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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 Saint Peter's Square.

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

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*

The Gospel of today's Liturgy (*Mk 10:35-45*) narrates that two disciples, James and John, ask the Lord to one day sit beside him in glory, as if they were "prime ministers", or something like that. But the other disciples hear it and become indignant. At that point, Jesus patiently offers them a great teaching. It is this: true glory is not obtained by rising over others, but by experiencing the same baptism that He, Jesus, would receive just a little later in Jerusalem, that is, the cross. What does this mean? The word "baptism" means "immersion": through his Passion, Jesus immersed himself into death, offering his life to save us. Therefore, his glory, the glory of God, is love that becomes service, not power that seeks to dominate. Not power that seeks to dominate, no! But love that becomes service. Thus, Jesus ends saying to his disciples and to us as well: "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant" (v. 43). To become great, you should take the path of service, serving others.

We are in front of two different types of logic: the disciples want *to rise up* and Jesus wants *to immerse Himself*. Let us spend a few moments on these two verbs. The first is *to rise up*. It expresses that worldly mentality to which we are always tempted: to experience everything, including relationships, in order to feed our ambition, to climb the ladder of success, to reach important positions. The quest for personal prestige can become a *spiritual malady*, masquerading itself even behind good intentions: for example, when behind the good we do and preach, we actually seek ourselves alone and our own affirmation, that is, that we get ahead and climb up, we see it even in the Church... How many times, we Christians – who should be servants – try to climb up, to get ahead. We therefore always need to evaluate our heart's real intentions, to ask ourselves: "Why am I carrying

out this work, this responsibility? To offer service or rather to be recognised, praised and to receive compliments?" Jesus contrasts this worldly logic with his own: instead of exalting yourself over others, get off your pedestal to serve them; instead of rising above others, to be immersed in others' lives. I was watching on the program *A Suo Immagine* that service carried out by Caritas so that no one might lack food: being concerned about others' hunger, being concerned about others' needs. There are so, so many in need, and after the pandemic there are many more. Seek to be immersed in service rather than to climb up for one's own glory.

Here is the second verb: *to be immersed*. Jesus asks us to immerse ourselves. And how should we immerse ourselves? Compassionately in the lives of those we meet. We were considering hunger: but do we think compassionately about the hunger of so many people? When we have a meal before us, which is a grace from God that we can eat, there are people who do not have enough food for the entire month. Let's think about that. And immerse ourselves compassionately, to have compassion, is not a statistic in an encyclopedia... No! They are people. Do I have compassion on people? Compassion for the lives of those we meet, like Jesus has done with me, with you, with all of us, he drew near with compassion. Let us look at the Crucified Lord, completely immersed in our wounded history, and we will discover God's way of doing things. We see that he did not remain up above in heaven to look down on us from up there, but he lowered himself to wash our feet. God is love and love is humble, it does not exalt itself, but comes down like the rain that falls to the earth and brings life. But how can we adopt the same direction as Jesus, going from raising ourselves up to immersing ourselves, from the mentality of prestige, worldly prestige, to that of service, Christian service? Dedication is needed, but that is not enough. It is difficult alone, but not impossible, for we have a strength within that helps us. It is the strength of Baptism, of that *immersion in Jesus* that all of us have already received through grace that directs us, moving us to follow him instead of seeking our interests, but to put ourselves at the service of others. It is a grace, a fire that the Spirit has kindled in us that needs to be nurtured. Today, let us ask the Holy Spirit to renew the grace of Baptism in us, that immersion in Jesus, in his way of being, to be more like servants, to be servants like he has been with us.

And let us pray to the Madonna: she – even though she was the greatest – did not seek to rise up, but was the humble servant of the Lord, and is completely immersed in our service to help us encounter Jesus.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today the foundation Aid to the Church in Need has set the date for parishes, schools, and families for the "For unity and peace, a million children recite the Rosary" initiative. I encourage this prayer campaign that has been entrusted to the intercession of Saint Joseph in a particular way this year. Thanks to all the boys and girls participating in it! Many thanks.

Yesterday, in Cordoba, Spain, the priest, Juan Elías Medina and 126 companion martyrs – priests, religious, seminarians and lay people – were killed in hatred of the faith during the violent religious persecution of the 1930s in Spain. May their fidelity grant us all strength, especially persecuted Christians in various parts of the world, the strength to witness to the Gospel courageously. A round of applause for the new Blessed!

Last week, various attacks took place in Norway, Afghanistan, England, that caused numerous deaths and wounded many. I express my nearness to the families of the victims. I beg you to please abandon the path of violence that is always a losing cause and is a defeat for everyone. Let us recall that violence begets violence.

I greet all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims from various countries. In particular, I greet the "Medee" Sisters who are holding their General Chapter, the Confederation of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux – Poor Knights of Christ, African businessmen gathered for their international meeting, members of the faithful from Este, Cavallino and Ca' Vio (Venice), and the Confirmation class of Galzignano.

I greet and bless the “Ecumenical Pilgrimage for Ecological Justice”, made up of various Christian confessions, who departed from Poland and are headed to Scotland for the climate summit, COP26.

And to all of you, I wish all of you a good Sunday. And please, please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your meal and *arrivederci*.
