

In his First Message for the Lenten Season, Pope Francis Focuses on the Poverty of Christ in Becoming Man



Vatican City, Feb 4, 2014 / 06:06 am ([CNA/EWTN News](#)).- In his first message for the Lenten season, Pope Francis focuses on the poverty of Christ in becoming man, emphasizing that it is our duty to give the same humble witness in our care for the poor.

From the Book of Heaven - V 3 - 12/25/99

“...my Dear Queen Mama came, carrying the Celestial Baby on Her Lap, wrapped in a little cloth, all shivering. She placed Him in my arms, telling me: “My daughter (Luisa), warm Him with your affections, because My Son was born in extreme poverty, in the complete abandonment of men, and in highest mortification.”

Announced in a Feb. 4 press conference, the Pope’s Lenten message was read by Cardinal Robert Sarah, president of the Pontifical Council “Cor Unum,” the council that presents the pontifical message each year.

Taking his theme from Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians, the Pope reflects on the apostle’s words “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that

though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by His poverty you might become rich.”

From the Book of Heaven - V20 - 10/26/26

And when I took the ropes to drive the profaners out of the temple, it was the human will that I was driving out, so that Mine might enter, Reigning and Dominating, and they might be truly Rich in their souls and no longer subject to natural poverty.

Reflecting on grace which Christ gives, the Pope emphasizes that the meaning of these words for Christians today shows “us how God works,” and that “God’s becoming man is a great mystery!”

What Paul says in his letter “is no mere play on words or a catch phrase,” Pope Francis states, but “rather, it sums up God’s logic, the logic of love, the logic of the incarnation and the cross.”

From the Book of Heaven - Volume 1

I begin. With a Novena of Holy Christmas, at the age of about seventeen, I prepared myself for the Feast of Holy Christmas, by practicing various acts of virtue and mortification; and, especially, by honoring the Nine Months which Jesus spent in the Maternal Womb with Nine Hours of Meditation each day, always concerning the Mystery of the Incarnation.

[Click here for Novena on Mystery of the Incarnation - Nine Excesses of Love.](#)

From the Book of Heaven - V6 - 12/22/03

As I was in my usual state, my Adorable Jesus came as Crucified, and after He shared His Pains with me, while I was suffering, He told me: "My daughter (Luisa), in the Creation I gave My Image to the soul; in the Incarnation I gave My Divinity, Divinizing Humanity. And since in the very Act, in the very instant, in which the Divinity Incarnated Itself in humanity, It Incarnated Itself in the Cross, in such a way that from the moment I was conceived, I was conceived United with the Cross - it can be said that just as My Cross was

United with Me in the Incarnation which I did in the Womb of My Mother, so does My Cross form as many other Incarnations of Mine in the wombs of souls. And just as the Cross forms My Incarnation in souls, the Cross is the Incarnation of the soul in God, destroying in her everything that gives of nature, and filling her with the Divinity so much, as to form a sort of Incarnation – God in the soul, and the soul in God." I remained as though enchanted on hearing that the Cross is the Incarnation of the soul in God, and He repeated: "I AM not saying Union, but Incarnation, because the Cross penetrates so much into her nature as to make her nature itself become suffering, and where there is suffering there is God, as God and suffering cannot be apart. And the Cross, forming this Incarnation, renders this Union more stable, and the separation of God from the soul almost as difficult as is separating suffering from nature. On the other hand, through Union, the separation can easily occur. It is understood, always, that this is not the Incarnation, but a simile of the Incarnation."

“God did not let our salvation drop down from heaven, like someone who gives alms from their abundance out of a sense of altruism and piety. Christ’s love is different!” he affirms.

V20 – January 28, 1927

“My daughter, true poverty is when a creature is in need—one wants to take, but has nothing to take, and is forced to ask others for a bare means of living. This poverty is of necessity, and almost forced; instead, both in Me and in the Celestial Mama, in whom there was all the fullness of the Eternal Fiat, it was not poverty of necessity, and even less forced, but it was voluntary poverty, spontaneous poverty, squeezed by the press of Divine Love. Everything was Our own; at one wish of Ours, sumptuous palaces would have been raised, and banquets prepared with foods never before seen and tasted.

