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Pope says Christians must learn to patiently endure trials, each other

by Cindy Wooden by Catholic News Service

Vatican City — Patience in the midst of trials and patiently putting up with other people are marks of Christian maturity, Pope Francis told ushers and other staff members of the office that cleans and repairs St. Peter's Basilica and watches over the millions of people who visit it each year.

Jesus calls his disciples to follow "the path of love, of patience, of putting up with tribulations and -- if I may say so -- of putting up with each other. We must do this with charity and love because if I have to put up with you, I am sure you will put up with me and we'll walk together on the path of Jesus," the pope said in a homily Tuesday.

Celebrating an early morning Mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, Pope Francis was joined by Cardinal Angelo Comastri, the archpriest of St. Peter's Basilica, and by basilica staff members.

Looking at the Acts of Apostles' account of the persecution of Sts. Paul and Silas, Pope Francis said their patience and joy in the midst of tribulation are signs of Christian maturity that every follower of Jesus must learn.

Learning how to patiently carry "the weight of difficulties, the weight of contradictions" is something people learn gradually, he said. It's a process of maturation that lasts a lifetime. "It's like fine wine."

"When difficulties occur, temptations arrive," he said. One of the most frequent temptations is that of complaining, saying, "'Look what's happening to me.' A Christian who continually complains, neglects being a good Christian and becomes Mr. or Mrs. Whiner, no?"

Patiently accepting trials and continuing to thank God for the gifts one is given "is not a masochistic

attitude, but an attitude that leads you to the path of Jesus," he said.

Continuing to pray and to be at peace, even in the midst of difficulties, the pope said, is a mature Christian attitude that actually keeps a person young. Pope Francis asked those at the Mass to think about the elderly people they know who have put up with trials patiently; "look at their eyes, young eyes, they have a youthful spirit and a renewed youth."

The pope ended his homily by telling the congregation, "Let us ask the Lord for the grace of Christian endurance that gives us peace, this ability to bear things with a good heart, for this joyful endurance."

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