



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

Those who starve children

Monday, 23 October 2017

(by: www.osservatoreromano.va)

The Holy Father described 200,000 Rohingya children and all those suffering from hunger today, as being victims of the “idolatry of money which makes ‘human sacrifices’ because this idolatry causes many people to starve to death”. During his homily at Santa Marta on Monday morning 23 October, he said that no one can remain indifferent before these “starving children” who have no medicine, have no education, who are abandoned. The Holy Father warned against the “God of money” that also destroys families who fall into the trap of greed, of personal interests.

“This Gospel passage begins with an inheritance and ends at the gates of another inheritance”, Francis explained, referring to the day’s reading from the Gospel according to Luke (Lk 12:13-21). Jesus “clearly warns: ‘Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; for a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions’”. Jesus then goes on to tell the parable of “a rich man who finds himself before the abundance of his harvest and does not know what to do”. But “two actions come to his mind: to expand and to extend”. In other words, the Pope said, he decides “to expand the storage barns and in his dreams, [thus] extend his life: ‘so I will be at ease’, but hands off the harvest; everything must be stored because that money is his god”, the Holy Father continued.

“He expands in order to make more room for his god and he lengthens his life to worship that god in his fantasy: he is a slave of that, isn’t he? He does not know completion”, Pope Francis

stressed. Jesus continues his parable saying that the man “continued to gather more goods, more goods and more goods until the point of nausea”. Therefore, the Holy Father asked, “how does this man reason?”. Luke’s passage provides the answer: “he thought to himself: ‘My soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry’. In other words, live the good life, all for yourself, with your god: eat, drink and enter into that exasperated consumerism [which] does not stop, knows no limits”.

However, Pope Francis pointed out, “God sets the limits”: “God said to him: ‘Fool!’. — How many times is the word ‘fool’ used in the Gospel? — This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have stored up, whose will they be?”. In response, the Pope observed, his wealth will end up in the hands of his heirs who will fight over those treasures considered to be like a god.

“This Gospel passage begins with an argument over an inheritance and will end with another argument when the nephews and all these will come: we know what will happen”, he added. But it is “God who puts a limit on this attachment to money”. That “man becomes the slave of money is not a fairytale which Jesus invents: this is the reality” also today, he stressed.

There are “many men and women who live to worship money, to make money their god: many people who live only for this and life has no meaning”, Pope Francis said. “‘So is he who lays up treasure for himself’ — says the Lord in the Gospel — and is not rich toward God”. In reality, the Holy Father said, “they do not know what it means to be rich toward God”.

Pope Francis then shared a personal story. “I remember some years ago, in the other diocese, a case which greatly impressed me: a great and very wealthy businessman had a similar attitude. He had cancer. He knew it. He only had a few more days left to live. In that last week of his life, he was thrilled about a villa and he bought a villa. He thought only about this. He was locked in that thought. When I saw this, I was taken aback. He did not think about the following week when he would have to stand before God”. Even today, he continued, there are “many people, many of these people who have so much”. “Let us just look at starving children who have no medicine, have no education, who are abandoned”. “This is idolatry, but it is an idolatry which kills and makes ‘human sacrifices’ because this idolatry causes many people to starve to death”, he said.

“Let us think about only a single case: [there are] 200,000 Rohingya children in refugee camps. There are 800,000 people there, 200,000 of them are children. They barely have enough to eat: malnourished, without any medicine. This still happens today. It is not something that the Lord says about those times. No, today!”, Pope Francis stressed.

Because of this, “our prayers must be strong: Lord, please touch the hearts of these people who worship... the god of money. Also touch my heart so that I may not fall into that, that I may be able to see”, the Pope prayed. He then spoke about another consequence: “There is war, always, here, family war. We all know what happens when an inheritance is at stake. Families become divided

and end up hating each other”.

Pope Francis ended his homily by referring back to the Gospel narrative. “At the end [of the passage] the Lord gently stresses: one who is ‘not rich toward God’”. “That is the only path: richness, but in God”, the Pope affirmed. However, he continued, this is “not contempt for money, no. It is truly covetousness as he says, covetousness”. It is “living attached to the god of money”. Concluding his remarks, the Pope urged that “our prayers must be strong today, these days when the media shows us many, many calamities, many injustices; let us just think of the children: Lord, may you convert the hearts of these people, that they may know you and not worship the god of money”.