



The Holy See

MORNING MASS IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAEHOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

"Remain in the Lord"

Wednesday, 1st April 2020

[[Multimedia](#)]

Introduction

Today I would like to pray for all those who work in the media, who are working to communicate, today, so that people are not isolated; for the education of children, to help us to bear this time of isolation.

Homily

In these days, the Church has us listen to the eighth chapter of John. There is a heated discussion between Jesus and the doctors of the Law. Above all, He is trying to reveal His true identity: John tries to bring us close to this argument to clarify the identity both of Jesus and of the doctors. Jesus backs them into a corner, making them see their own contradictions. In the end they find no way out other than to insult. It is one of the saddest pages, it is a blasphemy. They insult Our Lady. But speaking of identity, Jesus speaks to the Jews who had believed in Him, advising them, "If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples" (*Jn 8:31*). He returns to that word very dear to the Lord, which He will repeat several times, and then at the Last Supper: abide with me. Stay with the Lord. Abide with the Lord. He does not say, "Study well, and learn all the arguments well": that is taken for granted. He goes to the most important thing, that which is most dangerous in life if we don't do it: to remain. "Hold to my teaching", remain in my word (*Jn 3:31*). And those who hold to the word of Jesus have their own Christian identity. And what is it? "You are really my disciples" (*Jn 8:31*). The Christian identity is not an ID card that says, "I am a

Christian”: no. It is discipleship. If you abide in the Lord, in the Word of the Lord, in the life of the Lord, you will be a disciple. If you do not remain, you will be one who sympathises with the doctrine, who follows Jesus as a man who did a lot of good, who is very good, who has the right values... but discipleship is the true identity of Christians.

And it will be discipleship that gives us freedom: the disciple is a free person because he or she remains in the Lord. And to abide in the Lord, to remain in the Lord, what does it mean? Letting oneself be guided by the Holy Spirit. A disciple is a person who allows him or herself to be guided by the Spirit, and is therefore a person who is rooted in the tradition but can embrace the new, a free person. Free. Never subject to ideology, to doctrine within the Christian life, doctrine that can be disputed. He or she remains in the Lord, and is inspired by the Spirit. When we sing to the Spirit, we say that He dwells in the soul (see *Inno Veni, Sanctae Spiritus*), that dwells in us. But this is true only if we remain in the Lord.

I ask the Lord the grace that He might allow us to know the wisdom to remain in Him and to know that familiarity with the Spirit: the Holy Spirit gives us freedom, and this is an anointing. To remain in the Lord is to be a disciple, and a disciple is anointed, one who is anointed by the Spirit, who has received the anointing of the Spirit and carries it forward. This is the way that Jesus makes us see, the path of freedom and also of life. And discipleship is the anointing received by those who remain in the Lord.

May the Lord make us understand this. It is not easy. Even the doctors did not understand it. It cannot be understood only with the head: it is understood with the mind and the heart, this wisdom of the anointing of the Holy Spirit which makes us disciples.

Spiritual Communion

Those who cannot receive Communion sacramentally may now make a spiritual communion:

At Your feet, O my Jesus, I prostrate myself and I offer You repentance of my contrite heart, which is humbled in its nothingness and in Your holy presence. I adore You in the Sacrament of Your love, the ineffable Eucharist. I desire to receive You into the poor dwelling that my heart offers you. While waiting for the happiness of sacramental communion, I wish to possess You in spirit. Come to me, O Jesus, since I, for my part, am coming to You! May Your love embrace my whole being in life and in death. I believe in You, I hope in You, I love You. Amen.