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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

At midday today, the Holy Father Francis appeared at the window of his study in the Vatican Apostolic Palace to recite the Angelus with the faithful and pilgrims gathered in Saint Peter's Square.

The following are the Pope's words of introduction to the Marian prayer:

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

Today's Gospel reading (see *Lk 20: 27-38*) offers us a wonderful teaching of Jesus on the resurrection of the dead. Jesus is asked by some Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection and therefore provoke Him with an insidious question: in resurrection, whose wife would be a woman who had seven successive husbands, all brothers, who all died one after another? Jesus does not fall into the trap and replies that the risen in the hereafter "neither marry nor are given in marriage, for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (vv. 35-36). This is how Jesus responds.

With this answer, Jesus first of all invites His interlocutors – and us too – to think that this earthly dimension in which we live now is not the only dimension, but that there is another, no longer subject to death, in which it will be fully manifested that we are children of God. It gives great consolation and hope to listen to this simple and clear word of Jesus about life beyond death; we need it so much especially in our time, so rich in knowledge about the universe but so poor in wisdom about eternal life.

Jesus' clear certainty about the Resurrection is based entirely on the *fidelity of God*, Who is the God of life. In fact, behind the question of the Sadducees lies a deeper question: not only whose wife the widow of the seven husbands will be, but *whose will her life be*. It is a doubt that touches the man of all times and also us: after this earthly pilgrimage, what will become of our lives? Will it belong to nothing, to death?

Jesus answers that life *belongs to God*, Who loves us and cares so much about us, to the point of linking His name to ours: He is “the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now He is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him”. (vv. 37-38). Life exists where there is bond, communion and brotherhood; and it is a stronger life than death when it is built on true relationships and bonds of fidelity. On the contrary, there is no life where one has the pretension of belonging only to oneself and of living as an island: in these attitudes death prevails. It is selfishness. If I live for myself, I am sowing death in my heart.

May the Virgin Mary help us to live every day from the perspective of what we say in the final part of the Creed: “We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come”. Awaiting the hereafter.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Yesterday in Granada, in Spain, María Emilia Riquelme y Zayas, founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament of Mary Immaculate, was proclaimed Blessed. And today, in Braga, Portugal, a Mass of thanksgiving will be celebrated for the equipollent canonization of Saint Bartolomeu Fernandes dos Mártires. The new Blessed was an example of fervour in Eucharistic adoration and was generous in her service to those most in need; while the new Saint was a great evangelizer and pastor of his people. An applause to both the Blesseds!

I address a special thought to the dear people of South Sudan, whom I will visit this [next] year. With the memory, still vivid, of the spiritual retreat for the Authorities of the country, which took place in the Vatican last April, I wish to renew my invitation to all those involved in the national political process to seek that which unites and to overcome what divides, in a spirit of true brotherhood. The South Sudanese people have suffered too much in recent years, and they look forward with great hope to a better future, especially the definitive end of conflicts and a lasting peace. I therefore urge those responsible to continue tirelessly in their commitment to an inclusive dialogue in the search for consensus for the good of the nation. I also express the hope that the international community will not neglect to accompany South Sudan on the path to national reconciliation. I invite you all to pray together for this country, for which I have a particular affection.

[Hail Mary]

I also wish to entrust to your prayers the situation of beloved Bolivia, close to my homeland. I call on all Bolivians, particularly political and social actors, to wait constructively and unconditionally, in a climate of peace and serenity, for the results of the process of the revision of the elections, which is currently under way. In peace.

Today in Italy we celebrate National Thanksgiving Day for the fruits of the earth and work. I join with the bishops in recalling the strong link between bread and work, in the hope of courageous employment policies that take into account dignity and solidarity and prevent the risks of corruption. May workers not be exploited, and may there be work for all: but real work, not slave labour.

I thank all of you who have come from Rome, from Italy and from many other parts of the world. I greet the pilgrims of Haaren, Germany; Darwin, Australia; and the students of Neuilly, France; as well as the faithful of the diocese of Piacenza-Bobbio, and those of Bianzè and Burano.

I wish you all a happy Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you. Have a good lunch and *arrivederci!*

