

Discussion Guide

The Church of Mercy by Pope Francis

Let us discuss some of the observations and lessons from the Pope's sermons:

The Good News of Christ:

1. Once again, we have a reference to the story of the Prodigal Son. The lesson we learn from this story is that God always waits for us, even when we have left Him behind.
2. The light of faith illuminates every aspect of human existence. This light is so powerful it must come from God.
3. Newness makes us fearful. There is no situation that God cannot change. There is no sin that cannot be forgiven.
4. Baptism is a true revolution and it changes the human heart. Pope Benedict said that Jesus Christ is the "greatest mutation in the history of humanity."
5. Starting anew with Christ means imitating Him by leaving ourselves behind and to leave our comfort zone. He is the center of your life.

A Poor Church for the Poor

6. Solidarity presumes the creation of a new mindset that thinks in terms of community and the priority of the lives of all over the appropriation of goods by a few.
7. We profess in the Creed to believe in one Church, which means we have one faith, one sacramental life, one apostolic succession, one common hope, and the same charity. We must strive for unity and harmony.
8. The apostles were given a mandate to continue the work of Jesus, which was to pray and proclaim the Gospel. The Church is apostolic because she is founded on the preaching and prayer of the apostles, it keeps and hands on the teaching of the apostles, and that message is brought to all in the world.

Listening to the Spirit

9. Relativism causes us to think that nothing is definitive and to think that the truth comes from consensus or from something we like.
10. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of unity, and unity leads to harmony.

Proclamation and Testimony

11. The apostles saw persecution as a badge of honor that enabled them to truly follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

12. Live your faith! St. Francis of Assisi said “Preach the Gospel, and if necessary, use words.” What idol lies hidden in your life that prevents you from worshipping the Lord?
13. The clergy is called by God to rekindle their divine vocations, to proclaim the Gospel with emphasis on the young people, and called to promote a culture of encountering and welcoming everyone.
14. The Pope speaks of three simple attitudes: hopefulness, openness to being surprised by God, and living in joy.
15. “Let us therefore set aside every form of arrogance, to bend down to all whom the Lord has entrusted our care.” Being a pastor is not a career but a call to serve.

Full-Time Christians

16. Holy Week is a time of grace to open the doors of our heart, our lives and our parishes to meet others and make us close.
17. Joy is knowing with Him we are never alone. Christ’s cross never leads to sadness but to joy of having been saved.
18. Evangelization is the Church’s mission. We must all ask ourselves: What do I do with my life? Do I create unity around me or do I cause division by gossip, criticism, or envy?

Shepherds with the “Odor of the Sheep”

19. What does it mean to be a Pastor? Welcome magnanimously, walk with your flock, stay with your flock and provide stability.
20. What you teach should be nourishment for the people of God.
21. A good priest anoints his people with the oil of gladness. They must go out of themselves so that they don’t gradually become intermediaries and managers. People need the priests to preach the Gospel in a way that touches their everyday lives.

The Choice of the Last

22. We need to address our culture of waste, whether it is material goods, food, or people.
23. Home is a place that teaches charity, not for profit, but for love. Capitalism has taught the logic of profit at all costs, of giving to get exploitation without looking at the person.
24. Refugees and those uprooted from life need special pastoral care. The Pope wants world leaders to confront their reality and to look for solutions that protect their dignity, improve their quality of life, and to protect them from modern forms of persecution, oppression, and slavery.
25. Charity that leaves a poor person poor is not sufficient; true mercy helps the poor to no longer be poor. Defend the rights of the weakest. Empty convents and buildings should be used for housing and not to make money.

Demolishing the Idols

26. You are your brother's keeper. Violence and war are the language of death. We have perfected our weapons, our conscience has fallen asleep, and we have sharpened our ideas to justify ourselves.
27. We are living in a culture of waste. Human life is no longer a primary value. Reflect on the problem of the loss and waste of food. What are some solutions
28. Spiritual worldliness kills the soul, the person, and the Church!

The Culture of Good

29. Being free always to choose goodness will make you into people with backbone who can face life with courage and patience.
30. The fundamental pillars that govern a nation: life, family, integral education, health, and security.
31. Dialogue is the way to peace.
32. Unemployment is widening the boundaries of poverty.

What do you think our parish can do to further carry out this vision of a Church of Mercy?

What can you do on a personal basis to work towards this goal?

What is the Pope telling us about the importance of Mary, the Mother of Evangelization?