



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

Before the Angelus

After the Angelus

At the end of the Holy Mass for the First World Day of the Poor, 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 St. Peter's Square.

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

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

On this penultimate Sunday of the liturgical year, the Gospel presents us the parable of the talents (cf. *Mt.* 25, 14-30). A man, before departing on a journey, to his servants some talents, which at the time were coins of considerable value: five talents to one servant, two to another, and one to another, according to each one's abilities. The servant who received five talents was enterprising and made them bear fruit, earning another five. The servant who received two did likewise, procuring another two. Instead, the servant who received one dug a hole in the ground, and there he hid the coin from his master.

It is this same servant who explains the reason for his gesture to his master upon his return, saying, "Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground" (v. 24-25). This servant did not have a relationship of trust with his master, but rather was afraid of him, and this obstructed him. Fear always immobilizes and often leads us to make the wrong decision. Fear discourages us from taking the initiative, inducing us to take refuge in

safe and guaranteed solutions, and in this way we end up not achieving anything good. To go ahead and grow on life's journey, we must not be afraid; we must be trustful.

This parable shows us how important it is to have a true idea of God. We must not think of Him as a bad, hard and severe master who wants to punish us. If within us there is this mistaken image of God, our life will not be fruitful, because we will live in fear and this will not lead us to anything constructive; rather, fear paralyses us, causing us to self-destruct. We are called to reflect so as to discover what is truly our idea of God. Already in the Old Testament He is revealed as "a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (*Ex 34: 6*). And Jesus has always shown us that God is not a severe and intolerant master, but a father full of love and tenderness, a father full of goodness. Therefore we can and must have immense trust in Him.

Jesus shows us the generosity and the thoughtfulness of the Father in many ways: with His word, with His gestures, with His welcome to all, especially sinners, the small and the poor – as we are reminded today, the First World Day of the Poor – but also with His admonishments, which reveal His concern that we do not pointlessly squander our life. Indeed, it is a sign that God holds us in high regard: this awareness helps us to be responsible people in all our actions. Thus, the parable of the talents recalls to us a personal responsibility and faithfulness that also become a capacity to set out continually on new paths, without burying our talent, or rather, the gifts that God has entrusted to us, and for which He will ask us to account.

May the Holy Virgin intercede for us, so that we remain faithful to God's will, making fruitful the talents He has given us. In this way we will be useful to others and, on the final day, we will be welcomed by the Lord, Who will invite us to take part in His joy.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Yesterday, in Detroit, in the United States of America, Francis Solano Casey, priest of the Friars Minor Capuchin, was proclaimed Blessed. A humble and faithful disciple of Christ, he distinguished himself in his tireless service to the poor. May his witness help priests, religious and laypeople live with joy the bond between the announcement of the Gospel and love for the poor.

This is what we wished to recall with today's World Day of the Poor, which in Rome and in dioceses throughout the world is expressed in many initiatives of prayer and sharing. I hope that the poor may be at the centre of our communities not only in moments such as this, but always; because they are at the heart of the Gospel, and in them we encounter Jesus, Who speaks to us and calls to us through their sufferings and their needs.

I wish to remember today, in a particular way, the populations who live in painful poverty due to war and conflicts. I therefore renew my heartfelt appeal to the international community to make every effort possible to promote peace, especially in the Middle East. I address a special thought to the dear Lebanese people, and I pray for the stability of the country, so that it may continue to be a "messenger" of respect and co-existence for all the Region and for the entire world.

I also pray for the crew of the missing Argentine military submarine.

Today is also the Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, instituted by the United Nations. I encourage public institutions in their efforts for prevention, and urge motorists to be prudent and to respect the law, as the first form of protection for oneself and for others.

I greet all of you, families, parishes, associations and individual faithful, from Italy and many parts of the world. In

particular, I greet the pilgrims of the Dominican Republic; participants in the Solidarity Race from Košice, Slovakia, to Rome; and the Ecuadorian population resident in Rome, which celebrates Our Lady of Quinche. I greet the fraternity of the secular Italian Trinitarian Order, the faithful of Civitanova Marche, Sanzeno, Termoli, Capua and Nola, and the young confirmants of Mestrino, Padua.

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