The Holy See

JUBILEE AUDIENCE

CATECHESIS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Audience Hall
Saturday, 1 February 2025

[Multimedia]

Dear brothers and sisters!

The Jubilee is for people and for the Earth a new beginning; it is a time when everything must be rethought within the dream of God. And we know that the word “conversion” indicates a *change of direction*. Everything can be seen, at last, from another perspective, and so our steps also go towards new goals. This is how hope, which never disappoints, arises. The Bible tells of this in many ways. And for us too, the experience of faith has been stimulated by encounters with people who have been able to change in life and have, so to speak, entered into God's dreams. For even though there is much evil in the world, we can distinguish who is different: their greatness, which often coincides with littleness, wins us over.

In the Gospels, the figure of Mary Magdalene stands out above all others for this. Jesus healed her with mercy (cf. *Lk* 8:2), and she changed: sisters and brothers, mercy changes, mercy changes the heart, and for Mary Magdalene, mercy brought her into God’s dreams and gave new purpose to her journey.

The Gospel of John tells of her encounter with the Risen Jesus in a way that makes us think. It is repeated several times that Mary *turned around.* The Evangelist chooses his words well! In tears, Mary looks first inside the tomb, then she turns around: the Risen one is not on the side of death, but on the side of life. He can be mistaken for one of the people we encounter every day. Then, when she hears her name spoken, the Gospel says that again Mary turns around. And this is how

her hope grows: now she sees the tomb, but not like before. She can dry her tears, because she has heard her own name: only the Master pronounces it in this way. The old world still seems to be there, but it is no more. When we feel that the Holy Spirit is acting in our heart, and we feel that the Lord is calling us by name, do we know how to distinguish the voice of the Master?

Dear brothers and sisters, from Mary Magdalene, whom tradition calls “the apostle of the apostles”, we learn hope. One enters the new world by *converting more than once*. Our journey is a constant invitation to change perspective. The Risen One takes us into His world, step by step, on the condition that we do not claim to know everything already.

Let us ask ourselves today: do I know how to *turn around* to see things differently, with a different outlook? Do I have the desire for conversion?

An overconfident ego that is too proud prevents us from recognizing the Risen Jesus. Even when we weep and despair, we turn our back on Him. Instead of looking into the darkness of the past, into the emptiness of a tomb, from Mary Magdalene we learn to turn towards life. There our Master awaits us. There our name is spoken. For in real life there is a place for us, always and everywhere. There is a place for you, for me, for everyone. No one can take it, because it has always been meant for us. It is bad, as they say in the common parlance, it is bad to leave an empty seat: “This place is for me; if I don't go...”. Everyone can say: I have a place, I am a mission! Think about this: what is my place? What is the mission that the Lord gives us? May this thought help us to take a courageous attitude in life. Thank you.

Greeting

I address a cordial welcome to the pilgrims present in this Hall and to those linked up from the Vatican Basilica. Today there are many of them and we have to do this in two places, but connected.

I am pleased to welcome the faithful of the dioceses of Capua and Caserta. They have come to Rome, with their pastor Archbishop Pietro Lagnese, also to return the visit I had the joy of making to Caserta on 26 July 2014. I affectionately greet the pastor Giovanni Traettino, a good friend; I greet the priests, the consecrated persons, the pastoral workers, the families and all of you, with a respectful thought for the civil authorities. I wish to reiterate my thanks for the warm welcome you gave me on that occasion. May the memory of that event, full of ecclesial and spiritual significance, revive in everyone the will to deepen the life of faith and always to be witnesses of hope and workers for peace.

My thoughts now turn to the pilgrimage of the diocese of Sulmona-Valva, with Bishop Michele

Fusco, and the seminarians of Bergamo. Dear brothers and sisters, I encourage you increasingly to understand and welcome God’s love, the source and motive of our true joy. I also greet the Seminarians of Bergamo and urge them to always place Jesus at the centre of their lives.

My blessing to you all!

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