

FAITH AND REASON

May fraternity prevail over violence The following is a translation of the Pope's words, which he shared in Italian with the faithful present in Saint Peter's Square. Dear Brothers and Sisters, Buongiorno! In this Sunday's Gospel passage (Jn 15:9-17) after having compared himself to the vine and us to the branches, Jesus, explains what fruit is borne by those who remain united to him: this fruit is love. He again repeats the key-verb: abide. He invites us to abide in his love so that his joy may be in us and our joy may be full. To abide in Jesus' love.

Let us ask ourselves: what is this love in which Jesus tells us to abide to have his joy? What is this love? It is the love that originates in the Father, because "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8). This love of God, of the Father, flows like a river in his Son Jesus and through him comes to us, his creatures. Indeed, he says: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you" (Jn 15:9). The love Jesus gives us is the same with which the Father loves him: pure unconditional love, freely given love. It cannot be bought, it is free. By giving it to us, Jesus treats us like friends with this love, letting us know the Father; and he involves us in his same mission for the life of the world.

And then, we can ask ourselves the question, how do we abide in this love? Jesus says: "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love". Jesus summarized his commandments in a single one, this: "that you love one another as I have loved you". To love as Jesus Christ means to offer yourself in service, at the service of your brothers and sisters, as he did in washing the feet of the disciples. It also means going outside of ourselves, detaching ourselves from our own human certainties, from earthly comforts, in order to open ourselves up to others, especially those in greater need. It means making ourselves available, as we are and with what we have. This means to love not in word but in deeds.

To love like Christ means saying 'no' to other 'loves' that the world offers us: love of money those who love money do not love as Jesus loves, love of success, of vanity, of power... These deceptive paths of "love" distance us from the Lord's love and lead us to become more and more selfish, narcissistic and overbearing. And being overbearing leads to a degeneration of love, to the abuse of others, to making our loved ones suffer. I am thinking of the unhealthy love that turns into violence and how many women are victims of violence these days. This is not love. To love as the Lord loves us means to appreciate the people beside us, to respect their freedom, to love them as they are, not as we want them to be as they are, gratuitously. Ultimately, Jesus asks us to abide in his love, to dwell in his love, not in our ideas, not in our own self-worship. Those who dwell in self-worship live in the mirror: always looking at themselves. He asks us to overcome the ambition to control and manage others. Not controlling, serving them. Opening our heart to others, this is love, to be trusting, giving ourselves to others.

Dear brothers and sisters, where does this abiding in the Lord's love lead? Where does it lead us? Jesus told us: "That my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full". And the Lord wants that the joy he possesses, because he is in complete communion with the Father, also be in us insofar as we are united to him. The joy of knowing we are loved by God despite our infidelities enables us to face the trials of life confidently, makes us live through crises so as to emerge from them better. Our being true witnesses consists in living this joy, because joy is the distinctive sign of a true Christian. True Christians are not sad; they always have that joy inside, even in difficult moments... **Holy Father launches appeals for Jerusalem, Afghanistan and**

Colombia

Thoughts and Prayers for the Sick: 'Do you wish to be my follower'? 'Are you willing to drink the cup that I am going to drink (Passion), to be immersed in the bath of pain I am to be immersed in. Yes, indeed you shall, for you cannot be my follower unless you share the cross of suffering with me.

If you want the joy of that first Easter morning, the joy of the union with me, then you must first experience the anguish of a Holy Thursday, the pain of a Good Friday, and the uncertainty of a Holy Saturday."

With these thoughts in your mind, accept God's invitation, "Come to me all you who are weary and find life burdensome and I will give you rest". Carry this cross in the way God expects of you and you will find the peace and joy you search for.

O God, I turn to you not because I doubt your love for me, or because I wish to complain, but simply ask that you help me carry this cross as you wish me to. Your cross weighed heavily on your shoulders, it hurt, you fell beneath it several times. The cross you have sent me is in many respects the same. Help me to walk faithfully in your footsteps, never giving up hope, knowing that all things are possible to him who has faith in you.... **Fr. William C. Mooney**

If we never look at Him or think of what we owe Him and of the death which he suffered for our sakes, I do not see how we can get to know Him or do good works in His service. For what can be the value of faith without works, or works which are not united with the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ? And what but such thoughts can arouse us to love this Lord?... **St Teresa of Avila**

A Thought For the Day

Sunday	Fear not tomorrow. God is already there.
Monday	A small house will hold as much happiness as a big one.
Tuesday	Our Lord takes pleasure in doing the will of those who love him.
Wednesday	You can't possibly stumble if you're on your knees.
Thursday	Build yourself a cell in your heart and retire there to pray.
Friday	The moment I knew God existed I knew I could not do otherwise but to live for him alone.
Saturday	A Christian has not lost the power to sin, but the desire to sin.

Prayer to St, Joseph: Glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph, whose power makes the impossible possible, come to my aid in these times of anguish and difficulty. Take under your protection the serious and troubling situations that I commend to you, that they may have a happy outcome. My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain, and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power. **Amen.**

Humility: Be not troubled about those who are with you or against you, but take care that God be with you in everything you do. Keep your conscience clear and God will protect you, for the malice of man cannot harm one whom God wishes to help. If you know how to suffer in silence, you will undoubtedly experience God's help. He knows when and how to deliver you; therefore, place yourself in His hands, for it is a divine prerogative to help men and free them from all distress. It is often good for us to have others know our faults and rebuke them, for it gives us greater humility. When a man humbles himself because of his faults, he easily placates those about him and readily appeases those who are angry with him. It is the humble man whom God protects and liberates; it is the humble whom He loves and consoles. To the humble He turns and upon them bestows great grace, that after their humiliation He may raise them up to glory. He reveals His secrets to the humble, and with kind invitation bids them come to Him. Thus, the humble man enjoys peace in the midst of many vexations, because his trust is in God, not in the world. Hence, you must not think that you have made any progress until you look upon yourself as inferior to all others... **Thomas Ë Kempis... The Imitation of Christ**

The Trinity the true object of enjoyment: The true objects of enjoyment, then, are the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are at the same time the Trinity, one Being, supreme above all, and common to all who enjoy Him, if He is an object, and not rather the cause of all objects, or indeed even if He is the cause of all. For it is not easy to find a name that will suitably express so great excellence, unless it is better to speak in this way: The Trinity, one God, of whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things. Thus the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and each of these by Himself, is God, and at the same time they are all one God; and each of them by Himself is a complete substance, and yet they are all one substance. The Father is not the Son nor the Holy Spirit; the Son is not the Father nor the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit is not the Father nor the Son: but the Father is only Father, the Son is only Son, and the Holy Spirit is only Holy Spirit. To all three belong the same eternity, the same unchangeableness, the same majesty, the same power. In the Father is unity, in the Son equality, in the Holy Spirit the harmony of unity and equality; and these three attributes are all one because of the Father, all equal because of the Son, and all harmonious because of the Holy Spirit... **St. Augustine**

"Mary, who is the Virgin Most Pure, is also the Refuge of Sinners. She knows what sin is, not by the experience of its fall, not by tasting its bitter regrets, but by seeing what it did to her Divine Son." Venerable Fulton Sheen

In His Will is Our Peace
Fr. William C. Mooney

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