Vatican
Francis, the comic strip
The crowd watches as Pope Francis leads the Angelus message from the window of his studio

The crowd watches as Pope Francis leads the Angelus message from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Aug. 1. (CNS/Vatican Media)

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People should seek Jesus out of genuine love, not calculated self-interest, Pope Francis said.

"Why do I seek the Lord? What are the motivations for my faith, for our faith?" the pope asked Aug. 1 during his Sunday Angelus address.

It is important to reflect on one's reasons because there can be an "immature" faith driven by an "idolatrous temptation," that is, the temptation "that drives us to seek God for our own use, to solve problems," to turn to him for things "we cannot obtain on our own, for our interests," he said.

"But in this way faith remains superficial and even, if I may say so, faith remains miraculous: we look for God to feed us and then forget about him when we are satiated," the pope said, reflecting on the Sunday Gospel reading from St. John in

which Jesus sees a crowd looking for him because people had witnessed the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves.

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The pope said, "It is right to present our needs to God's heart, but the Lord, who acts far beyond our expectations, wishes to live with us first of all in a relationship of love. And true love is disinterested, it is free: One does not love to receive a favor in return! This is self-interest, and very often in life we are motivated by self-interest."

Living a faith that pleases God means doing his will, which is to welcome Jesus with love, "not adding religious practices or observing special precepts," Francis said.

"The Lord wants a loving relationship with us, he said, "a relationship with him that goes beyond the logic of interest and calculation."

This applies not only to God, but also to all relationships, he said, underlining the risk of "using people and exploiting situations for our own ends" when people seek primarily to satisfy their own needs.

Therefore, the Gospel invites people to "welcome Jesus as the bread of life" and learn to love others "freely and without calculation, without using people, freely with generosity, with magnanimity," he said.