

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLIS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 180909a

Sunday 09.09.2018

The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

Before the Angelus

After the Angelus

At midday today, the Holy Father Francis appeared at the window of his study in the Vatican Apostolic Palace to pray the Angelus with the faithful and pilgrims gathered in Saint Peter's Square.

The following is the Pope's introduction to the Marian prayer:

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

This Sunday's Gospel (cf. *Mk 7: 31-37*) refers to the episode of the miraculous healing of a deaf-mute by Jesus. They brought a deaf mute to Him, beseeching Him to lay His hand upon him. Instead He performs different gestures upon him; first He takes him aside far from the crowd. On this occasion, as in others, Jesus acts always with discretion. He does not want to impress people; He is not seeking popularity or success, but He just wants to do good for people. He teaches us by example that good is done without clamour, without ostentation, without "sounding a trumpet." It is done in silence.

When He was apart from the others, Jesus put His fingers into the ears of the deaf mute and touched his tongue with saliva. This gesture refers to the Incarnation. The Son of God is a man fully inserted in the human reality: He was made man, therefore He can understand the painful condition of another man and He intervenes with a gesture that involves His humanity. At the same time, Jesus wants it to be understood that the miracle takes place due to His union with the Father: so He looked up to Heaven. Then He sighed and said the decisive words: "Ephphatha," meaning, "be opened." And the man was immediately cured: his ears were opened and his

tongue was released. His healing was for him an “opening” to others and to the world.

This account stresses the need for dual healing: first of all, the healing of the sickness and of physical suffering, to restore the health of the body; even if this is not completely attainable in the earthly horizon, despite the many efforts of science and medicine. However, there is a second healing, perhaps more difficult, and it is the healing of fear; the healing of fear that drives us to marginalize the sick, to marginalize the suffering, the disabled. And there are many ways of marginalizing, also with pseudo-piety or with the removal of the problem; one remains deaf and dumb in face of the pains of people marked by illnesses, anguishes, and difficulties. Too often the sick and the suffering become a problem, whereas they should be opportunities to manifest the solicitude and solidarity of a society in its dealings with the weakest.

Jesus revealed to us the secret of a miracle that we also can repeat, becoming protagonists of the “Ephphatha,” of those words “be opened” with which He gave back the speech and hearing to the deaf mute. It means opening ourselves to the needs of our suffering brothers in need of help, avoiding selfishness and closure of the heart. It is, in fact, the heart, namely, a person’s profound nucleus, that Jesus came to “open,” to liberate, to make us capable of living fully our relationship with God and with others. He became man so that man, rendered inwardly deaf and dumb by sin, is able to listen to the voice of God, the voice of Love that speaks to the heart, and thus learn to speak, in turn, the language of love, translating it into gestures of generosity and self-giving.

May Mary, She who “opened” herself totally to the love of the Lord, obtain for us the ability to experience every day in faith, the miracle of the “Ephphatha,” to live in communion with God and with brothers.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Yesterday the Nativity of Mary was celebrated at Loreto, in the Papal Shrine of the Holy House, and a spiritual initiative for families was launched: the House of Mary, House of every family. We entrust to the Holy Virgin the Shrine’s initiative and all those who will take part in different capacities.

The Beatification of Alfonsa Maria Eppinger, Founder of the Sisters of the most Holy Saviour, takes place today in Strasbourg. Let us thank God for this courageous and wise woman who, suffering, in silence and praying, witnessed God’s love especially to all those who were sick in body and in spirit — an applause all together for the new Blessed!

I greet you all affectionately, Romans and pilgrims from several countries: the families, the parish groups, the Associations.

I greet the faithful of the diocese of Como, young people participating in the meeting promoted by the Work of the Church. and the newly confirmed faithful from Prevalle.

I wish you all a good Sunday and please, do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch, and goodbye.
