

In his **Angelus** address on Sunday, **Pope Francis** reflected on the **last judgement**, the subject of the day's Gospel reading.

He noted that this is the last Sunday of the liturgical year, the day on which the Church celebrates the **Solemnity of Christ the King of the Universe**. Christ's kingship, he said, is one "of guidance and service, but it is also a kingship that at the end of time will be asserted in judgement." The vision of the second coming of Christ, presented in the Gospel, introduces the final judgment, when all of humanity will appear before Him, and Jesus, exercising His authority, will separate one from another, "as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats."

Pope Francis recalled the criteria that Jesus says will be the foundation of His judgment: "What you did for the least of my brothers, that you did on to me." This sentence, the Pope said, "never fails to strike us, because it reveals to us" the end to which God is willing to go on account of His love for us. God goes so far as to identify Himself with us, not when we are "happy and healthy, but when we are in need." Thus, the Pope said, "Jesus reveals the decisive criteria of His judgment, that is, the concrete love for our neighbour in difficulty."

Likewise, those who cursed, in the Gospel account, are judged for failing to aid their brothers and sisters in their need. Pope Francis repeated, “At the end of our life we will be judged on love, that is, on our concrete commitment to love and to serve Jesus in our smallest and most needy brothers.”

The Holy Father reminds us that Jesus will come at the end of time **to judge all nations**; but He also “
comes to us every day
, in so many ways, and asks us to welcome Him.” The Pope concluded his reflection with the prayer that “the
Virgin Mary
might help us to encounter Him and to receive Him in
His Word
and in
the Eucharist
, and at the same time in our brothers and in our sisters who suffer hunger, illness, oppression, injustice. May our hearts be able to welcome Him in the ‘today’ of our life, so that we might be welcomed by Him into the eternity of His Kingdom of light and of peace.”

(from Vatican Radio)