



Pope Francis reflects on two types of unity in his homily during Mass on Thursday morning at Casa Santa Marta. One he calls “true” unity; and the other, “false” unity.

The first reading from Acts 23:6-11 and the Gospel from John 17:20-26 demonstrate two styles of unity, Pope Francis said during his homily at Mass at Casa Santa Marta on Thursday morning.

False unity divides

Pope Francis sees a false unity binding Paul’s accusers together. It is false because it leads to division he said. The Sadducees and Pharisees are at first united in their accusation against Paul. But Paul lays bare the “stone that divides” them, observing that he was on trial because of his “hope in the resurrection of the dead”.

In this case, as well as on Palm Sunday, a single people has turned into an anonymous mob. Pope Francis calls this an

exploitation of the people [which] is also contempt for the people because it converts them into an anonymous mob. It is an element which often repeats itself. Let’s think about this. On Palm Sunday everyone acclaims him: ‘Blessed are you, who comes in the name of the Lord.’ The Friday after, the same people cry out ‘Crucify him.’ What happened? They brainwashed them, and they changed everything. They became an anonymous mob which destroys.

This is the dynamic beneath any condemnation, calumny, or defamation. Even at the parish level, the Pope said that:

when two or three begin to criticize another and begin to talk behind the person's back... They create a false unity to condemn. They feel safe and condemn mentally, then they act it out; then they end in accusing each other because they are divided. In this way gossip is a behavior that kills because it destroys people, it destroys their reputation.

True unity

“Let's think of the greatness of the vocation to which we are called: to be one with Jesus, and the Father”, Pope Francis concluded. That should be our goal:

men and women who are united and who always seek to progress along the path of unity—not a false unity, which has no substance, which only serves to get ahead and condemn people, and promotes interests which are not ours: the interests of the prince of this world, which is destruction. May the Lord give us the grace of walking always along the path of true unity.