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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

At the end of the Holy Mass celebrated today in the Vatican Basilica on the occasion of the Third World Day of the Poor, 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!

The Gospel of this penultimate Sunday of the liturgical year (cf. *Lk* 21: 5-19) presents to us Jesus' discourse on the end of time. Jesus pronounces it in front of the temple of Jerusalem, a building admired by the people for its grandeur and splendour. But He prophesied that of all the beauty of the temple, that grandeur, "there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down" (v. 6). The destruction of the temple foretold by Jesus is not so much a figure of the *end* of history as of the *purpose* of history. Indeed, before the listeners who want to know how and when these signs will happen, Jesus responds with the typical apocalyptic language of the Bible.

He uses two apparently contrasting images: the first is a series of frightening events: catastrophes, wars, famines, riots and persecutions (vv. 9-12); the other is reassuring: "Not a hair of your head will perish" (v. 18). First of all there is a realistic look at history, marked by calamities and also by violence, by traumas that wound creation, our common home, and also the human family that lives there, and the Christian community itself. Think of the many wars today, so many calamities today. The second image – enclosed in Jesus' reassurance – tells us the attitude that the Christian must adopt in living this story, characterized by violence and adversity.

And what is the attitude of the Christian? It is the attitude of hope in God, which allows us not to be overwhelmed by tragic events. Indeed, they are an "opportunity to bear witness" (v. 13). Christ's disciples cannot remain

slaves to fears and anxieties; instead they are called to live history, to stem the destructive force of evil, with the certainty that the Lord's action of goodness is always accompanied by His providential and reassuring tenderness. This is the eloquent sign that the Kingdom of God is coming to us, that is, that the realization of the world as God wants it is approaching. It is He, the Lord, Who guides our existence and knows the ultimate purpose of things and events.

The Lord calls us to collaborate in the construction of history, becoming, together with Him, peacemakers and witnesses of hope in a future of salvation and resurrection. Faith makes us walk with Jesus on the very often tortuous roads of this world, in the certainty that the power of His Spirit will bend the forces of evil, subjecting them to the power of God's love. Love is superior, love is more powerful, because it is God: God is love. The Christian martyrs are an example to us – our martyrs, of our times too, who are more numerous than those of the beginnings – who, despite persecution, are men and women of peace. They give us an inheritance to preserve and imitate: the Gospel of love and mercy. This is the most precious treasure that has been given to us and the most effective witness that we can give to our contemporaries, responding to hatred with love, to offence with forgiveness. Even in our daily lives: when we receive an offence, we feel pain; but we must forgive from the heart. When we feel we are hated, we must pray with love for the person who hates us. May the Virgin Mary, through her maternal intercession, sustain our daily journey of faith, following the Lord Who guides history.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Yesterday in Riobamba, Ecuador, Blessed Father Emilio Moscoso was proclaimed a martyr priest. A member of the Society of Jesus, he was killed in 1897 in a climate of persecution against the Catholic Church. May his example of a humble religious, an apostle of prayer and an educator of youth, sustain our journey of faith and Christian witness. Let us applaud the new Blessed!

Today we celebrate World Day of the Poor, which has as its theme the words of the psalm "The hope of the poor shall not perish forever" (Ps 9: 18). My thoughts go to all those in dioceses and parishes around the world who have promoted initiatives of solidarity to provide tangible hope to the poorest people. I thank the doctors and nurses who have served in these days in the Medical Presidium here in St. Peter's Square. I thank you for the many initiatives in support of the people who suffer, the needy, and this must bear witness to the attention that must never be lacking towards our brothers and sisters. Recently, a few minutes ago, I saw some statistics on poverty. They make us suffer! Society's indifference to the poor... Let us pray. [Silent prayer]

I greet all pilgrims who have come from Italy and from different countries. In particular, I greet the Ecuadorian Community of Rome, which celebrates the Virgen del Quinche; the faithful of New Jersey and those of Toledo; the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians from various countries and the Italian Association of Marian Shrine Accompaniers in the World. I greet the groups from Porto d'Ascoli and Angri; and the participants in the pilgrimage of the Lasallian Schools of Turin and Vercelli for the conclusion of the third centenary of the death of Saint Jean-Baptiste de la Salle.

On Tuesday I will begin my journey to Thailand and Japan: I ask you for a prayer for this Apostolic Journey. And I wish you all a happy Sunday. And please do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch and *arrivederci*!
