



## The Holy See

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POPE FRANCIS *ANGELUS* *Saint Peter's Square*

*Sunday, 21 August 2016* [\[Multimedia\]](#)

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*Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!*

Today's Gospel passage urges us to meditate on the topic of salvation. St Luke the Evangelist tells us that while Jesus was travelling to Jerusalem, he was approached by a man who asked him this question: "Lord, will those who are saved be few?" (Lk 13:23). Rather than giving a direct answer, Jesus shifts the issue to another level in an evocative way, which the disciples don't understand at first: "strive to enter by the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able" (v. 24). Using the image of a door, he wants his listeners to understand that it is not a question of numbers — how many will be saved —, how many is not relevant, but rather, it is important for everyone to know the way that leads to salvation.

This way means entering through a door. But where is the door? Who is the door? Jesus himself is that door. He says so in the Gospel of John: "I am the door" (10:9). He leads us to communion with the Father, where we find love, understanding and protection. But why is this door narrow, one might ask? Why does he say it is narrow? It is a narrow door not because it is oppressive, but because it demands that we restrain and limit our pride and our fear, in order to open ourselves to Him with humble and trusting hearts, acknowledging that we are sinners and in need of his forgiveness. This is why it is narrow, to limit our pride, which swells us. The door of God's mercy is narrow but is always open to everyone! God does not have preferences, but always welcomes everyone, without distinction. A narrow door to restrain our pride and our fear; a door open wide because God welcomes us without distinction. And the salvation that He gives us is an unending flow of mercy that overcomes every barrier and opens surprising perspectives of light and peace. The door is narrow but always open wide: do not forget this.

Once more, Jesus extends a pressing invitation to us today to go to Him, to pass through the door of a full, reconciled and happy life. He awaits each one of us, no matter what sins we have committed, to embrace us, to offer us his forgiveness. He alone can transform our hearts, He alone can give full meaning to our existence, giving us true joy. By entering Jesus' door, the door of faith and of the Gospel, we can leave behind worldly attitudes, bad habits, selfishness and narrow-mindedness. When we encounter the love and mercy of God, there is authentic change.

Our lives are enlightened by the light of the Holy Spirit: an inextinguishable light!

I would like to propose something to you. Let us think now for a moment, in silence, of the things that we have inside us which prevent us from entering the door: my pride, my arrogance, my sins. Then, let us think of the other door, the one opened wide by the mercy of God who awaits us on the other side to grant us forgiveness.

The Lord offers us many opportunities to be saved and to enter through the door of salvation. This door is an occasion that can never be wasted: we don't have to give long, erudite speeches about salvation, like the man who approached Jesus in the Gospel. Rather, we have to accept the opportunity for salvation. Because at a certain moment, the master of the house will rise and shut the door (cf. Lk 13:25), as the Gospel reminded us. But if God is good and loves us, why would he close the door at a certain point? Because our life is not a video game nor a television soap opera. Our life is serious and our goal is important: eternal salvation.

Let us ask the Virgin Mary, the *Gate of Heaven*, to help us seize the opportunities the Lord gives us in order to cross the threshold of faith and thus to enter a broad path: it is the path of salvation that can embrace all those who allow themselves to be enraptured by love. It is love that saves, the love that already on this earth is a source of happiness for all those who, in meekness, patience and justice, forget about themselves and give themselves to others, especially to those who are most weak.

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### **After the Angelus:**

Dear brothers and sisters, I received the painful news of a brutal attack that struck our dear Turkey yesterday. Let us pray for the victims, for the dead and the injured, and let us ask for the gift of peace for all.

*Hail Mary....*

I cordially greet all the pilgrims from Rome and those arriving from other countries, in particular the faithful from Kalisz, Poland, and Gondomar, Portugal. I should also like to greet in a special way the new seminarians of the Pontifical North American College. Welcome to Rome!

I wish everyone a happy Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch.

*Arrivederci!*