



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

When God recreates

Tuesday, 10 December 2013

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Pope Francis dedicated his homily at the Mass he celebrated in the Chapel of Santa Marta to the tender consolation with which the Lord makes hope flourish in the hearts of Christians.

Commenting on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (40:1-11), also known as the Book of the Consolation of Israel, the Pontiff reflected on the consolation which God grants to his people. The Lord himself “draws near to console them, to give them peace,” he said. And in this way, the Lord “accomplishes a great work”, for he “refashions all things, he recreates them”. This recreation, he added, is even more beautiful than creation itself.

The Pope explained that God’s people were awaiting the Lord’s coming, they knew he would visit them. He said: “Let us recall the last words of Joseph to his brothers: ‘God will visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here’. The Lord would visit his people. This was Israel’s hope. And he would visit them with this consolation: he would make all things new. Not once, but again and again”.

“When the Lord draws near to us, he gives us hope,” Pope Francis said. He refashions all things with hope. He always opens a door”. In the Christian life, he added, this hope “is a true strength, it

is a grace, it is a gift". In fact, he said, "when the Christian loses hope his life no longer has meaning. It is as though he were standing before a wall, faced with nothingness". But the Lord consoles us and refashions us in hope so that we might continue on".

The Lord is close to each one of us in a special way, the Pope then said. Citing the concluding verse of the passage from Isaiah, he said: "He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms, he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young" (v. 11). "It is the image of tenderness," he said. "The Lord consoles us with tenderness. The Lord, the great God, is not afraid of tenderness. He becomes tenderness, he becomes a baby, he make himself little. In the Gospel Jesus himself says: 'it is the will of my Father in heaven that not one of these little ones should perish'" (Mt 18:14). Therefore, the Pope explained, "each one of us is very, very important" to the Lord.

"This was Jesus' great work," he said, in the forty days that passed from the time of his Resurrection to his glorious Ascension: "consoling the disciples, drawing near to them to console them, drawing near to them to give them hope, drawing near to them with tenderness. Let us think of the tenderness he showed to the Apostles, to Mary Magdalene, to the disciples on the road to Emmaus". And it is always so, he said, even with us. Yet, Pope Francis concluded, we must ask the Lord for the grace "not to be afraid of the Lord's consolation, not to be afraid of being open, of asking for it, of searching for it, for it is a consolation that gives us hope and makes us feel the tenderness of God the Father".