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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

At the end of the Celebration of Palm Sunday and the Passion of the Lord, before the apostolic blessing, the Holy Father Francis led the recitation of the Angelus prayer.

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

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

We have begun Holy Week. For the second time we will live it within the context of the pandemic. Last year we were more upset; this year it is more trying for us. And the economic crisis has become heavy.

In this historical and social situation, what is God doing? He takes up the cross. Jesus takes up the cross, that is, he takes on the evil that this situation entails, the physical and psychological evil – and above all the spiritual evil – because the Evil One is taking advantage of the crisis to disseminate distrust, desperation, and discord.

And us? What should we do? The one who shows us is the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus, who is also his first disciple. She followed her Son. She took upon herself her own portion of suffering, of darkness, of confusion, and she walked the way of the passion keeping the lamp of faith lit in her heart. With God's grace, we too can make that journey. And, along the daily *way of the cross*, we meet the faces of so many brothers and sisters in difficulty: let us not pass by, let us allow our hearts to be moved with compassion, and let us draw near. When it happens, like the Cyrenian, we might think: "Why me?" But then we will discover the gift that, without our own merit, has touched us.

Let us pray for all the victims of violence, especially those of this morning's attack in Indonesia, in front of the Cathedral of Makassar.

May the Madonna who always precedes us on the path of faith help us.