“And in fact, when it was needed, at a little wish of Ours, even the birds served Us, bringing Us fruits, fish and other things in their beaks, making feast because they were serving their Creator and their Queen. With their trilling, singing and warbling, they played for Us the most beautiful melodies; so much so, that in order not to attract the attention of creatures

with Our uniqueness, We had to command them to depart, to continue their flight under the vault of the heavens where Our Will was waiting for them; and, obedient, they would withdraw.

“Therefore, Our poverty was of love—it was poverty of example, to teach creatures detachment from the low things of the earth. It was not poverty of necessity, nor could it be so, in an absolute way, because wherever the fullness, the life of My Will reigns, all evils end as though under one single blow, and they lose life.”

“Christ’s poverty is the greatest treasure of all,” the pontiff explains, noting that “Jesus’ wealth is that of his boundless confidence in God the Father, his constant trust, his desire always and only to do the Father’s will and give glory to him.”

From the Book of Heaven - V 3 - 12/25/99

“From the moment I was born, I always kept My Heart offered in Sacrifice, to Glorify the Father, for the conversion of sinners, and for the people who surrounded Me, and who were My most faithful companions in My Pains. In the same way, I want your heart to be in this continuous attitude, offered in Spirit of Sacrifice for these three purposes.”

Recalling the words of author Leon Bloy when he says that the only real poverty is not to be a Saint, the Pope also emphasizes that “there is only one real kind of poverty: not living as children of God and brothers and sisters of Christ.”

Drawing attention to the witness we give as Christians, the Pope explains that although we often believe that we can “save the world with the right kind of human resources,” this is “not the case.”

“In imitation of our Master, we Christians are called to confront the poverty of our brothers and sisters, to touch it, to make it our own and to take practical steps to alleviate it.”

From the Book of Heaven - V21 - April 14, 1927

“I wanted to be born in a stable and suffer the most extreme poverty. The human will had formed something worse than a stable for the poor creatures, while passions had formed manure in their souls. And blowing more than wind, it had rendered them numb with intense cold, to the point

of affecting their nature, not only taking terrestrial happiness away from them, but making them experience hunger and poverty—not only of the soul, but also of the body. And I wanted to suffer intense cold, extreme poverty, and the stench of the manure that was in the stable; and in seeing two animals near Me, I had the sorrow that the human will had converted Our most Beautiful Work, Our dear Jewel, Our dear Image—the poor man—almost into a beast. There was not one pain that I suffered that did not have its origin in the human will, and I subjected Myself to everything in order to rehabilitate it once again in the Kingdom of the Supreme Fiat.

“Even in My Passion, I wanted to suffer being stripped in the scourging, denuded on the Cross, and stretched in such a horrible way that My Bones could be counted, amid confusion, abandonment and unspeakable bitterness. All this was nothing other than the outpouring of the human will, that had stripped man of all Goods, and with its poisonous breath, had covered him with confusion and opprobrium, to the point of transforming him in a horrible way, and of rendering him an object of mockery for his many enemies.

Reflecting on the difference between “poverty” and “destitution,” the Pope observes that “There are three types of destitution: material, moral and spiritual.”

From the Book of Heaven - V7 - 12/15/06

"My daughter, since the Divine Will is the only Nourishing Food that contains all flavors and tastes together, which are suitable for the soul, the soul finds her favorite Food and becomes appeased. Her desire finds its Food, and it only thinks of pasturing itself, slowly, and it forms without desiring anything else; her inclination has nothing else toward which to tend, because it has found the Food that satisfies it. Her will has nothing else to will, because the soul has left her own will, which formed her torment, and has found the Divine Will, which forms her happiness; she has left poverty and has found wealth – not human, but Divine.

