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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

After Holy Mass in the Vatican Basilica for the Solemnity of Mary, Most Holy Mother of God, and for the fiftieth World Day of Peace, Pope Francis appeared at the window of his study in the Vatican Apostolic Palace to pray the Angelus with the faithful and pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square for the usual Sunday appointment.

The following are the Pope's words introducing the Marian prayer:

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

In recent days we have laid our adoring gaze on the Son of God, born in Bethlehem; today, the Solemnity of Mary, Most Holy Mother of God, let us turn our eyes to the Mother, yet embracing both of them in their close bond. This bond is not limited solely in the fact of having generated or having been generated: Jesus was "born of woman" (Gal 4,4) for a mission of salvation, and His mother is not excluded from this mission; rather, she is intimately associated with it. Mary is aware of this, and so she does not close herself up in considering only her maternal relationship with Jesus, but remains open to and concerned about all the events that take place around Him: she preserves and meditates, scrutinizes and examines, as the Gospel reminds us today (cf. Lk 2,19). She said "yes" and gave her willingness to be involved in the implementation of the plan of salvation of God Who "has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty" (Lk 1, 51-53). Now, silent and attentive, she tries to understand what God wants of Her day by day.

The visit of the shepherds offers her the opportunity to grasp some elements of God's will, as it is shown in the presence of these humble and poor people. The evangelist Luke narrates the visit of the shepherds to the cave by using a series of verbs expressing movement: they go without delay, they find the Child with Mary and Joseph, they see Him, they refer to what was said to them about Him, and finally they glorify God (cf. Lk 2,16 to 20). Mary closely follows this passage, what the shepherds say, what happened to them, because already she perceives in it the movement of salvation that will emerge from the work of Jesus, and she adapts, ready to meet any request from the Lord. God asks Mary not only to be the mother of His only begotten Son, but also to

cooperate with the Son and for the Son in the plan of salvation, so that in her, a humble servant, the great works of divine mercy may be fulfilled.

And then while, like the shepherds, we contemplate the icon of the Child in his Mother's arms, we feel growing in our hearts a sense of immense gratitude toward the One Who gave the Saviour to the world. Therefore, the first day of a new year, let us say to her:

Thank you, O Holy Mother of the Son of God, Jesus, Holy Mother of God!

Thank you for your humility that attracted the gaze of God;
thank you for the faith with which you welcomed His Word;
thank you for the courage with which you said "Here I am",
forgetting yourself, fascinated by Holy Love,
becoming one with His hope.

Thank you, O Holy Mother of God!

Pray for us, pilgrims in time;
help us to walk the path of peace.
Amen.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, Happy New Year!

And the year will be good to the extent that each of us, with God's help, will try to do good day by day. In this way we build peace, by saying "no" – with our actions – to hatred and violence, and "yes" to fraternity and reconciliation. Fifty years or so ago, Blessed Pope Paul VI began to celebrate the World Day of Peace on this day, to strengthen our joint efforts to build a peaceful and fraternal world. In this year's message, I have proposed to assume *nonviolence as a style of politics for peace*.

Unfortunately, violence has also afflicted this night of good wishes and hope. Deeply saddened, I express my closeness to the Turkish people, I pray for the many victims and injured and for the whole nation in mourning, and I ask the Lord to sustain all men of goodwill who bravely roll up their sleeves to confront the scourge of terrorism and this bloodstain that envelops the world in a shadow of fear and bewilderment.

I wish to thank the president of the Italian Republic for the good wishes he addressed to me last night during his Message to the Nation. I warmly reciprocate, invoking the Lord's blessing on the Italian people so that, with the responsible and fraternal contribution of all, they can look to the future with confidence and hope.

I greet all of you present here: families, associations and youth groups, wishing you a happy and peaceful new year. I express my gratitude for the many initiatives of prayer and commitment to peace that take place in every part of the world. I remember in particular the national march yesterday evening in Bologna, organised by the Italian Episcopal Conference, Caritas, Catholic Action and Pax Christi, with the support of the diocese and municipality of Bologna.

I greet those attending the "Peace in all lands" event promoted by the Sant'Egidio Community. Thank you for your presence and your witness"

I wish to all of you a year of peace in the grace of the Lord and with the maternal protection of Mary, Mother of God.

Have a good feast day and please do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch and goodbye!
