

## Pope Francis : "Miserando atque eligendo"...

Pope Francis has chosen the motto "Miserando atque eligendo", meaning lowly but chosen; literally in Latin 'by having mercy, by choosing him'.

The motto is one the Pope had already chosen as Bishop. It is taken from the homilies of the Venerable Bede on Saint Matthew's Gospel relating to his vocation: "Jesus saw the tax collector and by having mercy chose him as an Apostle saying to him : Follow me."

This homily, which focuses on divine mercy and is reproduced in the Liturgy of the Hours on the Feast of Saint Matthew, has taken on special significance in the Pope's life and spiritual journey.

In fact it was on the Feast of Saint Matthew in 1953 that a young seventeen year-old Jorge Bergoglio was touched by the mercy of God and felt the call to religious life in the footsteps of Saint Ignatius of Loyola.

Beyond the motto, the coat of arms has a blue field and is surmounted by the mitre and the papal keys. On the crest itself at the centre is the symbol of the Jesuits, a flaming sun with the three letters recalling the name and the salvific mission of Jesus. Underneath we have two more symbols: to the right the star representing Mary and to the left the lily flower representing Joseph.

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## Pope Francis : Inaugural Mass of Petrine Ministry

St Peter's Square

19 March 2013:



## Pope Francis calls home

Thousands of pilgrims gathered Tuesday in Buenos Aires' Plaza de Mayo outside the Cathedral to follow Pope Francis' installation mass in Rome were stunned to hear the Pope's own voice addressing them over loudspeakers. Made in the early morning hours from Rome, Pope Francis's telephone call was broadcast live to the faithful gathered in the square of his native Argentina: "We all walk united," he said; "we take care of each other and, continue to pray for me." "To pray," he added, "is so beautiful. It means looking to heaven and to our heart. We know that we have a good Father who is God." The Pope then called on people to "put aside jealousy and hatred" and to take care "of the family, nature, children and the elderly."

## Pope Francis pays homage to Our Lady

14 March 2013

Pope Francis is an early riser and surprised the Romans on the very first morning of his pontificate by visiting, at 8.15 am one of Rome's Major Basilicas, Saint Mary Major. The Pope came bearing a floral homage.

Upon his election on Wednesday evening the new Bishop of Rome had anticipated he was going to "go and pray to the Madonna so that she might protect Rome". And so it was that the newly elected Pope went to venerate Mary in this most ancient of Christian Basilicas in the West dedicated to her. Going directly to the Pauline Chapel to the left of the main nave to pray in front of the icon of the Madonna 'Salus Populi Romani':

Pope Francis also went to pray by the main altar where a relic of the manger is housed and subsequently the Sistine Chapel across from the Pauline Chapel within the Basilica. A place especially significant to Jesuits as it's where Saint Ignatius of Loyola once celebrated holy mass on Christmas eve following his ordination to the priesthood,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I thank the Lord that I can celebrate this Holy Mass for the inauguration of my Petrine ministry on the solemnity of Saint Joseph, the spouse of the Virgin Mary and the patron of the universal Church. It is a significant coincidence, and it is also the name-day of my venerable predecessor: we are close to him with our prayers, full of affection and gratitude.

I offer a warm greeting to my brother cardinals and bishops, the priests, deacons, men and women religious, and all the lay faithful. I thank the representatives of the other Churches and ecclesial Communities, as well as the representatives of the Jewish community and the other religious communities, for their presence. My cordial greetings go to the Heads of State and Government, the members of the official Delegations from many countries throughout the world, and the Diplomatic Corps.

In the Gospel we heard that "Joseph did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took Mary as his wife" (*Mt 1:24*). These words already point to the mission which God entrusts to Joseph: he is to be the *custos*, the protector. The protector of whom? Of Mary and Jesus; but this protection is then extended to the Church, as Blessed John Paul II pointed out: "Just as Saint Joseph took loving care of Mary and gladly dedicated himself to Jesus Christ's upbringing, he likewise watches over and protects Christ's Mystical Body, the Church, of which the Virgin Mary is the exemplar and model" (*Redemptoris Custos*, 1).

How does Joseph exercise his role as protector? Discreetly, humbly and silently, but with an unflinching presence and utter fidelity, even when he finds it hard to understand. From the time of his betrothal to Mary until the finding of the twelve-year-old Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem, he is there at every moment with loving care. As the spouse of Mary, he is at her side in good times and bad, on the journey to Bethlehem for the census and in the anxious and joyful hours when she gave birth; amid the drama of the flight into Egypt and during the frantic search for their child in the Temple; and later in the day-to-day life of the home of Nazareth, in the workshop where he taught his trade to Jesus.

How does Joseph respond to his calling to be the protector of Mary, Jesus and the Church? By being constantly attentive to God, open to the signs of God's presence and receptive to God's plans, and not simply to his own. This is what

God asked of David, as we heard in the first reading. God does not want a house built by men, but faithfulness to his word, to his plan. It is God himself who builds the house, but from living stones sealed by his Spirit. Joseph is a “protector” because he is able to hear God’s voice and be guided by his will; and for this reason he is all the more sensitive to the persons entrusted to his safekeeping. He can look at things realistically, he is in touch with his surroundings, he can make truly wise decisions. In him, dear friends, we learn how to respond to God’s call, readily and willingly, but we also see the core of the Christian vocation, which is Christ! Let us protect Christ in our lives, so that we can protect others, so that we can protect creation!

