



## **VATICAN - Pope Francis: to evangelize, baptism is enough**

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - Being Christian "is a gift that makes us go forward with the power of the Spirit in the proclamation of Jesus Christ." And "baptism is enough, it is sufficient to evangelize," to preach Christ even amidst persecution or when one lives in insecurity. This is how Pope Francis outlined the dynamics of the Christian proclamation in the homily during the Mass he presided over this morning in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

The Pope was inspired by the passage from the Acts of the Apostles read during the liturgy, which described the events of the first Christian community in Jerusalem, affected by the persecution after the martyrdom of St. Stephen. While the apostles remained in Jerusalem, all the others were scattered between Judea and Samaria, and there they "went from place to place, proclaiming the Word" (Acts 8: 4). "They left the house, they brought with them maybe a few things - the Pope said - but "they brought with them the wealth they had: the faith. That wealth that the Lord had given them. They are simple faithful, baptized just a year or so, maybe. But they had the courage to go and proclaim. (...). Baptism gave them the courage, the strength of the Spirit."

Inspired by the Gospel, Pope Francis proposed some reflections on the gift of baptism and the apostolic mission to which all Christians are called: "I think of us who are baptized, if we have this power, I think: do we believe in this, that baptism enough, is it enough to evangelize? Or do we have to wait for the priest to say, that the bishop says ... and we? ". In this regard, the Pope repeated the story of the Christian communities in Japan in the seventeenth century, affected by persecutions: "In Japan, a fact happened ... The Catholic missionaries were driven out and the communities remained. For two hundred years they were left without priests. When after this time other missionaries arrived again, they found all the communities in place: all baptized, catechized, all married in the church, and those who were dead, all buried in a Christian manner. There is no priest ... Who did this? The baptized." (GV) (Agenzia Fides 17/04/2013).