SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
BOLLETTINO

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

N. 190217a

Sunday 17.02.2019

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!

Today's Gospel (cf. *Lk* 6: 17, 20-6) presents to us the Beatitudes in Saint Luke's version. The text is divided into four beatitudes and four admonitions formulated with the expression "Woe to you". With these words, strong and incisive, Jesus opens our eyes, He makes us see with His outlook, beyond appearances, beyond the surface, and He teaches us to discern situations with faith.

Jesus declares blessed the poor, the hungry, the afflicted, the persecuted; and he admonishes those who are rich, satiated, laughing and acclaimed by the people. The reason for this paradoxical beatitude resides in the fact that God is close to those who suffer, and intervenes to free them from their slavery; Jesus sees this, He already sees the beatitude beyond the negative reality. And equally, the "woe to you" addressed to those who today are doing well, serves to awaken them to the dangerous deception of selfishness and to open them up to the logic of love, while they are still in time to do so.

Today's Gospel reading therefore invites us to reflect on this deep meaning of having faith, that consists of

entrusting oneself totally to the Lord. It is a matter of breaking down worldly idols so as to open the heart to the living and true God; He alone can give to our existence that fullness so desired and yet difficult to achieve. Brothers and sisters, there are indeed many, even in our time, who propose themselves as dispensers of happiness: they come and promise success in a short time, great profits at hand, magical solutions to every problem, and so on. And here it is easy to slip without realizing in sin against the first commandment: that is, idolatry, replacing God with an idol. Idolatry and idols look like things from other times, but in reality they are of all time! Even today. They describe some contemporary attitudes better than many sociological analyses.

Therefore Jesus opens our eyes to the reality. We are called to happiness, to being blessed, and we become so from now to the extent to which we place ourselves on the side of God, of His Kingdom, on the side of what is not ephemeral but rather which lasts for eternal life. We are happy if we acknowledge ourselves to be in need before God – and this is very important: “Lord, I need you” – and if, like Him and with Him, we are close to the poor, the afflicted and the hungry. We too are thus before God: we are poor, afflicted, we are hungry before God. We become capable of joy every time that, possessing the goods of this world, we do not make idols of them to which we sell our soul, but are capable of sharing them with our brothers. The liturgy today invites us once again to question ourselves on this and to make the truth in our hearts.

Jesus’ beatitudes are a decisive message, that drives us not to place our trust in material and transient things, not to seek happiness following vendors of smoke – who are very often sellers of death, illusionists. We must not follow them, because they are incapable of giving us hope. May the Lord help us open our eyes, to acquire a more penetrating outlook on reality, to heal from the chronic myopia with which the worldly spirit infects us. With his paradoxical word He shakes us and makes us recognise what truly enriches us, sates us, gives us joy and dignity. In short, what truly gives meaning and fullness to our life. May the Virgin Mary help us listen to this Gospel with open minds and hearts, so that it may bear fruit in our life and that we may become witnesses to the happiness that does not deludes, that of God Who never disappoints.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

From next Thursday to Sunday a meeting will be held in the Vatican of the presidents of all the Episcopal Conferences on the theme of the protection of the minors in the Church. I invite you to pray for this appointment, which I wished for as an action of strong pastoral responsibility faced with an urgent challenge of our time.

I greet families, parishes, associations and those who have come to Rome, from Italy and from many parts of the world; in particular, pilgrims from Croatia, Toulon, Marseille and London; and students from Paris and Badajoz. I greet the faithful of Sassari, Fermo, Castiglione del Lago, and Concorezzo; the families of Trentino Alto Adige and pilgrims from the diocese of Vicenza.

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