



The Holy See

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY

POPE FRANCIS

JUBILEE AUDIENCE

*Saint Peter's Square
Saturday, 10 September 2016*

[Multimedia]

Mercy and Redemption

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

The passage that we have heard speaks of God's mercy which is implemented in the Redemption, that is, in the salvation which we were given with the Blood of his Son Jesus (cf. 1 Pet 1:18-21). The word "redemption" is not often used, yet it is fundamental because it indicates the most radical liberation that God could fulfil for us, for all of humanity and for all of creation.

It seems that man today no longer likes to think he has been freed and saved through God's intervention; he deludes himself that his freedom is a force for obtaining everything. But in reality this is not the case. How many illusions are sold on the pretext of freedom, and how many new forms of slavery are created in our times in the name of a false freedom! Many, many slaves. 'I do this because I want to, I take drugs because I like to, I am free. I do otherwise'. They are slaves! They become slaves in the name of freedom. We have all seen people like this who end up on the ground. We need God to free us from every form of indifference, selfishness and self-sufficiency".

The words of the Apostle Peter clearly express the meaning of the new life to which we are called. By making Himself one of us, the Lord Jesus not only takes on the human condition, but also raises us up to the possibility of being Children of God. By His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ, the blameless Lamb, conquered death and sin to free us from their dominion. He is the Lamb that was sacrificed for us, so that we can receive a new life made up of forgiveness, love

and joy. These three words are beautiful: forgiveness, love and joy. All that He assumed was also redeemed, freed and saved. Certainly, it is true that life puts us to the test, and at times we suffer for this. However, in these moments we are invited to turn our gaze to the crucified Jesus who suffers for us and with us, as sure proof that God does not abandon us. Let us never forget that in anguish and persecution, as in everyday sufferings, we are always freed by the merciful hand of God who raises us up to Him and leads us to a new life.

God's love is boundless: we can discover ever new signs that show his attention towards us and, above all, his wish to reach us and to await us. All our life, although marked by the fragility of sin, is placed under the gaze of God who loves us. How many pages of Sacred Scripture speak to us of God's presence, closeness and tenderness for every man, especially for the smallest, the poor and the troubled! God has great tenderness, great love for the small ones, for the weak, for those rejected by society. The greater our need, the more his gaze upon us is filled with mercy. He feels compassion and pity towards us because He knows our weaknesses. He knows our sins and He forgives us. He always forgives us! He is so good, our Father is so good.

Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, let us open up to the Lord, and receive his grace! Because, as the Psalm says, "For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with Him is plentiful redemption" (130[129]:7).

Special greetings:

I warmly greet the Italian-speaking pilgrims!

My thought goes first of all to the National Civil Protection Service which was supposed to be present today, and which cancelled its participation in order to continue the precious work of care and assistance to the populations struck by the earthquake on 24 August. I thank them for their dedication and the generous help offered in these days! Thank you brothers and sisters!

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, particularly those from Botswana, South Africa, the Philippines and the United States of America. During your visit to the Eternal City, may your faith in the crucified and risen Christ be renewed and strengthened. May God fill you with his reconciling and tender mercy. God bless you all!

I address a special greeting to the young people of Catholic Action who are gathered for the Youth Festival. I encourage you to continue on the path undertaken, always cultivating the values of love for family and respect for creation, our common home.

I greet those taking part in the Jubilee of Universities and Research Centres, with the hope that the teaching may be rich in values, so as to form people who are able to make their God-given

talents bear fruit.

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