

PAPAL MASS
HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
Vatican Basilica

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[...] Ours is an age of grave global problems and issues. We live at a time in which polarization and exclusion are burgeoning and considered the only way to resolve conflicts. We see, for example, how quickly those among us with the status of a stranger, an immigrant, or a refugee, become a threat, take on the status of an enemy. An enemy because they come from a distant country or have different customs. An enemy because of the colour of their skin, their language or their social class. An enemy because they think differently or even have a different faith. An enemy because... And, without our realizing it, this way of thinking becomes part of the way we live and act. Everything and everyone then begins to savour of animosity. Little by little, our differences turn into symptoms of hostility, threats and violence. How many wounds grow deeper due to this epidemic of animosity and violence, which leaves its mark on the flesh of many of the defenceless, because their voice is weak and silenced by this pathology of indifference! How many situations of uncertainty and suffering are sown by this growing animosity between peoples, between us! Yes, between us, within our communities, our priests, our meetings. The virus of polarization and animosity permeates our way of thinking, feeling and acting. We are not immune from this and we need to take care lest such attitudes find a place in our hearts, because this would be contrary to the richness and universality of the Church, which is tangibly evident in the College of Cardinals. We come from distant lands; we have different traditions, skin colour, languages and social backgrounds; we think differently and we celebrate our faith in a variety of rites. None of this makes us enemies; instead, it is one of our greatest riches. [...]