

THE CROSS



Vatican City, 8 September 2013 (VIS) – Pope Francis, following yesterday's fast and prayer vigil for peace in Syria, the Middle East and all over the world, returned to the theme of peace during the Angelus at midday today. He commented on today's Gospel reading in which **Jesus states the condition for his disciples: to put nothing before their love for Him, carrying their cross, and following him.**

The Holy Father explained that many people approached Jesus, especially in the wake of some prodigious dream, that indicated Him as the Messiah, the King of Israel. **But Jesus knows that in Jerusalem the cross awaits Him and does not wish to create illusions;** he knows that the path will lead him to sacrifice Himself for the redemption of our sins. “Following Jesus does not mean taking part in a triumphal parade!” the Pope said. “It means sharing in His merciful love, becoming part of His great mission of mercy towards each and every man. ... **And this universal forgiveness, this mercy, comes through the cross.** Jesus does not want to carry out this mission alone: He wants to involve us too, in the mission that the Father entrusted to Him. ...



FROM THE BOOK OF HEAVEN

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The cross is the noblest mark in the soul.

This morning, my adorable Jesus came with an appearance all admirable and mysterious. He was wearing a chain at His neck, hanging over His whole breast. At one end of the chain, one could see something like a bow; at the other end, something like a quiver full of precious stones and gems which formed an ornament of the most beautiful sort on the breast of my sweet Jesus. He also had a lance in His hand. While in this appearance, He told me: "The human life is a game; some play pleasure, some play money, some, their own lives, and many other games they play. I too delight in playing with souls; but what are the jokes I make? **They are the crosses which I send. If they receive them with resignation and thank Me for them, I amuse Myself and I play with them, delighting immensely, receiving great honor and glory, and letting them make the greatest gains.**"

As He was saying this, He began to touch me with the lance; **all the precious stones that the bow and the quiver contained came out, and turned into many crosses and arrows which wounded the creatures. Some of them, but extremely few, rejoiced, kissed them, and thanked Him, engaging in a game with Jesus;** others then, would take them and throw them in His face. Oh, how afflicted Jesus would be left, and what a loss for those souls! Then Jesus added: **"This is the thirst which I cried out on the cross,** which, unable to quench entirely at that time, I delight in continuing to quench in the souls of my dear ones who suffer. So, when you suffer, you come to give a refreshment to my thirst."

As He came other times, and I prayed Him to free the confessor, who was suffering, He told me: **"My daughter, don't you know that the noblest mark I can impress in my dear children is the cross?"**