The vocation of being a “protector”, however, is not just something involving us Christians alone; it also has a prior dimension which is simply human, involving everyone. It means protecting all creation, the beauty of the created world, as the Book of Genesis tells us and as Saint Francis of Assisi showed us. It means respecting each of God’s creatures and respecting the environment in which we live. It means protecting people, showing loving concern for each and every person, especially children, the elderly, those in need, who are often the last we think about. It means caring for one another in our families: husbands and wives first protect one another, and then, as parents, they care for their children, and children themselves, in time, protect their parents. It means building sincere friendships in which we protect one another in trust, respect, and goodness. In the end, everything has been entrusted to our protection, and all of us are responsible for it. Be protectors of God’s gifts!

Whenever human beings fail to live up to this responsibility, whenever we fail to care for creation and for our brothers and sisters, the way is opened to destruction and hearts are hardened. Tragically, in every period of history there are “Herods” who plot death, wreak havoc, and mar the countenance of men and women.

Please, I would like to ask all those who have positions of responsibility in economic, political and social life, and all men and women of goodwill: let us be “protectors” of creation, protectors of God’s plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment. Let us not allow omens of destruction and death to accompany the advance of this world! But to be “protectors”, we also have to keep watch over ourselves! Let us not forget that hatred, envy and pride defile our lives! Being protectors, then, also means keeping watch over our emotions, over our hearts, because they are the seat of good and evil intentions: intentions that build up and tear down! We must not be afraid of goodness or even tenderness!

Here I would add one more thing: caring, protecting, demands goodness, it calls for a certain tenderness. In the Gospels, Saint Joseph appears as a strong and courageous man, a working man, yet in his heart we see great tenderness, which is not the virtue of the weak but rather a sign of strength of spirit and a capacity for concern, for compassion, for genuine openness to others, for love. We must not be afraid of goodness, of tenderness!

Today, together with the feast of Saint Joseph, we are celebrating the beginning of the ministry of the new Bishop of Rome, the Successor of Peter, which also involves a certain power. Certainly, Jesus Christ conferred power upon Peter, but what sort of power was it? Jesus’ three questions to Peter about love are followed by three commands: feed my lambs, feed my sheep. Let us never forget that authentic power is service, and that the Pope too, when exercising

power, must enter ever more fully into that service which has its radiant culmination on the Cross. He must be inspired by the lowly, concrete and faithful service which marked Saint Joseph and, like him, he must open his arms to protect all of God’s people and embrace with tender affection the whole of humanity, especially the poorest, the weakest, the least important, those whom Matthew lists in the final judgment on love: the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison (cf. *Mt 25:31-46*). Only those who serve with love are able to protect!

In the second reading, Saint Paul speaks of Abraham, who, “hoping against hope, believed” (*Rom 4:18*). Hoping against hope! Today too, amid so much darkness, we need to see the light of hope and to be men and women who bring hope to others. To protect creation, to protect every man and every woman, to look upon them with tenderness and love, is to open up a horizon of hope; it is to let a shaft of light break through the heavy clouds; it is to bring the warmth of hope! For believers, for us Christians, like Abraham, like Saint Joseph, the hope that we bring is set against the horizon of God, which has opened up before us in Christ. It is a hope built on the rock which is God.

To protect Jesus with Mary, to protect the whole of creation, to protect each person, especially the poorest, to protect ourselves: this is a service that the Bishop of Rome is called to carry out, yet one to which all of us are called, so that the star of hope will shine brightly. Let us protect with love all that God has given us!

I implore the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph, Saints Peter and Paul, and Saint Francis, that the Holy Spirit may accompany my ministry, and I ask all of you to pray for me! Amen.

### **Pope Francis receives pallium, ring at start of inaugural mass**

Hundreds of thousands of people filled St Peter’s Square Tuesday morning, flowing out into the surrounding streets to participate in the outdoor Mass for the installation of Pope Francis. At the start of the liturgy, Pope Francis received a white wool pallium embroidered with red crosses, a symbol of the Good Shepherd. The Dean of the College of Cardinals, Cardinal Angelo Sodano then placed the papal fisherman’s ring upon the finger of the new pontiff. The ring, originally designed for Pope Paul VI but never worn by him, represents the figure of the fisherman and first pope, the Apostle Peter with the keys of papal authority.

Among those attending the Pope’s installation Mass are six sovereigns, and U.S. Vice President Joe Biden. Argentinean President Cristina Fernandez is among Latin American dignitaries. Representatives from Europe, Africa, and Asia have also flown in to Rome for the celebrations.

Muslim, Jewish and Christian religious leaders are present as well as the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew from Istanbul.

Civil protection authorities have been on the streets since the early hours of Tuesday morning to direct the crowds and Italy’s Red Cross is on hand in the event of any incidents.

The world’s media, which had been covering the Conclave, are also out in force to cover this event and security is tight.