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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!

In today's Gospel reading (see *Lk 12: 32-48*), Jesus recalls His disciples to continual vigilance. Why? To grasp the passage of God in one's own life, because God continually passes through life. And He shows the ways to live this vigilance well: "Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning" (35). This is the way. Above all, "Be dressed ready for service", an image that recalls the attitude of the pilgrim, ready to set out on a journey. It means not laying down roots in comfortable and reassuring dwellings, but abandoning oneself, being open with simplicity and trust to the passage of God in our life, to the will of God Who guides us towards the next destination. The Lord always journeys with us and very often takes us by the hand, to guide us, so that we do not err in this difficult journey. Indeed, those who trust in God know well that the life of faith is not something static, but it is dynamic! The life of faith is a continuing journey, heading towards ever new stages, that the Lord indicates day after day. Because He is the Lord of surprises, the Lord of newness, of real true newness.

And then – the first way was "be dressed ready for service" – then we are required to "keep the lamps burning", to be able to light up the darkness of the night. We are invited, that is, to live an authentic and mature faith,

capable of illuminating the many “nights” of life. We know, we have all had days that were true spiritual nights. The lamp of faith needs to be continuously nurtured, with the heart-to-heart meeting with Jesus in prayer and by listening to His Word. I repeat something I have told you many times: always carry a small Gospel in your pocket, in your bag, to read it. It is an encounter with Jesus, with the Word of Jesus. This lamp of the encounter with Jesus in prayer and in His Word is entrusted to us for the good of all: therefore, no one can retreat in an intimistic way into the certainty of his own salvation, without interest in others. It is a fantasy to believe that alone one can illuminate oneself within. No, it is a fantasy. True faith opens our hearts to others and spurs us towards concrete communion with our brothers, especially those in need.

And Jesus, to let us understand this attitude, recounts the parable of the servants who await the return of the master when he returns from a wedding banquet (36-40), thus presenting another aspect of vigilance: being ready for the final and definitive encounter with the Lord. Each one of us will meet Him, will find himself on that day of encounter. Each one of us has his or her own date for the definitive encounter. The Lord says: “Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. ... If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants!” (37-38). With these words, the Lord reminds us that life is a journey towards eternity; therefore, we are called to make fruitful all the talents we have, without forgetting that “Here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come” (*Heb 13: 14*) From this perspective, every instant becomes precious, and so we need to live and act on this earth with nostalgia for heaven: with feet on the ground, walking on the ground, working on the ground, doing good on the ground, and with the heart nostalgic for heaven.

We cannot truly understand what this supreme joy consists of, although Jesus enables us to intuit this with the simile of the master who, finding his servants still awake upon his return, “will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them” (37). The eternal joy of paradise is manifested in this way: the situation will be reversed and it will no longer be the servants, that is, us, who serve God, but God Himself will place Himself at our service. And Jesus already does this now: Jesus prays for us, Jesus looks at us and prays to the Father for us, Jesus serves us now, He is our servant. And this will be the definitive joy. The thought of the final encounter with the Father, rich in mercy, fills us with hope, and inspires us to constant effort for our sanctification and to build a more just and fraternal world.

May the Virgin Mary, by her maternal intercession, sustain this effort of ours.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Tomorrow will be the seventieth anniversary of the Geneva Convention, important international legal instruments that impose limits on the use of force and aim to protect civilians and prisoners in wartime. May this anniversary make states increasingly aware of the indispensable need to protect the life and dignity of the victims of armed conflicts. All are required to observe the limits imposed by international humanitarian law, protecting defenceless populations and civilian structures, especially hospitals, schools, places of worship and refugee camps. And let us not forget that war and terrorism are always a grave loss for the whole of humanity.

They are the great human defeat!

I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims from various countries: families, parish groups, associations.

There are also many children and young people present today. I greet you with affection. In particular the teenagers and Saccolongo and also those of Creola, the youth pastoral group from Verona, and the young people of Cittadella.

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