



The Holy See

CONCLUSION OF THE SPIRITUAL RETREAT OF THE HOLY FATHER AND OF THE ROMAN CURIA

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Casa Divin Maestro, Ariccia

Friday, 10 March 2017

[Multimedia]

I would like to thank you for the good that you wanted to do for us and for the good that you have done for us.

First of all, for having shown yourself as you are, natural, without presenting a “façade”. Natural. Without artifice. With all your life’s baggage: studies, publications, friends, parents, the young friars you have to take care of.... Everything, everything. Thank you for being “normal”.

Secondly, I want to thank you for the work you have done, for how you prepared. This means responsibility, taking things seriously. And thank you for all that you have given us. It is true: there is a mountain of things on which to meditate, but Saint Ignatius says that when one finds something in the Exercises which offers consolation or desolation, one must stop there and not proceed further. Certainly each of us has found one or two of these among all this. And the rest is not wasted; it remains; it will do for another time. Perhaps the most important, the strongest things, say nothing to some, and perhaps a tiny word, a [little] thing says more.... Like that anecdote of the great Spanish preacher who, after a great, well-prepared sermon, was approached by a man — a great public sinner — in tears, asking for confession. He confessed; a floodgate of sins and tears, sins and tears. The confessor, surprised — as he knew the life of this man — asked him: “tell me, at what point did you feel that God was touching your heart?. With which word?”. — “When you said let us move on to another topic”. [laughter]. At times the simplest words are the ones that help us, or the most complicated ones: the Lord gives the [right] word to each of us.

I thank you for this and I hope you will continue to work for the Church, in the Church, in exegesis, in the many things that the Church entrusts you with. But above all, I hope you may be a good

friar.

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