

CELEBRATION OF THE SECOND VESPERS
ON THE SOLEMNITY OF THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE
HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Basilica of St. Paul Outside-the-Walls
Thursday, 25 January 2018

[Link](#)

[...] After their liberation, the chosen people undertook a long and difficult journey through the desert, often wavering, but drawing strength from the memory of God's saving work and His presence, always close. Today's Christians too encounter many difficulties along the way, surrounded by so many spiritual deserts, which cause hope and joy to dry up. Along the way there are also serious dangers, which endanger life: how many brothers today suffer persecution for the name of Jesus! When their blood is shed, even if they belong to different Confessions, they become together witnesses of faith, martyrs, united in the bond of baptismal grace. Together with friends of other religious traditions, Christians today still face challenges that demean human dignity: they flee situations of conflict and misery; they are victims of human trafficking and other forms of modern slavery; they suffer hardship and hunger, in a world that is increasingly rich in means and poor in love, where inequalities continue to increase. But like the Israelites of Exodus, Christians are called to conserve together the memory of what God has accomplished in them. By reviving this memory, we can support each other and face, armed only with Jesus and the sweet power of His Gospel, every challenge with courage and hope. [...]