From the Book of Heaven - V29 - 7/7/31

It happens to one who has continued many good acts as to someone who has acquired many properties; if he has a setback, it won't be able to do him

much harm, because the many properties will fill the void of the setback that he suffered. But if someone else has acquired little, or possesses nothing, a little setback is enough to leave him destitute, of the most squalid misery. Such is to do much good, or little or nothing. This is why I always repeat to you, be attentive, be faithful to Me, and let your flight in My Divine Will be continuous."

"Material destitution is what is normally called poverty," he notes, and it "affects those living in conditions opposed to human dignity: those who lack basic rights and needs such as food, water, hygiene, work and the opportunity to develop and grow culturally."

What the Church does as a response is "meeting these needs and binding these wounds which disfigure the face of humanity," because "in the poor and outcast we see Christ's face," explains the pontiff.

From the Book of Heaven - V2 - 4/21/99

I said to him: "Tell me, who are you?" He answered: "I am the poorest of the poor, I don't have a place to stay. I have come to you (Luisa), if you want to keep Me with you in your little room. See, I AM so poor that I don't even have clothes; but you will take care of everything." I looked well at him; he was a five or six year old boy, without clothes, without shoes, but so very beautiful and graceful. Immediately I answered him: 'For me, I would gladly keep you, but what will my father say? I am not a free person who can do whatever she wants; I have my parents who prevent me. As for clothing you, I can do it with my poor toils, I will make any sacrifice – but as for keeping you here, it is impossible. Besides, don't you have a father, don't you have a mother, don't you have a place to stay?'

But the boy answered bitterly: "I have no one. O please! Don't make Me wander any more – let Me stay with you!" I myself did not know what to do - how to keep him. A thought flashed within me: 'Who knows whether it is Jesus? Or maybe it is some demon, to disturb me.' So, again I said to him: 'But, tell me the truth at least – who are you?' And he repeated: "I am the poorest of the poor." I replied: 'Have you learned how to make the sign of the cross?' "Yes", he answered. 'Well then, make it, I want to see how you make it.' So he signed himself with the cross. I added: 'And the Hail Mary – do you know how to say it?' "Yes, but if you want me to say it, let us say it together."

I began the Hail Mary and he was saying it together with me, when a most pure light was unleashed from His adorable forehead, and I recognized that the poorest of the poor was Jesus. ...'My Dear Little One, forgive me. Had I recognized You, I would not have forbidden You to enter.

“Our efforts are also directed to ending violations of human dignity, discrimination and abuse in the world, for these are so often the cause of destitution.”

“When power, luxury and money become idols, they take priority over the need for a fair distribution of wealth,” he notes, and thus “our consciences...need to be converted to justice, equality, simplicity and sharing.”

From the Book of Heaven - Volume 6 - April 26, 1904

...Ah, My daughter (Luisa), the external action has so much strength to penetrate into one's interior as to form a material garment for the soul; and when the Divine Touch touches them, they do not feel it vividly because their souls are wrapped with a muddy garment. And since they do not feel the Liveliness of Grace, Grace is either rejected or remains fruitless. Oh, how difficult it is to enjoy pleasures, to dress luxuriously on the outside, and to despise those things internally! On the contrary, the opposite occurs – that is, one loves in his interior, and enjoys, what surrounds him externally.

April 6, 1922

As I was in my usual state, my sweet Jesus carried me outside of myself, and showed me masses of peoples crying, homeless, prey to the greatest desolation; towns collapsed, streets deserted and uninhabitable. One could see nothing but heaps of stones and rubble. Only one point remained untouched by the scourge. My God, what pain, to see these things, and live! I looked at my sweet Jesus, but He did not deign to look at me; rather, He cried bitterly, and with a Voice, broken by the Tears, told me: "My daughter (Luisa), man has forgotten Heaven for the earth. It is Justice that what is earth be taken away from him, and that he go wandering, unable to find shelter, so that he may remember that Heaven exists. Man has forgotten the soul for the body. So, everything is for the body: pleasures, comforts, sumptuousness, luxury and the like. The soul is starving, deprived of

everything, and in many it is dead, as if they did not have it. Now, it is Justice that their bodies be deprived, so that they may remember that they have a soul....”

