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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 pilgrims and faithful 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 recounts the parable of the Good Samaritan (cf. *Lk* 10:25-37) – we all know it. In the backdrop is the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Jericho along which lies a man who had been beaten badly and robbed by brigands. A priest passing by sees him but does not stop; he keeps on going. A Levite, someone who performed services in the temple, does the same thing. "But a Samaritan", the Gospel says, "*as he journeyed*, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion" (v. 33). Let us not forget this word – "he had compassion on him". This is what God feels every time he sees we are having a problem, we have sinned, we are experiencing misery. "He had compassion on him". The Evangelist makes it a point to specify that this Samaritan *was on a journey*. So, even though he had his own plans and was heading toward a distant destination, that Samaritan does not come up with an excuse but allows himself to get involved, he allows himself to get involved with what had happened along the road. Let us think about this: isn't the Lord teaching us to do just that? To look off into the distance, to our final destination, while paying close attention to the steps to take here and now in order to get there.

It is significant that the first Christians were called "*disciples of the Way*" (cf. *Acts* 9:2). In fact, the believer strongly resembles the Samaritan – like him, the believer is on a journey, is a wayfarer. The believer knows they have not "arrived", but wants to learn each day, following the Lord Jesus who said: "I am the *way*, and the truth, and the life" (*Jn* 14:6), "I am the *way*". The disciple of Christ walks along following Him and thus becomes a "disciple of the *Way*". He or she goes behind the Lord, is not sedentary, no, but is always on the way. Along the

way, he or she meets people, heals the sick, visits villages and cities. This is what the Lord did, he was always on the move.

The “disciple of the Way”, that is, we Christians, observes, therefore, that his or her way of thinking and of acting gradually changes, becoming more and more conformed to that of the Master. Walking in the footsteps of Christ, the disciple becomes a wayfarer and – like the Samaritan – learns *to see* and *to have compassion*. He sees and has compassion on him. First of all, *to see*: their eyes are open to reality, not egoistically closed in on the circle of their own thoughts. Instead, the priest and the Levite see the unfortunate man, but they pass by as if they do not see him, they look the other way. The Gospel teaches us to see – it leads each of us to correctly understand reality, overcoming preconceptions and dogmatism each day. So many believers take refuge behind dogmatism to defend themselves from reality. Then, it teaches us to follow Jesus, because following Jesus teaches us *to have compassion* – to see and to have compassion – to become aware of others, especially those who suffer, those who are in need, and to intervene like the Samaritan, not to pass by but to stop.

Faced with this Gospel parable, it can happen that we might blame others or blame ourselves, pointing fingers towards others, comparing them to the priest or the Levite – “That person, that person goes on, that one doesn’t stop...” – or even to blame ourselves, counting our own failures to pay attention to our neighbours. But I would like to suggest another type of exercise to you all, not one that finds fault, no. Certainly, we must recognize when we have been indifferent and have justified ourselves. But let us not stop there. We must acknowledge this, it is a mistake. But let us ask the Lord to help us overcome our selfish indifference and put ourselves on the Way. Let us ask him *to see* and *to have compassion*, this is a grace. We need to ask the Lord, “Lord, that I might see, that I might have compassion just like you see me and have compassion on me”. This is the prayer that I suggest to you today. “Lord, that I might see and have compassion just like you see me and have compassion on me” – that we might have compassion on those whom we encounter along the way, above all on those who suffer and are in need, to draw near to them and do what we can do to give them a hand. Many times, when I am with some Christian who comes to speak about spiritual things, I ask if they give alms. “Yes”, the person says to me.

“So, tell me, do you touch the hand of the person you gave the money to?”

“No, no, I throw it there.”

“And do you look into the eyes of that person?”

“No, it doesn’t cross my mind.”

If you give alms without touching the reality, without looking into the eyes of the person in need, those alms are for you, not for that person. Think about this. Do I touch misery, even the misery that I am helping? Do I look into the eyes of the people who suffer, of the people that I help? I leave you with this thought – to see and to have compassion.

May the Virgin Mary accompany us on this journey of growth. May she, who “shows us the Way”, that is Jesus, help us also to more and more become “disciples of the Way”.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

I unite myself to the sorrow of the people of Sri Lanka who continue to suffer the effects of political and economic instability. Together with the Bishops of the country, I renew my appeal for peace and I implore those who have authority not to ignore the cry of the poor and the necessities of the people.

I would like to address a special thought to the people of Libya, in particular to the young people and to all those who are suffering because of the serious social and economic problems in the country. I urge everyone to seek ever new convincing solutions with the help of the international community, through constructive dialogue and national reconciliation.

I renew my closeness to the Ukrainian people, who are daily tormented by the brutal attacks that the ordinary people are paying for. I pray for all the families, especially for the victims, the wounded, those who are sick. I pray for the elderly and for the children. May God show the way to put an end to this senseless war.

Sea Sunday is being celebrated today. Let us remember all seafarers with esteem and gratitude for their precious work, as well as the chaplains and volunteers of "Stella Maris". I entrust to Our Lady those seafarers who find themselves stranded in war zones so that they might return home.

I greet the group from São Tomás College from Lisbon, and the members of the faithful from Viseu, Portugal; the "Siempre Así" choir from Spain; the young people from the Archdiocese of Berlin and the Confirmation candidates from Bolgare (Bergamo). I extend my greeting to the Polish pilgrims as well as those who are participating in the annual pilgrimage of families from Radio Maria to the Shrine of Częstochowa. I greet the priests from various countries who are participating in the course for seminary formators organized by the Istituto Sacerdos of Rome.

I wish all of you a good Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch and arrivederci!
