

# Pope Francis: Let Jesus completely transform your life

## ICN

St Paul's conversion teaches us that it is never too late to let Jesus completely change and transform your life, Pope Francis said during his Wednesday General Audience with pilgrims in St Peter's Square.

Continuing his series of catecheses on apostolic zeal, the Pope said he would be focusing on different individuals, who at different times and in different ways, gave "exemplary witness of what passion for the Gospel means, choosing to focus this and next week on St Paul, who became "a new creation."

He said that when Jesus enters St Paul's life, everything changes, and that Jesus had this effect on all the saints.

The story of Paul of Tarsus, is emblematic, the Pope noted, as he said, that the saint "converted" his zeal from the Law to the Gospel.

Saul's zeal first wanted to destroy the Church, but later he would build it up.

"We can ask ourselves: what happened? What has changed in Paul? In what sense was his zeal, his drive for the glory of God transformed?"

St Thomas Aquinas, Pope Francis recalled, teaches that passion, morally speaking, is neither good nor bad: its virtuous use makes it morally good, sin makes it bad.

"In Paul's case, what changed him was not a mere idea or conviction: it was the encounter with the Risen Lord that transformed his whole being."

Paul's humanity, passion for God and glory, the Holy Father said, is "not annihilated," "but transformed, 'converted' by the Holy Spirit," and "so for every aspect of his life."

Just as it happens in the Eucharist, where the bread and wine do not disappear, but become the Body and Blood of Christ, the Pope said, Paul's zeal remains, but becomes the zeal of Christ.

The Holy Father stressed: "Jesus concretely can transform us and our lives, if we let Him. St Paul himself said: So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come."

"Passion for the Gospel is not a question of understanding or studies, which are useful but do not generate it; rather, it means going through that same experience of "fall and resurrection" that Saul/Paul lived and that is at the origin of the transfiguration of his apostolic drive."

The Holy Father remembered that Paul himself said how Christ's love changes us and can change our lives forever.

"The true Catholic, the true Christian is one who receives Jesus within, which changes your heart. This is the question I ask you all today: what does Jesus mean for me? Did I let him enter my heart, or do I keep him within reach but so that he does not really enter within? Have I let myself be changed by him? Or is Jesus just an idea, a theology that goes ahead... And this is zeal, when one finds Jesus and feels the fire, like Paul, and must preach Jesus, must talk about Jesus, must help people, must do good things. When one finds the idea of Jesus, he or she remains an ideologue of Christianity, and this does not justify, only Jesus justifies us. May the Lord help us find Jesus, encounter Jesus, and may this Jesus change our life from within and help us to help others.