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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

Before the Angelus

After the Angelus

At midday today, Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 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!

In today's Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the holy faithful people of God express with joy their veneration of the Virgin Mother. They do so in the common liturgy and also with a thousand different forms of piety; and thus, the prophecy of Mary herself comes true: "All generations will call me blessed" (*Lk* 1: 48), because the Lord has raised up His humble handmaid. The Assumption into Heaven, in soul and body, is a divine privilege accorded to the Holy Mother of God because of her particular union with Jesus. It is a bodily and spiritual union, which began with the Annunciation and matured throughout all of Mary's life, through her unique participation in the mystery of her Son. Mary always went with her Son: she followed Jesus, and so we say she was His first disciple.

Our Lady's existence unfolded like that of any woman of her time: she prayed, she managed the family and the home, she went to the Synagogue . . . However, she performed every daily action in total union with Jesus. And on Calvary this union reached its apex, in love, in compassion and in the suffering of the heart. Therefore, God

gave her full participation in Jesus' *resurrection*. The body of the Holy Mother, like that of the Son, was preserved from corruption.

The Church invites us today to contemplate this mystery: it shows us that *God wishes to save the whole man*, that is, to save his *soul and body*. Jesus rose again with the body He assumed from Mary, and He ascended to the Father with His transfigured humanity. With the body, a body like ours, but transfigured. The Assumption of Mary, human creature, confirms to us what our glorious destiny will be. The Greek philosophers had already understood that man's soul is destined for happiness after death. However, they disdained the body – considered the prison of the soul –and they did not conceive that God had provided for man's body to be united to the soul in heavenly beatitude. Our body, transfigured, will be there. This – the “*resurrection of the flesh*” – is an element proper to Christian revelation, a cornerstone of our faith.

The stupendous reality of Mary's Assumption manifests and confirms the unity of the human person, and it reminds us that we are called to serve and glorify God with all our being, soul and body. To serve God only with the body would be an act of slaves; to serve God only with the soul would be against our human nature. Around the year 220, Saint Irenaeus, a great Father of the Church, affirmed that “the glory of God is man fully alive, and man's life consists in the vision of God” (*Against the Heresies*, IV, 20, 7). If we have lived thus, in the joyful service of God, which is also expressed in generous service to brothers, on the day of the resurrection our destiny will be similar to that of our heavenly Mother. Given then will be the full realization of the Apostle Paul's exhortation: “Glorify God in your body!” (*1 Cor* 6: 20), and we will glorify Him forever in Heaven.

Let us pray to Mary that, by her maternal intercession, she may help us to live our daily journey in the active hope of being able one day to join her, with all the Saints and our dear ones, all in Paradise.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

To Mary Consoler of the afflicted, whom we contemplate today in the glory of Paradise, I would like to entrust all the anguish and torments of those who, in so many parts of the world, suffer in body and in spirit. May our celestial Mother obtain comfort, courage and serenity for all.

I think in particular of all those that affected by yesterday's tragedy in Genoa, which claimed victims and loss in the population. As I entrust to God's mercy those who lost their life, I express my spiritual closeness to their families, to the wounded, to the displaced and to all those who suffer as a result of this tragic event. I invite you to join me in prayer for the victims and their loved ones. Let us recite together the *Hail Mary*.

I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims from different countries! I thank you for your presence and I wish you a happy feast of Our Lady's Assumption. And, please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch and goodbye!
