priest who was moved because a child approached him in his parish and said, "Father, this is my savings; not very much. It is for the poor, for those who are in need today because of the pandemic". A small thing, but a great thing. It is a contagious gratitude, which helps each of us to be grateful to those who take care of our needs. When someone offers us a service, we should not think that we deserve everything. No, many services are carried out freely. Think of volunteer work, which is one of the greatest things about Italian society. The volunteers... And how many of them have lost their lives in this pandemic. They do it out of love, simply to serve. Gratitude, appreciation is, first of all, good manners, but it is also a characteristic of a Christian. It is a simple but genuine sign of the Kingdom of God, which is the kingdom of gratuitous and grateful love.

May Mary Most Holy, who loved Jesus more than her own life and followed him even to the cross, help us to always put ourselves before God with willing hearts, allowing his Word to judge our behaviour and our choices.

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**After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:**

Dear brothers and sisters, this Tuesday, 30 June, the European Union and the United Nations' Fourth Conference on "Supporting the future of Syria and the region" will take place. Let us pray for this important meeting, so that it may improve the dramatic situation of the Syrian people and neighbouring peoples, particularly from Lebanon, in the context of serious socio-political and economic crises that have been made even more difficult by the pandemic. Consider that there are hungry children, who have nothing to eat! Please, may the leaders be capable of making peace.

I also invite everyone to pray for the population of Yemen, here too, especially the children, who are suffering as a result of the very serious humanitarian crisis, and also for those affected by the severe floods in Western Ukraine: may they experience the comfort of the Lord and the help of

their brethren.

I address my greeting to all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims from Italy and from other countries. I see flags: Polish, German, and so many! In particular, I greet those who, here this morning in Rome, attended the Mass in the Congolese rite, praying for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I greet the Congolese delegation present here! These Congolese people are good!

I wish you all a happy Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch! And I will see you tomorrow for the feast of Saints Peter and Paul.