



(ZENIT, Vatican City, September 28, 2016).- For the sick, suffering, or even incarcerated, don't forget to look to Christ Crucified on the Cross, who is God with us.

The Pope offered this reflection today during this morning's General Audience, when he gave a catechesis on Jesus' words during his Passion culminate in forgiveness: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk 23:34).

For the good thief, the Pontiff explained, these are not mere words, for Jesus truly forgives him. Yet, for the bad thief, Francis contrasted, it is inconceivable that the Messiah would remain on the Cross and not save himself.

"But it is precisely by remaining on the Cross that Jesus offers salvation to every person regardless of their situation," the Pope said.

Nothing can separate us So Look Up

The Holy Father recalled that this Jubilee Year is a time of grace and mercy for all, the good and the bad, those in health and those who suffer.

"It is a time to remember that nothing can separate us from the love of God (cf. Rm 8:39)."

We learn a lesson from the good thief, Francis stressed, namely on how we should approach God.

When we approach Him with awe and respect for His power and infinite goodness, instead of fear, he noted, "we entrust ourselves to his mercy, even in the darkest of moments."

The Pontiff stressed to those gathered in the Square that God is always with

us sinners, and he loves us even to death on the Cross.

“Let us see in the good thief a model of confidence in the Lord and, like him, let us call upon Jesus’ name and ask him to remember us in Paradise,” he said.

During today’s audience, the Pope also renewed his appeal to help the suffering nation of Syria and decried unemployment in Italy, specifically in the earthquake-affected region.