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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

At midday today, fifth Sunday of Lent, 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!*

Today, fifth Sunday of Lent, as we draw closer to Holy Week, Jesus in the Gospel (cf. *Jn* 12:20-33) tells us something important: that on the Cross we will see His glory and that of the Father (cf. vv. 23, 28).

But how is it possible that the glory of God manifest itself right there, on the Cross? One would think it happened in the Resurrection, not on the Cross, which is a defeat, a failure. Instead, today, talking about His Passion, Jesus says: "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified" (v. 23). What does He mean?

He means that glory, for God, does not correspond to human success, fame and popularity; glory, for God, has nothing self-referential about it, it is not a grandiose manifestation of power to be followed by public applause. For God, glory is to love to the point of giving one's life. Glorification, for Him, means giving Himself, making Himself accessible, offering His love. And this reached its culmination on the Cross, right there, where Jesus outspread God's love to the maximum, fully revealing the face of mercy, giving us life and forgiving his crucifiers.

Brothers and sisters, from the Cross, the "cathedra of God", the Lord teaches us that true glory, that which never fades and makes us happy, is made up of *giving* and *forgiveness*. Giving and forgiveness are the essence of the glory of God. And for us, they are the way of life. Giving and forgiveness: very different criteria to what we see around us, and also within us, when we think of glory as something to receive rather than to give; something to

possess instead of something to offer. No, worldly glory fades, and does not leave joy in the heart; it does not even lead to the good of all, but rather to division, discord, and envy.

And so, we can ask ourselves: what is the glory I desire for myself, for my life, that I dream of for my future? That of impressing others with my prowess, my abilities, or the things I possess? Or the path of giving and forgiveness, that of the Crucified Jesus, the way of those who never tire of loving, confident that this bears witness to God in the world and makes the beauty of life shine? What kind of glory do I want for myself? Indeed, let us remember that when we give and forgive, God's glory shines in us. Right there: when we give and forgive.

May the Virgin Mary, who followed Jesus faithfully at the hour of His Passion, help us be living reflections of the love of Jesus.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters!

I have learned with relief that in Haiti, a teacher and four of the six brothers religious of the *Frères du Sacré-Cœur* Institute, kidnapped 23 February last, have been freed. I ask for the release as soon as possible of the other two brothers and all those people still being held hostage in that beloved country, so fraught with violence. I invite all the political and social actors to abandon any personal interest and to engage in a spirit of solidarity in the pursuit of the common good, supporting a peaceful transition to a country that, with the help of the international community, may be equipped with solid institutions capable of restoring order and tranquillity among its citizens.

Let us continue to pray for the populations tormented by war, in Ukraine, Palestine and Israel, and in Sudan. And let us not forget Syria, a country that has suffered greatly for a long time because of war.

I greet all of you who have come to Rome, from Italy and many parts of the world. In particular, I greet the Spanish students from the "Camplus" network of university residences, parish groups from Madrid, Pescara, Chieti, Locorotondo and the parish of *San Giovanni Leonardi* in Rome. I greet the Saint Joseph Social Cooperative of Como, children from Perugia, the young people of Bologna on their journey towards the Profession of Faith, and candidates for Confirmation from Pavia, Iolo di Prato and Cavaion Veronese.

I welcome with pleasure the participants in the Rome Marathon, a traditional celebration of sport and fraternity. Again this year, on the initiative of *Athletica Vaticana*, many athletes are involved in the "solidarity relays", becoming witnesses of sharing.

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