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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

At midday today, the Holy Father Francis prayed the Angelus from the Library of the Vatican Apostolic Palace.

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

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good afternoon!

A few days after Christmas, the liturgy invites us to turn our eyes to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. It is good to reflect on the fact that the Son of God wanted to be in need of the warmth of a family, like all children. Precisely for this reason, because it is Jesus' family, the family of Nazareth is the model family, in which all families of the world can find their sure point of reference and sure inspiration. In Nazareth, the springtime of the human life of the Son of God began to blossom at the moment he was conceived by the work of the Holy Spirit in the virginal womb of Mary. Within the welcoming walls of the House of Nazareth, Jesus' childhood unfolded in joy, surrounded by the maternal attention of Mary and the care of Joseph, in whom Jesus was able to see God's tenderness (cf. Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde*, 2).

In imitation of the Holy Family, we are called to rediscover the educational value of the family unit: it must be founded on the love that always regenerates relationships, opening up horizons of hope. Within the family one can experience sincere communion when it is a house of prayer, when the affections are serious, profound, pure, when forgiveness prevails over discord, when the daily harshness of life is softened by mutual tenderness and serene adherence to God's will. In this way, the family opens itself to the joy that God gives to all those who know how to give joyfully. At the same time, it finds the spiritual energy to be open to the outside world, to others, to the service of brothers and sisters, to collaboration in building an ever new and better world; capable, therefore, of becoming a bearer of positive stimuli; the family evangelises by the example of life. It is true, in every family there are problems, and at times arguments. "And, Father, I argued..." but we are human, we are weak, and we all quarrel within the family at times. I would like to say something to you: if you quarrel within the

family, do not end the day without making peace. “Yes, I quarrelled”, but before the end of the day, make peace. And do you know why? Because cold war, day after day, is extremely dangerous. It does not help. And then, in the family there are three words, three phrases that must always be held dear: “Please”, “Thank you”, and “I am sorry”. “Please”, so as not to be intrusive in the life of others. Please: may I do something? Is it alright with you if I do this? Please. Always, so as not to be intrusive. Please, the first word. “Thank you”: so much help, so much service is granted to us in the family: always say thank you. Gratitude is the lifeblood of the noble soul. “Thank you”. And then, the hardest to say: “I am sorry”. Because we always do bad things and very often someone is offended by this: “I am sorry”, “I am sorry”. Do not forget the three words: “please”, “thank you”, and “I am sorry”. If in a family, in the family environment there are these three words, the family is fine.

Today's feast reminds us of the example of evangelising with the family, proposing to us once again the ideal of conjugal and family love, as underlined in the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris laetitia*, promulgated five years ago this coming 19 March. And it will be a year of reflection on *Amoris laetitia* and it will be an opportunity to focus more closely on the contents of the document. These reflections will be made available to ecclesial communities and families, to accompany them on their journey. As of now, I invite everyone to take part in the initiatives that will be promoted during the Year and that will be coordinated by the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family and Life. Let us entrust this journey, with families all over the world, to the Holy Family of Nazareth, in particular to Saint Joseph, the devoted spouse and father.

May the Virgin Mary, to whom we now address the Angelus prayer, grant that families throughout the world be increasingly fascinated by the evangelical ideal of the Holy Family, so as to become a leaven of new humanity and of a genuine and universal solidarity.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

I greet you all, families, groups and individual faithful, who are following the Angelus prayer via the social communications media. My thoughts turn in particular to the families who, during these months, have lost a loved one or have been affected by the consequences of the pandemic. I think also of the doctors, nurses and all healthcare professionals whose great example on the front line in fighting the spread of the virus has had significant repercussions on family life.

And today I entrust all families to the Lord, especially those most tried by life's difficulties and by the scourges of misunderstanding and division. May the Lord, born in Bethlehem, grant them all the serenity and strength to walk together in the way of goodness.

And do not forget these three words that will help so much to achieve family unity: “Please” - not to be intrusive, to respect others - “Thank you” - to thank each other, mutually, within the wrong. And this apology - or when we quarrel - please say it before the end of the day: make peace before the end of the day.

I wish you all a good Sunday and please don't forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch and *arrivederci*!
