

# origins

CNS documentary service

## Homily at Year of Mercy Mass for Priests

Pope Francis

*Like the Good Shepherd, good priests do not privatize their time and demand to be left alone, but rather are always willing to risk everything in search of the lost sheep, Pope Francis said at the closing Mass of the Jubilee for Priests. "He stands apart from no one but is always ready to dirty his hands. The Good Shepherd does not wear gloves," the pope said June 3. Celebrating the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus with thousands of priests in St. Peter's Square, the pope said the feast serves as a call to contemplate two hearts: "the heart of the Good Shepherd and our own heart as priests." He said, "The heart of the Good Shepherd reaches out to*

*"Contemplating the heart of Christ, we are faced with the fundamental question of our priestly life, Where is my heart directed?"*

*us, above all to those who are most distant. There the needle of his compass inevitably points, there we see a particular 'weakness' of his love, which desires to embrace all and lose none." A good priest, the pope said, does not have a "fluttering heart" that is easily taken by "momentary whims" and "petty satisfactions," but is "rooted firmly in the Lord" despite his own sins. Departing several times from his prepared homily, the pope gave them advice: Seek and include those who are far away and live joyfully. The pope spoke in Italian; a Vatican translation of his homily follows, copyright © 2016 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.*

**t**his celebration of the Jubilee for Priests on the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus invites us all to turn to the heart, the deepest root and foundation of every person, the focus of our affective life and, in a word, his or her very core. Today we contemplate two hearts: the heart of the Good Shepherd and our own heart as priests.

The heart of the Good Shepherd is not only the heart that shows us mercy but is itself mercy. There the Father's love shines forth; there I know I am welcomed and understood as I am; there, with all my sins and limitations, I know the certainty that I am chosen and loved. Contemplating that heart, I renew my first love: the memory of that time when the Lord touched my soul and called me to follow him, the memory of the joy of having cast the nets of our life

*continued on page 98*



### contents

- 97 Homily at Year of Mercy Mass for Priests  
*by Pope Francis*
- 99 Retreat With Priests for Year of Mercy: First Meditation  
*by Pope Francis*
- 104 Retreat With Priests for Year of Mercy: Second Meditation  
*by Pope Francis*
- 108 The Duties and Demands of Catholic Social Teaching  
*by Archbishop José H. Gomez*
- 110 The Sluggish Pursuit of Racial Justice  
*by Bishop Joseph N. Perry*
- 112 Datebook
- 112 On File

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