Friday of the First Week of Lent

Gospel text (*Mt* 5:20-26): Jesus said to his disciples: "(...) if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. (...)."

We will not find God without forgiveness

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(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, we find Jesus' teaching on forgiveness at the very beginning of the "Sermon on the Mount", in the new interpretation of the fifth commandment. Guilt can be overcome only by forgiveness, not by retaliation. God is a God who forgives because He loves His creatures; but forgiveness can only penetrate and become effective in one who is himself forgiving.

The Lord tells us that we cannot come into God's presence unreconciled with our brother; anticipating him in the gesture of reconciliation, going out to meet him, is the prerequisite for true worship of God. In so doing, we should keep in mind that God Himself, knowing that we, human beings, stood against Him unreconciled, stepped out of His divinity in order to come toward us, to reconcile us.

—O Jesus, before giving us the Eucharist, You knelt down before Your disciples and washed their dirty feet, cleansing them with Your humble love. Let my forgiveness be like this.