



The Holy See

PAPAL MASS FOR THE REPOSE OF THE SOULS OF THE CARDINALS AND BISHOPS WHO DIED OVER THE COURSE OF THE YEAR

HOMILY OF POPE FRANCIS

Vatican Basilica, Altar of the Chair

Monday, 3 November 2014

[Multimedia]

This celebration, thanks to the Word of God, is totally illumined by faith in the Resurrection. It is a truth that had a long arduous journey through the Old Testament, and which emerges in an explicit way in the episode we have just heard, the Collect for the expiatory sacrifice for the deceased (2 Mac 12:43-46).

All Divine Revelation is the fruit of the dialogue between God and his people, and even faith in the Resurrection is tied to this dialogue, which accompanies the journey of the People of God in history. It is not surprising that a mystery so great, so decisive, so superhuman as that of the Resurrection required the whole journey, all the time necessary, up to Jesus Christ. He can say: “I am the resurrection and the life” (Jn 11:25), because in Him this mystery is not only revealed in its fullness, but takes place, happens and becomes, for the first time and forever, reality. The Gospel we have heard, linking — according to Mark’s version — the account of the death of Jesus and that of the empty tomb, represents the culmination of that entire journey. The event of the Resurrection answers the long search of the People of God, the search of every man and of the whole of humanity.

Every one of us is invited to enter into this event. We are called first to stand before Jesus’ Cross, like Mary, like the women, like the centurion; to hear Jesus’ cry, and his last breath, and finally the silence — that silence that lasts throughout Holy Saturday. And then we are called to go to the tomb, to see the great stone rolled away, to hear the proclamation: “He has risen, he is not here” (Mk 16:6). The answer is there. The foundation, the rock, is there. Not in “persuasive discourses of wisdom”, but in the living Word of the Cross and of the Resurrection of Jesus.

This is what the Apostle Paul preaches: Jesus Christ crucified and risen. If He has not risen, our faith is empty and inconsistent. But because he has risen indeed, He is the Resurrection, so our faith is full of the truth and eternal life.

Renewing the tradition, today we offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice in suffrage for our Brother Cardinals and Bishops who have passed away in the last 12 months. And our prayer is enhanced by emotions, memories, by gratitude for the witness of the people we knew, with whom we shared service in the Church. Many of their faces are present to us; but all, each one of them is looked upon by the Father with his merciful love. And together with the gaze of our Heavenly Father there is that of the Mother, who intercedes for her children whom she loves so much. Together with the faithful whom they served here on earth they are able to enjoy the joy of the new Jerusalem.