

Pope: The Gospel never disappoints

“The Gospel is a word of joy, summoning us to mutual acceptance and fellowship, as we make our pilgrim journey towards the Kingdom of God.”

Pope Francis offered that reminder at Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica on the 6th Sunday of the Word of God, as the Vatican hosts the Jubilee for the World of Communication.

The theme for this year’s Word of God Sunday is “I Hope in Your Word.” During the Mass, the Pope conferred the ministry of Lector on 40 lay people: 4 from Albania, 3 from Argentina, 5 from Austria, 1 from Bolivia, 4 from Brazil, 5 from the Philippines, 1 from Iceland, 6 from Italy, 5 from Mexico, 1 from Poland, and 5 from Slovenia.

In his homily, the Pope reflected on the Gospel passage from Luke, in which Jesus reads the Scriptures at the synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth.

He noted that the Word of God Sunday coincides with the Jubilee for Communication, which is the first of the many individual events animating the 2025 Jubilee of Hope.

“Jesus is the living Word in whom all the Scriptures find their fulfilment,” he said. “In the *today* of the sacred Liturgy, we are His contemporaries; we too, filled with amazement, open our hearts and minds to listen to Him.”

Speaking off-the-cuff, the Pope said listening and understanding the Scriptures is not enough. Rather, the Word of God must bring us to experience “amazement,” so that it may enter our hearts and renew us.

Gospel word of compassion, mercy, light

Pope Francis went on to reflect on five actions that characterize the mission of Christ, which he said is both unique and universal.

Jesus, he said, was anointed to “bring good news to the poor,” which is the news that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

The Lord visits His people, added the Pope, and brings the Gospel’s “word of

compassion” that urges us to practice charity and forgive the debts of others. Second, Jesus comes to “proclaim release to the captives,” who are freed by the redeeming power of Christ’s salvation.

The Pope called this Gospel element a “word of mercy,” which calls us to be “passionate witnesses of peace, solidarity, and reconciliation.

Third, Jesus brings “recovery of sight to the blind,” opening our hearts which are often blinded by the allure of power and vanity.

“The Gospel is a word of light, which beckons us to the truth and calls us to bear witness to our faith and to be consistent in its practice,” he said.

Fourth, Jesus’ mission will “let the oppressed go free,” since the Messiah makes us all brothers and sisters and breaks all forms of bondage.

The Gospel, said the Pope, is a “word of freedom,” which invites each of us to conversion, integrity, and perseverance.

Fifth, Jesus comes to “proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour,” which corresponds to the Jubilee and God’s offer to regenerate our lives in hope.

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Christians’ mission to evangelize at all times

Pope Francis said these five actions of Christ fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah, which Jesus read in the synagogue in Nazareth.

However, he noted, Christ’s salvation is not yet fully realized, as we see in the many wars and suffering present in our world.

“Yet,” he said, “wars, injustice, pain and death will not have the final word over the peoples of the earth and our history: for the Gospel is a living and certain word that never disappoints.”

In conclusion, the Pope invited Christians to thank God for sending His Word, who was made flesh for the salvation of the world.

“The Lord has not spoken to us as silent listeners, but as His witnesses, called to evangelize at all times and in every place,” he said. “Let us commit ourselves to bringing the good news to the poor, proclaiming release to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, letting the oppressed go free and announcing the year of the Lord’s favour.”

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