



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAЕ

God's lullaby

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We have a God who is “in love with us”, who pampers us tenderly and sings us a lullaby just as a daddy does with his child. Not only this: he seeks us first, he awaits us and teaches us to be “small”, because “love is more in giving than in receiving” and is “more in actions than in words”. Pope Francis recalled this during Mass on the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The Pope considered the Collect recited during Mass, in which he said we thanked the Lord for giving us the grace, the joy to “glory in the heart of [his] beloved Son and recall the wonders of his love for us”.

And “love” is indeed the key word chosen by the Bishop of Rome to express the profound significance of the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart. Because, he stated, “today is the feast of the love of God, of Jesus Christ: who is God’s love for us and God’s love in us”. A feast, he added, which “we celebrate with joy”.

According to the Pontiff, there are, in particular, two “characteristics of love”. The first is contained in the affirmation that “love is more in giving than in receiving”; the second in “love is more in actions than in words”.

The Holy Father explained that when we say that love “is more in giving than receiving, it’s

because love always communicates, it always communicates, and is received by the beloved". And, he added, "when we say that it's more in actions than in words", this is because "love always gives life, it makes things grow".

The Pope thus outlined the fundamental features of the love of God toward people. And he proposed several passages from the day's readings, which, he indicated, "speak to us twice about the small". In fact, in the first reading from Deuteronomy (7:6-11), "Moses explains why the people were chosen, saying: because you are the smallest of all nations". Then in the Gospel of Matthew (11:25-30), "Jesus praises the Father because he had hidden divine things from the wise, and revealed them to the little ones".

The Pope asserted that "in order to understand God's love, this smallness of heart is necessary". Jesus clearly said so: if you don't become as children, you won't enter the kingdom of heaven. This, then, is the right path: "to make yourselves children, make yourselves small", because "only in this smallness, in this humbling" can God's love be received.

It isn't by chance, Pope Francis observed, that when the Lord, "explains his relationship of love", he speaks "as if speaking to a child". And sure enough, God "reminds the people" 'remember, I taught you to walk as a father does with his child'. This is exactly like "that daddy to child" relationship. However, he explained, "if you aren't small" that relationship can't be established.

And it's a relationship that leads "the Lord, in love with us", to use "even words that sound like a lullaby". The Lord states in the Scripture: "Fear not, you worm of Israel, fear not!". And he pampers us, telling us: "I am with you, I hold your hand".

This "is the Lord's tenderness in his love, this is what he communicates to us. And he gives power to our tenderness". However, the Pope cautioned, "if we feel strong, we will never experience caresses as beautiful as the Lord's".

The "words of the Lord", the Pontiff continued, allow us to "understand that mysterious love that he has for us". Jesus himself tells us how: when he speaks about himself, he says he is "gentle and humble of heart". For this reason "even he, the Son of God, humbles himself to receive the Father's love".

Another truth which the feast of the Sacred Heart reminds us, the Pope added, can be gleaned from a passage in the second reading from the first letter of St John (4:7-16): "God loved us first, he is always before us, he always awaits us". He is described in the bible like the almond branch, the first to blossom in spring. Therefore, the Pontiff emphasized, "when we seek him, he has sought us first: he is always before us, he waits to receive us in his heart, in his love".

Summarizing his thoughts, Pope Francis reaffirmed that the two characteristics “can help us to understand this mystery of God’s love for us: to be expressed, our smallness, our humbling is necessary. And he also needs our astonishment when we seek him and find him there awaiting us”. And it’s “so beautiful to thus understand and feel the love of God in Jesus, in Jesus’ heart”.

The Pontiff concluded by inviting those present to pray that the Lord grant every Christian the grace “to understand, to experience, to enter in this mysterious world, to be astonished and to have patience with this love which communicates itself, that he give us joy and lead us on the path of life like a child” who is taken “by the hand”.