Turning his focus to moral destitution, the Pope highlights that it “consists in slavery to vice and sin,” and that many families suffer because “one of their members – often a young person - is in thrall to alcohol, drugs, gambling or pornography!”

Lamenting that many “no longer see meaning in life or prospects for the future” and have “lost hope” due to unemployment, unjust social conditions, or unequal access to education and healthcare, the pontiff stated that such cases of moral destitution “can be considered impending suicide.”

“This type of destitution, which also causes financial ruin, is invariably linked to the spiritual destitution which we experience when we turn away from God and reject his love,” he says, because when we “believe we can make do on our own, we are headed for a fall.”

From the Book of Heaven - V6 - 6/6/04

“...everything you do, it is not you who does it, for you do nothing other than give the Divinity your soul as residence. It happens to you as to a poor woman who had a little hovel, and the king asks for it as his residence, and she gives it to him and does everything the king wants. So, since the king resides in that little hovel, it contains riches, nobility, glory and all goods. But to whom do they belong? To the king; and if the king wants to leave, what remains to the poor one? She is left always with her poverty.”

An antidote for this spiritual destitution can be found in the Gospel, the Pope reflects, emphasizing that “wherever we go, we are called as Christians to proclaim the liberating news that forgiveness for sins committed is possible.”

From the Book of Heaven - Volume 4 - 9/4/01

As my adorable Jesus continued to come, this morning, as I saw Him, I felt such a yearning to ask Him whether He had forgiven my sins; so I said to Him: ‘My sweet Love, how I yearn to hear from Your Lips whether You have forgiven my many sins.’ Jesus drew close to my ear, and with His Gaze He

seemed to scrutinize all of my interior; and He told me: "Everything is forgiven, and I remit them"

From the Book of Heaven - V17 - 5/10/25

At other times, while I Fuse myself in the Divine Volition, I want to feel sorrow for all the offenses given to my God, and I start my Round again in that immense void, in order to find all the sorrow that Jesus felt for all sins. I make it my own, and I wander everywhere, in the most hidden and secret places, in public places, over all the acts of evil men, to feel sorrow for all the offenses. And for each sin, gathering within me all the sorrow for all sins, I feel like crying out in every motion of all creation: 'Forgiveness, forgiveness!' There is not one offense to God, even the slightest one, for which I do not feel sorrow and ask forgiveness. And so that all may hear my plea of forgiveness for all sins, I impress it in the rumbling of the thunder, so that sorrow for having offended my God may thunder in all hearts. 'Forgiveness!' in the striking of lightening. Sorrowful repentance in the whistling of the wind, crying out to all: 'Repentance, and plea of forgiveness!' And in the tinkling of the bells: 'Sorrow and forgiveness!' In sum, the same in everything. Then I bring the sorrow of all to my God, and I implore forgiveness for all, saying: 'Great God, let your Will descend upon earth, so that sin may no longer take place! The human will alone is what produces so many offenses that it seems to be flooding the earth with sins. Your Will will be the destroyer of all evils. Therefore, I beg you, make the Little Daughter of your Will content, who wants nothing else but that your Will be Known and Loved, and that It Reign in all hearts.'

"The Lord asks us to be joyous heralds of this message of mercy and hope," the pontiff notes, expressing that "it is thrilling to experience the joy of spreading this good news."

From the Book of Heaven - V6 - 4/16/04

At that moment I saw another Person behind the Shoulders of blessed Jesus, and He told me, almost making a sign with His eyes: "Present yourself to My Father and see what He tells you (Luisa)." I presented myself, all trembling, and as soon as He saw me, He told me: "Why have you (Luisa) come to Me?" And I: 'Adorable Goodness, Infinite Mercy, Knowing that You are Mercy Itself, I have come to ask for Your Mercy - Mercy on Your very Images, Mercy

on the Works created by You; Mercy on nothing else but Your creatures themselves.'

