



The Holy See

WAY OF THE CROSS AT THE COLOSSEUM

PRAYER OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Palatine Hill

Good Friday, 30 March 2018

[Multimedia]

Lord Jesus, our gaze is turned to you, full of shame, remorse and hope.

Before your supreme love

shame pervades us for having left you alone to suffer for our sins:

shame for having fled when tested despite having said to you a thousand times: *“even if all leave you, I will never leave you”*;

shame for having chosen Barabbas and not you, power and not you, appearances and not you, the god of money and not you, worldliness and not eternity;

shame for having tempted you with mouth and heart, each time that we faced a trial, saying to you: *“you are the Messiah, save yourself and we will believe!”*;

shame because many people, and even some of your ministers, have allowed themselves to be deceived by ambition and vainglory, losing their dignity and the love they had at first;

shame because our generations are leaving young people a world fractured by divisions and war; a world devoured by selfishness in which the young, the children, the sick, the elderly are marginalized;

shame for having lost our shame;

Lord Jesus, grant us always the grace of holy shame!

Our gaze is also filled with remorse which before your *eloquent silence* implores your mercy:

remorse which germinates in the certainty that you alone can save us from evil; you alone can heal us from our leprosy of hate, selfishness, pride, greed, vengeance, avarice, idolatry; you alone can embrace us again, restoring our filial dignity and rejoicing in our return to home, to life;

remorse which blossoms from feeling our pettiness, our nothingness, our vanity, and which allows itself to be caressed by your pleasing and powerful call to conversion;

remorse of David who, from the abyss of his misery, found in you his unique strength;

remorse which arises from our shame, which is born from the certainty that our heart will always be unsettled until we find you and in you its sole source of fulfillment and calm;

the remorse of Peter who, in meeting your gaze, wept bitterly for having denied you before men.

Lord Jesus, grant us always the grace of holy remorse!

Before your supreme majesty, in the obscurity of our despair, a glimmer of hope ignites because we know that your unique measure of loving us is that of loving us without measure:

hope because your message continues to inspire, still today, many people and peoples for whom good alone can conquer evil and cruelty; forgiveness alone can destroy rancour and vengeance; fraternal embrace alone can dispel hostility and fear of the other;

hope because your sacrifice continues, still today, to emit the perfume of divine love which caresses the hearts of many young people who continue to consecrate their lives to you, becoming living examples of charity and gratuitousness in this world of ours, devoured by the logic of profit and easy earnings;

hope because so many missionaries continue, still today, to challenge humanity's *dormant conscience*, risking their lives to serve you in the poor, the rejected, the immigrants, the invisible, the exploited, the hungry and the imprisoned;

hope because your Church, holy and comprised of sinners, continues, still today, despite attempts to discredit her, to be a light that illuminates, encourages, comforts and witnesses to your boundless love for mankind, a model of altruism, an ark of salvation and font of certainty and truth;

hope because the Resurrection has sprung from your Cross, fruit of the greed and cowardice of many doctors of the Law and hypocrites, transforming the darkness of the tomb into the splendour of the dawn of the Sunday whose sun never sets, *teaching us that your love is our hope.*

Lord Jesus, grant us always the grace of holy hope!

Help us, Son of man, to strip ourselves of the arrogance of the robber placed at your left and of the shortsightedness of the corrupt, who have seen in you an opportunity to exploit, a condemned man to criticize, a defeated man to deride, another occasion to ascribe to others, and even to God, their own faults.

We ask you instead, Son of God, to identify us with the good robber who looked at you with eyes full of shame, remorse and hope; who, with the eyes of faith, saw divine victory in your seeming defeat and thus knelt before your mercy, and *with honesty, stole paradise!* Amen!