



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAЕ

The power of money

Friday, 20 September 2013

(by *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly ed. in English, n. 39, 25 September 2013)

We must guard ourselves against the temptation to idolize money, for this may weaken our faith and accustom us to the deception of meaningless and hurtful desires that lead people to destruction and perdition. Pope Francis warned against this danger at Mass on Friday morning, 20 September, in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

The Holy Father commented on the Readings of the day, saying: “Jesus told us clearly and definitively, that we cannot serve two masters, you cannot serve both God and money. It just doesn't work. There is something about the attitude of love towards money that takes us away from God”. Quoting the First Letter of St Paul to Timothy (6:2-12), the Pope said: “Those who want to be rich fall into temptation and deception, and the many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and perdition”.

Greed, he continued, is the “root of all evil. Overtaken by this desire, some have wandered away from the faith and are grabbed by many torments. It is the power of money that makes you deviate from authentic faith. It cuts you off from the faith, and weakens you so that you lose it”. The Pope pointed to St Paul's warning that “if anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and doctrine, conforming to true religion, then he is blinded by

pride, understands nothing, and is addicted to idle issues and useless discussions”.

“So what happens with money?” the Pope asked. “Money offers a degree of prosperity: you are alright, you feel a little important and then comes the vanity. We have read in Psalm [48]: this vanity comes to you. Vanity that is useless, but makes you feel like an important person”. Vanity, pride, wealth: this is how men in the Psalm are described: Those who “trust in their strength, and boast of their great wealth”. And so what is the truth? The truth, the Pope explained, is that “no one can redeem himself, or pay to God the appropriate price. The redemption of a life would be too expensive. No one can save themselves with money”, however strong the temptation may be to chase “the wealth of feeling sufficient, the vanity of feeling important and, in the end, pride and arrogance”.

The Pope then spoke of the sin that is linked to the greed of money, with all that that it entails, in the first of the Ten Commandments. The Apostle Paul tells us to instead strive for righteousness, piety, faith, charity, and patience, in opposition to vanity, and against pride. Indeed “this is the way of God, not that of the idolatrous power that money gives you. It is the road of humility in Jesus Christ, who being rich became poor to enrich us with his own poverty. This is the way to serve God. May the Lord help us all to not fall into the trap of the idolatry of money”.