



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHL
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ
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N. 240616a

Sunday 16.06.2024

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 approximately fifteen thousand faithful and pilgrims present in Saint Peter's Square.

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

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

Today the Gospel of the liturgy speaks to us of the Kingdom of God through the image of the seed (cf. *Mk* 4:26-34). Jesus uses this simile several times (cf. *Mt* 13:1-23; *Mk* 4:1-20; *Lk* 8:4-15), and today He does so by inviting us to reflect in particular on an important attitude connected to the image of the seed: it is the attitude of *confident expectation*.

Indeed, in sowing, no matter how good or abundant the seed the farmer scatters, or how well he prepares the land, the plants do not sprout immediately: it takes time and it takes patience! Therefore, it is necessary that, after having sown, he knows how to wait confidently, to allow the seeds to open at the right moment and the shoots to sprout from the seed and grow, strong enough to guarantee, at the end, an abundant harvest (cf. vv. 28-29). Underground the miracle is already in progress (cf. v. 27), there is enormous development, but it is invisible, it takes patience, and in the meantime it is necessary to keep tending the turf, watering it and keeping it clean, despite the fact that on the surface nothing seems to be happening.

The Kingdom of God is like this too. The Lord places in us the seeds of His word and His grace, good seeds, abundant seeds, and then, without ever ceasing to accompany us, He waits patiently. The Lord continues to take care of us, with the confidence of a Father, but He gives us time – the Lord is patient – so that the seeds open, grow and develop to the point of bearing the fruits of good works. And this is because He wants nothing in His field to be lost, that everything should reach full maturity; He wants us all to be able to grow like ears of grain.

Not only this. By doing so, the Lord gives us an example: He teaches us too to sow the Gospel confidently wherever we are, and then to wait for the seed that has been sown to grow and bear fruit in us and in others, without becoming discouraged and without ceasing to support and help each other even where, despite our efforts, we do not seem to see immediate results. In fact, often even among us, beyond appearances, the miracle is already underway, and in due course it will bear abundant fruit!

Therefore, we can ask ourselves: do let the Word be sown in me? Do I too sow the Word of God with confidence in the places where I live? Do I wait patiently, or am I discouraged because I do not see the results immediately? And do I know how to entrust everything serenely to the Lord, while doing my best to proclaim the Gospel?

May the Virgin Mary, who welcomed and made the seed of the Word grow within her, help us to be generous and confident sowers of the Gospel.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Yesterday, in Krakow, Michał Rapacz was beatified. A priest and martyr, a pastor according to the heart of Christ, and a faithful and generous witness of the Gospel, he experienced both Nazi and Soviet persecution and responded with the gift of his life. A round of applause for the new Blessed!

Painful news continues to arrive of clashes and massacres in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I appeal to the national leaders and the international community to do everything possible to stop the violence and safeguard the lives of civilians. Among the victims, many are Christians killed *in odium fidei*. They are martyrs. Their sacrifice is a seed that germinates and bears fruit, and teaches us to bear witness to the Gospel with courage and consistency.

Let us not cease to pray for peace in Ukraine, in the Holy Land, in Sudan, in Myanmar and wherever people suffer from war.

I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims! In particular, I greet the faithful from Lebanon, Egypt and Spain; students from the "London Oratory School"; those from the diocese of Opole in Poland and those of Budapest-Albertfalva; the participants in the European Forum of the Laity, on the theme "Faith, art and synodality"; and the group of mothers from the Congolese community of Rome. These mothers sing well! I would like to hear them sing another time.

I greet the faithful of Carini, Catania, Siracusa and Messina; the young candidates for Communion and Confirmation from Mestrino; the newly-confirmed of Castelsardo, Sassari, from Bolgare, Bergamo, and from Camin, Padua; and finally, a thought of gratitude to the blood donors who have just celebrated their national Day.

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