

### **Homily - Multicultural Mass - 10/04/2017**

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today's liturgy reminds us of St. Francis of Assisi, who with his life was an example and witness of the person of Jesus Christ. In today's liturgy we have several expressions that speak of following Jesus. Jesus says, follow me and the person responds: Let me first go and bury my father. Let me say goodbye first to my family. Let me enjoy life first.

Jesus asks us for a courageous and firm decision. We must react against the temptation of a mediocre, easy, lazy Christianity, made to the measure of one's own comforts and interests. Put your hand to the plow and do not look back ... We have to look forward! Be determined to follow the Master. Soren Kierkegaard once said, "Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards." (Past experiences ripen us, leave marks, but with humility and simplicity we are able to appreciate the little things, the new ideas, the lessons and challenges of life).

Someone who seeks to follow Jesus must have positive attitudes. He must be someone who preserves hope (believes that God walks by our side, must have a positive view of reality), is able to let himself be surprised by God (He always reserves the best for us, like a new wine - to follow Jesus and make us welcome the surprises of God that are not always easy to understand. Sometimes we go through painful experiences and find it hard to be cheerful.

Following Jesus is a journey, a process and makes us go places we had never before thought or imagined. Learning, for example, a new language opens new horizons, new possibilities and sometimes requires us to leave our comfortable world, our country. Communication unites people, allows different worlds to touch and connect. This multicultural celebration is an example of our ability to share lives, customs, and live in community, without hatred or rancor. We must be

communicators of a culture of tolerance and respect for others. For Jesus no one is inferior, no one is insignificant, but we are all precious and important: you are important. God counts on you for what you are, not for what you have.

The ESL course, the philosophical and theological training of this school, offers the opportunity for each to live and manage the differences. That is being Christian. Many of us do not stop to think about this reality. Living, just living, is not enough! Life consists of living together. You have been called to live with others and that means living together. For this you have to learn to renounce many things. We can not live life the way we think it should be lived. We have to live with those who drive in traffic in another way, with people of another color, of another religion, of another culture, and all should be treated with respect. They are the differences that make us human beings capable of living and living in community. Let us learn from Jesus who taught us how to live and live together by following him. May St. Francis intercede for us to follow Jesus and to live kindly with our neighbor and remember his words: "The love of Jesus Christ is the most powerful weapon against hatred." Amen.