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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

Before the Angelus

After the Angelus

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.

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

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

This Sunday's Gospel reading (cf. *Mk* 10: 2-16) offers us Jesus' word on marriage. The account begins with the provocation of the Pharisees who ask Jesus if it is licit for a husband to repudiate his own wife, as provided for in the law of Moses (cf. 2-4). First of all Jesus, with the wisdom and authority that comes to Him from the Father, brings down to size the Mosaic prescription, saying: "Because of your hardness of heart he – that is, the ancient legislator – wrote you this commandment" (v5). It is therefore a concession that serves to counter the flaws produced by our selfishness, but it does not correspond to the original intention of the Creator.

And here Jesus takes up again the Book of Genesis: "From the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female'. Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife" (verses 6-7). And he concludes: "What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate" (verse 9). In the Creator's original plan, there is no man who marries a woman and, if things do not get well, repudiates her. No. Instead there are the man and the woman called upon to recognize each other, to complete each other, to help each other in the marriage.

This teaching of Jesus is very clear and defends the dignity of marriage, as a union of love that implies fidelity. What enables spouses to remain united in marriage is a love of reciprocal giving sustained by Christ's grace. If instead in the spouses there prevails individual interest, one's own satisfaction, then their union cannot hold

And it is the same Gospel reading that reminds us, with great realism, that the man and the woman, called to live the experience of relationship and love, may painfully carry out gestures that put it in crisis. Jesus does not admit all that which may lead a relationship to sink. He does so to confirm God's plan, in which the strength and the beauty of the human relationship are highlighted. The Church on the one hand never tires of confirming the beauty of the family as given to us by the Scripture and by tradition; at the same time, she strives to make her maternal closeness felt in a concrete way by those who live the experience of relationships which are broken or continue in a painful or burdensome way.

God's way of acting with His unfaithful people – that is, with us – teaches us that wounded love can be healed by God through mercy and forgiveness. Therefore in these situations, the Church is not asked immediately and always to condemn. On the contrary, faced with so many painful failed marriages, she feels called to live her presence of love, charity and mercy, to lead wounded and lost hearts back to God.

Let us invoke the Virgin Mary, that she may help spouses always to live and renew their union, starting from the original gift of God.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today, the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, I address a special greeting to the faithful gathered in the Shrine of Pompeii for the traditional Plea, presided at on this occasion by Cardinal Mario Zenari, apostolic nuncio in Syria. I reiterate my invitation to you all to pray the Rosary every day during the month of October, concluding with the antiphon "Under your protection" and the prayer to Saint Michael Archangel, to counter the attacks from the devil who wants to divide the Church.

Next Saturday in Rome the First Day of the Catacombs will be held. Many sites will be open to the public, with educational laboratories and cultural events. I thank the Pontifical Commission for Sacred Architecture for this initiative and I wish it every success.

I greet you all with affection, Romans and pilgrims, especially the families and parish groups from Italy and various parts of the world. I greet the Greek Catholic pilgrims from Slovakia, the faithful of Poznan and Fortaleza, Brazil, grandparents from Malta and students from Neuilly, France, and the Sisters of Saint Paul of Chartres from Australia.

I greet the participants in the pilgrimage organized by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, the "Calliope" Choir of Gussago, Brazil, the young people of "Gioventù Studentesca" ot Latium and the faithful of Abbiategrasso.

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