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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 his words of introduction to the Marian prayer:

### Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*

The Gospel of this Sunday's Liturgy presents us with a lively domestic scene with Martha and Mary, two sisters who extend their hospitality to Jesus in their home (cf. *Lk* 10:38-42). Martha immediately sets about welcoming the guests, whereas Mary sits at Jesus' feet to listen to him. Then Martha turns to the Master and asks him to tell Mary to help her. Martha's complaint does not seem out of place; indeed, we would tend to agree with her. Yet Jesus answers her: "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things, but few things are needed. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her" (*Lk* 10:41-42). This is a surprising answer. But Jesus overturns our way of thinking many times. So, let us ask ourselves why the Lord, while appreciating Martha's generous care, says that Mary's behaviour is to be preferred.

Martha's "philosophy" seems to be this: first duty, then pleasure. In effect, hospitality is not composed of fine words, but demands that you put your hand to the stove, that everything necessary is done so the guest feels welcome. Jesus is well aware of this. And indeed, he acknowledges Martha's effort. However, he wants to make her understand that there is a new order of priorities, different from the one she had followed until then. Mary had intuited that there is a "*better part*" that must be accorded first place. Everything else comes after, like a stream flowing from the source. And so we wonder: what is this "better part"? It is listening to Jesus' words. The Gospel says Mary "sat at Jesus' feet and *listened to what he was saying*" (v. 39). Note: she did not listen while standing, doing other things, but she sat at Jesus' feet. She understood that he is not like other guests. At first sight it seems that he has come to receive, because he needs food and lodging, but in reality, the Master came

to give himself to us through his word.

The word of Jesus is not abstract; it is a teaching that touches and shapes our life, changes it, frees it from the opaqueness of evil, satisfies and infuses it with a joy that does not pass: Jesus' word is the *better part*, that Mary had chosen. Therefore, she gives it first place: *she stops and listens*. The rest will come after. This does not detract from the value of practical effort, but it must not precede, but rather flow from listening to the word of Jesus. It must be enlivened by his Spirit. Otherwise, it is reduced to fussing and fretting over many things, it is reduced to sterile activism.

Brothers and sisters, let us take advantage of this summer vacation time to stop and listen to Jesus. Nowadays it is increasingly difficult to find free time to meditate. For many people the rhythm of life is frenetic and wearisome. Summertime can be valuable also for opening the Gospel and reading it slowly, without haste, a passage each day, a short passage from the Gospel. And this lets us enter into this dynamic of Jesus. Let us allow ourselves to be challenged by those pages, asking ourselves how our life, my life, is going, if it is in line with what Jesus says, or not so much. In particular, let us ask ourselves: When I start my day, do I throw myself headlong into the things to be done, or do I first seek inspiration in the Word of God? At times we begin the day automatically, we start doing things ... like hens. No, We must start the day by first of all looking to the Lord, taking his Word, briefly, but let this be the inspiration for the day. If we leave the house in the morning keeping a word of Jesus in mind, the day will surely acquire a tone marked by that word, which has the power to orient our actions according to the wishes of the Lord.

May the Virgin Mary teach us to choose the *better part*, which will never be taken from us.

### After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday in Ellwangen, Germany, Johann Philipp Jeningen was beatified. A priest of the Society of Jesus, he lived in Germany in the second half of the seventeenth century and exercised his ministry among the rural populations of the Duchy of Württemberg. A tireless preacher of the Gospel, he reached people of every social class, inspired by a great apostolic spirit and a special Marian devotion. May the example of this priest help us to feel the joy of sharing the Gospel with our brothers. A round of applause for the new Blessed!

Once again, I express my closeness to the people of Sri Lanka. Dear brothers and sisters, I join you in prayer and I urge all parties to seek a peaceful solution to the present crisis, favouring, in particular, the poorest, respecting the rights of all. I join the religious leaders in imploring everyone to refrain from all forms of violence and to initiate a process of dialogue for the common good.

And I am also always close to the martyred Ukrainian population, struck every day by a hail of missiles. How can one fail to understand that war only creates destruction and death, driving peoples apart, killing truth and dialogue? I pray and hope that all the international actors will truly work to resume negotiations, not to fuel the senselessness of war.

Next Sunday, God willing, I will leave for Canada; therefore I would now like to address all the inhabitants of that country. Dear brothers and sisters of Canada, as you know, I will come among you especially in the name of Jesus to meet and embrace the indigenous peoples. Unfortunately, in Canada, many Christians, including some members of religious institutes, have contributed to the policies of cultural assimilation that, in the past, have severely harmed native communities in various ways. For this reason, I recently received some groups in the Vatican, representatives of indigenous peoples, to whom I expressed my sorrow and solidarity for the harm they have suffered. And now I am about to embark on a penitential pilgrimage, which I hope, with God's grace, will contribute to the journey of healing and reconciliation already undertaken. I thank you in advance for all the work

of preparation and for the welcome you will give me. Thank you all! And I ask you to please accompany me in prayer.

And now I greet you, dear Romans and pilgrims, especially the Sisters of the Resurrection and the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, who are holding their General Chapters in Rome. I greet the faithful of the *Hermanidad de la Virgen de las Nieves*, of Los Palacios y Villafranca, Seville, and the young people following the formation course of the *Regnum Christi* movement. Young people make themselves heard!

I am pleased to reciprocate the greeting I received from the young people participating in the Giffoni Film Festival, which this year is dedicated to the “invisibles”, that is, the people who are cast aside and excluded from social life. Thank you and best wishes! And I also greet the young people of the *Immacolata*.

I wish you all a blessed Sunday and please do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch, and *arrivederci*!

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