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## Pope at Mass: Culture of encounter is the foundation of peace

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(Vatican Radio) “Doing good” is a principle that unites all humanity, beyond the diversity of ideologies and religions, and creates the “culture of encounter” that is the foundation of peace: this is what Pope said at Mass this morning at the Domus Sanctae Martae, in the presence of employees of the Governorate of Vatican City. Cardinal Bechara

Boutros Rai, Patriarch of Antioch of the Maronites, concelebrated at the Mass. Wednesday’s Gospel speaks to us about the disciples who prevented a person from outside their group from doing good. “They complain,” the Pope said in his homily, because they say, “If he is not one of us, he cannot do good. If he is not of our party, he cannot do good.” And Jesus corrects them: “Do not hinder him, he says, let him do good.” The disciples, Pope Francis explains, “were a little intolerant,” closed off by the idea of possessing the truth, convinced that “those who do not have the truth, cannot do good.” “This was wrong . . . Jesus broadens the horizon.” Pope Francis said, “The root of this possibility of doing good – that we all have – is in creation”:

"The Lord created us in His image and likeness, and we are the image of the Lord, and He does good and all of us have this commandment at heart: do good and do not do evil. All of us. ‘But, Father, this is not Catholic! He cannot do good.’ Yes, he can. He must. Not can: must! Because he has this commandment within him. Instead, this ‘closing off’ that imagines that those outside, everyone,

cannot do good is a wall that leads to war and also to what some people throughout history have conceived of: killing in the name of God. That we can kill in the name of God. And that, simply, is blasphemy. To say that you can kill in the name of God is blasphemy.”

“Instead,” the Pope continued, “the Lord has created us in His image and likeness, and has given us this commandment in the depths of our heart: do good and do not do evil”:

"The Lord has redeemed all of us, all of us, with the Blood of Christ: all of us, not just Catholics. Everyone! ‘Father, the atheists?’ Even the atheists. Everyone! And this Blood makes us children of God of the first class! We are created children in the likeness of God and the Blood of Christ has redeemed us all! And we all have a duty to do good. And this commandment for everyone to do good, I think, is a beautiful path towards peace. If we, each doing our own part, if we do good to others, if we meet there, doing good, and we go slowly, gently, little by little, we will make that culture of encounter: we need that so much. We must meet one another doing good. ‘But I don’t believe, Father, I am an atheist!’ But do good: we will meet one another there.”

“Doing good” the Pope explained, is not a matter of faith: “It is a duty, it is an identity card that our Father has given to all of us, because He has made us in His image and likeness. And He does good, always.”

This was the final prayer of Pope Francis:

"Today is [the feast of] Santa Rita, Patron Saint of impossible things – but this seems impossible: let us ask of her this grace, this grace that all, all, all people would do good and that we would encounter one another in this work, which is a work of creation, like the creation of the Father. A work of the family, because we are all children of God, all of us, all of us! And God loves us, all of us! May Santa Rita grant us this grace, which seems almost impossible. Amen.”



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