

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 240106b

Saturday 06.01.2024

The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

At midday today, Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, 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 are the Pope's words of introduction to the Marian prayer:

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno* and happy feast day!

Today we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord, that is, His manifestation to all peoples in the person of the Magi (cf. *Mt* 2:1-12). They are wise seekers who, after wondering about the apparition of a star, set out on a journey and arrive in Bethlehem. And there, they find Jesus, "with Mary His mother", they bow down and they offer "gold, frankincense and myrrh" (c. 11).

Wise men who recognize the presence of God in a simple Child: not in a prince or a nobleman, but in the child of poor people, and they prostrate themselves before Him, adoring Him. The star led them there, before a Child; and they, in His small innocent eyes, perceive the light of the Creator of the universe, to whose pursuit they have dedicated their existence.

It is the decisive experience for them, and important for us too: indeed, in the Child Jesus, we see God made man. And so let us look at Him, let us wonder at His humility. Contemplating Jesus, staying before Him, adoring Him in the Eucharist: it is not wasting time, but giving meaning to time. To worship is not to waste time, but to give meaning to time. This is important, I repeat: to worship is not to waste time, but to give meaning to time; it is rediscovering the course of life in the simplicity of a silence that nourishes the heart.

And let us also find the time to watch children, like the Magi watch Jesus: the little ones who also speak to us of Jesus, with their trust, their immediacy, their wonder, their healthy curiosity, their ability to cry and laugh spontaneously, to dream. God is made like this: a Child, trusting, simple, a lover of life (cf. *Wis* 11:26), with our children; patiently, as grandparents know how to do! If we stay before the child Jesus and in the company of children, we will learn to be amazed and we will start out simpler and better, like the Magi. And we will know how to have new outlooks, creative outlooks on the problems of the world.

Let us ask ourselves, then: in these days, have we stopped to adore, have we made a little space for Jesus in silence, praying before the crib? Have we dedicated time to the children, to speaking and playing with them? And finally, are we able to see the problems of the world through the eyes of children?

May Mary, Mother of God and ours, increase our love for the Child Jesus and for all children, especially those burdened by wars and injustice.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters!

Sixty years ago, in these very days, Pope Saint Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras met in Jerusalem, breaking down a wall of incommunicability that had kept Catholics and Orthodox apart for centuries. Let us learn from the embrace of those two great men of the Church on the path to Christian unity, praying together, walking together, working together.

And thinking of that historic gesture of fraternity in Jerusalem, let us pray for peace, for peace in the Middle East, in Palestine, in Israel, in Ukraine, all over the world. So many victims of war, so many deaths, so much destruction... Let us pray for peace. I express my closeness to the Iranian people, in particular the relatives of the many victims of the terrorist attack that occurred in Kerman, the many who were injured and all those who were affected by this great suffering.

The Epiphany is Missionary Childhood Day. I greet missionary children and young people throughout the world. I thank them for their commitment in prayer and in concrete support of the proclamation of the Gospel and, in particular, the promotion of young people in the mission territories. Thank you, thank you very much!

I joyfully welcome the participants in the historic-folkloristic procession, dedicated this year to the area of the Valley of the river Tiber, and to its human and religious values.

I greet the faithful from Germany, the young people of the "Among us" Movement, the "Friends of history and tradition" from Carovilli, and the AVIS group from Paderno Franciacorta. And I extend my blessing to the participants in the great procession of the Three Kings taking place in Warsaw and in many cities in Poland.

And I wish everyone a happy Feast of the Epiphany. Please continue to pray for me and to keep going, bravely: may the Lord bless you. Enjoy your lunch, and *arrivederci*!