From the Book of Heaven - V24 - 7/2328

"My daughter, the soul in whom My Divine Will is present is the Luminous Point in the world. ...How beautiful it is to see from Heaven these Luminous Points in the depth of the earth. ...Wherever these Luminous Points are present, the current of evil is stopped; My Justice Itself feels Disarmed by the Strength of this Light, and changes the scourges into Grace. These Points are the smile of the earth; their Light is Herald and Bearer of Peace, of Beauty, of Sanctity, of Life that never dies.

"They can be called the Fortunate Points of the earth, because in their midst there is the Light that never dims, the Life that always rises..."

Encouraging the faithful to "imitate Christ who became poor and enriched us by his poverty,"

From the Book of Heaven - V10 - 12/25/10

This was a most bitter sorrow for Me at My Birth, because in those priests the attachment to riches, to interest, to families and to exterior things was so great as to blind their sight like a glare, harden their hearts, and render their intelligence dazed to the Knowledge of the Most Sacrosanct and Most Certain Truths. They were so engulfed in the low things of the earth, as to never be able to believe that a God could come upon earth in the midst of so much poverty and so much humiliation. And this, not only at My Birth, but also during the course of My Life. When I performed the most sensational miracles, no one followed Me; on the contrary, they plotted My Death, and killed Me on the Cross. And after using all of My Art in order to draw them to Myself, I put them into oblivion and chose poor and ignorant people as My Apostles, forming My Church in them.

Pope Francis explains that "Lent is a fitting time for self-denial," and that "we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty."

From the Book of Heaven - V6 - 1/6/04

"My daughter (Luisa), since the human race is all one family; when someone does some good work and offers something to Me, the whole human family participates in that offering and is present to Me as if all were offering it.

“Let us not forget that real poverty hurts: no self-denial is real without this dimension of penance. I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt.”

From the Book of Heaven 5 - 10/27/03

"My daughter (Luisa), to accept mortifications and sufferings as penance and as chastisement is praiseworthy, it is good, but it has no connection with the Divine Way of Operating. In fact, I did much, I suffered much, but the way I had in all this was only Love for the Father and for men. So, it shows immediately whether a creature has the Way of Operating and Suffering in a Divine Manner - if it is Love alone that pushes her to do it and to suffer. If she has other ways, good as they may be, they are always the ways of creatures, and therefore she will find in them the merit that a creature can acquire, not the merit that the Creator can acquire, because there is no Union of Ways. But if she has My Way, the Fire of Love will destroy any disparity and inequality, and will form one single thing between My Work and that of the creature."

He then voices a prayer to the Holy Spirit, asking that he help us in our resolutions to have a greater concern and responsibility for humanity “so that we can become merciful and act with mercy.”

From the Book of Heaven - V17 - 5/17/25

'I come to give Love in return for everything which the Sanctifier does to those who are to be Sanctified. I come to enter into the Order of Grace, to give You Glory and return of Love, as if all had become Saints, and to repair You for all the oppositions and lack of correspondence to Grace...'; and as much as you can, in Our Will you search for the Acts of Grace of the Spirit Sanctifier, in order to make your own - His Sorrow, His Secret Moans, His anguishing Sighs in the depth of the hearts, on seeing Himself unwelcome. And since the First Act He does is to bring Our Divine Will as the Complete Act of their Sanctification, on seeing Himself rejected, He Moans with inexpressible Moans. And in your childlike simplicity, you say to Him: 'Spirit Sanctifier, hurry, I implore You, I beg You, let everyone Know Your Will, so that, in

Knowing It, they may Love It and welcome Your Prime Act of their Complete Sanctification - which is Your Holy Will!

“In expressing this hope, I likewise pray that each individual member of the faithful and every Church community will undertake a fruitful Lenten journey,” the Pope states, adding that “I ask all of you to pray for me. May the Lord bless you and Our Lady keep you safe.”

For our Holy Father, Pope Francis"

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

Glory Be...

FIAT!