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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 pray the Angelus with the faithful and pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square.

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

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good day!

Today's Gospel (see *Jn* 3: 16-18), on the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, demonstrates - with the apostle John's succinct language - the mystery of God's love for the world, His creation. In the brief dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus presents Himself as He who brings to fulfilment the Father's plan of salvation for the world. He affirms: "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (v. 16). These words are to indicate that the action of the three divine Persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - is all a single plan of love that saves humanity and the world. It is a plan of salvation: for us. The world God created was good, beautiful, but after sin, the world is marked by evil and corruption, and we men and women are sinners; therefore, God could intervene to judge the world, to destroy evil and castigate sinners. Instead, He loves the world, despite its sins; God loves every one of us even when we make mistakes and distance ourselves from Him. God the Father loves the world so much that, to save it, He gives what is most precious to Him: His only-begotten Son, who gives His life for humanity, rises again, returns to the Father and together with Him sends the Holy Spirit. The Trinity is therefore Love, all in the service of the world, which He wishes to save and recreate. And today, thinking of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we think of God's love! And it would be beautiful if we felt that we were loved: "God loves me!". This is today's sentiment.

When Jesus affirms that the Father has given His only-begotten Son, we spontaneously think of Abraham and his offering of his son Isaac, about whom the Book of Genesis speaks (cf. 22: 1-14): this is the "measure without measure" of God's love. And let us also think of how God reveals Himself to Moses: full of tenderness, merciful,

compassionate, slow to anger and full of grace and fidelity. This is what the Book of Exodus tells us. The encounter with this God encouraged Moses, who, as the book of Exodus tells us, was not afraid to stand between the people and the Lord, saying to Him: “Although this is a stiff-necked people, forgive our wickedness and our sin, and take us as your inheritance” (34: 9). And this is what God did, by sending His Son. We are children in the Son with the strength of the Holy Spirit. We are God’s legacy.

Dear brothers and sisters, today’s feast day invites us to let ourselves once again be fascinated by the beauty of God; beauty, goodness and inexhaustible truth. But also beauty, goodness and humble truth, close, who became flesh in order to enter into our life, into our history, into the history of each one of us, so that every man and woman may encounter it and have eternal life. And this is faith. This is faith: to welcome God-as-Love. To welcome God-as-Love who gives Himself in Christ, who moves us in the Holy Spirit; to let ourselves be encountered by Him and to trust in Him. This is Christian life. Love, to encounter God, to search for God, and He seeks us first. He encounters us first.

May the Virgin Mary, dwelling-place of the Trinity, help us to welcome with an open heart the love of God, which fills us with joy and gives meaning to our journey in this world, always guiding us towards our destination, which is Heaven.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims: individual faithful, families, and religious communities. And also your presence in the square is a sign that in Italy the acute phase of the epidemic is over - but be careful, do not sing “Victory!” yet, do not celebrate victory too soon! It remains necessary to follow the rules in force carefully, because they are rules that help us to prevent the virus from gaining ground. Thanks to God we are coming out of it stronger, but always with the prescriptions given to us by the authorities. But unfortunately in other countries - I am thinking of some of them - the virus continues to claim many victims. Last Friday, in one country, one person died every minute! Terrible. I wish to express my closeness to those populations, to the sick and their families, and to all those who care for them. With our prayer, let us be close to them.

The month of June is dedicated in a special way to the Heart of Christ, a devotion that unites the great spiritual teachers and the simple among the people of God. Indeed, the human and divine Heart of Jesus is the wellspring where we can always draw upon God’s mercy, forgiveness and tenderness. We can do so by focusing on a passage from the Gospel, feeling that at the centre of every gesture, of every word of Jesus, at the centre there is love, the love of the Father who sent His Son, the love of the Holy Spirit that is within us. And we can do this by adoring the Eucharist, where this love is present in the Sacrament. Then our heart too, little by little, will become more patient, more generous, more merciful, in imitation of the Heart of Jesus. There is an ancient prayer - I learned it from my grandmother - which said: “Jesus, make my heart resemble yours”. It is a beautiful prayer. “Make my heart similar to yours”. A beautiful prayer, short, to pray during this month. Shall we say it together now? “Jesus, may my heart resemble yours”. Once more: “Jesus, may my heart resemble yours”.

I wish you all a good Sunday. I was about to say “a good and hot Sunday”. A good Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch, and *arrivederci*.
