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## The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

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.

At the end of the Angelus prayer, five children representing the five continents were present at the window of the study. The Holy Father wanted them by his side to announce his meeting with children from all over the world, supported by the Dicastery for Culture and Education, to be held this coming 6 November in the Paul VI Hall, on the theme: "Let us learn from boys and girls".

The following are the Pope's words of introduction to the Marian prayer:

### Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today, the Gospel speaks about two sons. Their father asks them to go to work in the vineyard (cf. *Mt 21:28-32*). One of them responds "yes", right away, but then does not go. The other, says "no", but then repents and goes.

What is there to say about the behaviour of these two? What quickly comes to mind is that going to work in the vineyard requires sacrifice, and sacrifice costs. This doesn't come naturally, even with the beauty of knowing they are sons and heirs. But the problem here is not so much connected that they resist going to work in the vineyard, as much as their *sincerity*, or lack thereof, with their father and with themselves. Even though neither of the sons behaves impeccably, one lies, while the other makes a mistake but remains sincere.

Let us look at the son who says "yes", but then does not go. He does not want to do the father's will, but neither does he want to get into a discussion or talk about it. Thus, he hides behind a "yes", behind a false willingness that hides his laziness and he saves face for the time being. He is a hypocrite. He gets by without conflict, but he

cheats and deceives his father, disrespecting him in a way that is worse than had he responded with a blunt “no”. The problem with someone who behaves like this is that he or she is not a *sinner*, but is *corrupt* because they lie with no difficulty to cover up and disguise their disobedience without welcoming any honest dialogue or feedback.

The other son, instead, who said “no” but then went, is sincere. He is not perfect, but sincere. Certainly, it would have been nice to hear him say “yes” right away. That did not happen, but at least he shows his reluctance clearly and, in a certain sense, courageously. That is, he takes responsibility for his behaviour and acts out in the open. Then, with this basic honesty, he ends up questioning himself until he understands he has made a mistake and retraces his steps. He is a *sinner*, we could say, but he is not *corrupt*. Pay close attention to this: this son is a sinner, but he is not corrupt. And there is always the hope of redemption for a sinner; for the corrupt, instead, it is much more difficult. In fact, the corrupt person’s false “yesses”, elegant but hypocritical façades and habitual false pretenses, are like a thick “rubber wall”, behind which to take cover from qualms of conscience. And these hypocrites do so much evil! Brothers and sisters, sinners yes – all of us are – corrupt no! Sinners yes, corrupt no!

Let us look at ourselves now and, in the light of all this, ask ourselves some questions. When faced with the difficulty to live an honest and generous life, to dedicate myself to the will of the Father, am I willing to say “yes” each day, even if it costs? And when I fail, am I sincere before God about my difficulties, my failings, my weaknesses? And when I say “no”, do I turn around after? Do we speak with the Lord about this? When I make a mistake, am I willing to repent and retrace my steps? Or do I pretend everything is okay and go through life wearing a mask, concerning myself only about appearing good and righteous? Finally, am I a sinner, like everyone, or is there something corrupt in me? Do not forget: sinners yes, corrupt no.

May Mary, mirror of holiness, help us be sincere Christians.

### After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Yesterday, Father Giuseppe Beotti, killed in hatred of the faith in 1944, was beatified in Piacenza. He was a pastor according to the heart of Christ who did not hesitate to give his life to protect the flock entrusted to him. A round of applause for the new blessed!

In these days, I am following the tragic situation of the displaced people in Nagorno-Karabakh. I renew my appeal for dialogue between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and hope that talks between the parties, with the support of the international community, might foster a lasting agreement to bring the humanitarian crisis to an end. I assure you of my prayers for the victims of the explosion in the fuel depot that occurred near the city of Stepanakert.

Today begins the month of October, the month of the *Rosary* and of the *missions*. I encourage everyone to experience the beauty of praying the Rosary, contemplating the mysteries of Christ with Mary and invoking her intercession for the needs of the Church and of the world. Let us pray for peace in battered Ukraine and in all those lands wounded by war. Let us pray for the evangelization of peoples. And let us also pray for the Synod of Bishops during this month in which the first Assembly on the theme of synodality in the Church takes place.

Today is the feast of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, the Little Flower, the saint of confidence, the saint of confidence in ourselves. This coming 15 October, an Apostolic Exhortation on her message will be published. Let us pray to Saint Thérèse and to Our Lady: may Saint Thérèse help us have confidence and to work for the missions.

I greet all of you, people from Rome and pilgrims from Italy and from many countries. In particular, I greet the group from the Shrine of Our Lady of Revelation from Three Fountains in Rome, the faithful from a parish in Catania, the confirmation candidates from Porto Sant'Elpidio, the scouts from Afragola and the confraternities from Arcieri Storici and the Knights of Saint Sebastian. I extend a thought and encouragement to the National Association of Women who have had Breast Operations.

As you can see, beside me today are five children who represent the five continents. I would like to announce along with them that on the afternoon of November 6, in Paul VI Hall, I will meet with children from all over the world. "Let us learn from boys and girls" is the theme for this event, sponsored by the Dicastery for Culture and Education. It will be a meeting that will manifest the dream each of us has: to retrieve the pure sentiments of children for the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like children. Children teach us how to be transparent in relationships, how to spontaneously welcome those who are strangers, and how to respect all of creation. Dear children, I too look forward to learning from all of you!

I wish all of you a good Sunday. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your meal and *arrivederci!*

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