



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

*St Peter's Square
Sunday, 23 June 2013*

[[Multimedia](#)]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning!

In this Sunday's Gospel resound some of Jesus' most incisive words: "Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it" (Lk 9:24).

This is a synthesis of Christ's message, and it is expressed very effectively in a paradox, which shows us his way of speaking, almost lets us hear his voice.... But what does it mean "to lose one's life for the sake of Jesus"? This can happen in two ways: explicitly by confessing the faith, or implicitly by defending the truth. Martyrs are the greatest example of losing one's life for Christ. In 2,000 years, a vast host of men and women have sacrificed their lives to remain faithful to Jesus Christ and his Gospel. And today, in many parts of the world, there are many, many — more than in the first centuries — so many martyrs, who give up their lives for Christ, who are brought to death because they do not deny Jesus Christ. This is our Church. Today we have more martyrs than in the first centuries! However, there is also daily martyrdom, which may not entail death but is still a "loss of life" for Christ, by doing one's duty with love, according to the logic of Jesus, the logic of gift, of sacrifice. Let us think: how many dads and moms every day put their faith into practice by offering up their own lives in a concrete way for the good of the family! Think about this! How many priests, brothers and sisters carry out their service generously for the Kingdom of God! How many young people renounce their own interests in order to dedicate themselves to children, the disabled, the elderly.... They are martyrs too! Daily martyrs, martyrs of everyday life!

And then there are many people, Christians and non-Christians alike, who “lose their lives” for truth. And Christ said “I am the truth”, therefore whoever serves the truth serves Christ. One of those who gave his life for the truth is John the Baptist: tomorrow, 24 June, is his great feast, the Solemnity of his birth. John was chosen by God to prepare the way for Jesus, and he revealed him to the people of Israel as the Messiah, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (cf. Jn 1:29). John consecrated himself entirely to God and to his envoy, Jesus. But, in the end, what happened? He died for the sake of the truth, when he denounced the adultery of King Herod and Herodias. How many people pay dearly for their commitment to truth! Upright people who are not afraid to go against the current! How many just men prefer to go against the current, so as not to deny the voice of conscience, the voice of truth! And we, we must not be afraid! Among you are many young people. To you young people I say: Do not be afraid to go against the current, when they want to rob us of hope, when they propose rotten values, values like food gone bad — and when food has gone bad, it harms us; these values harm us. We must go against the current! And you young people, are the first: Go against the tide and have the daring to move precisely against the current. Forward, be brave and go against the tide! And be proud of doing so.

Dear friends, let us welcome Jesus’s words with joy. They are a rule of life proposed to everyone. And may St John the Baptist help us put that rule into practice. On this path, as always, our Mother, Mary Most Holy, precedes us: she lost her life for Jesus, at the Cross, and received it in fullness, with all the light and the beauty of the Resurrection. May Mary help us to make ever more our own the logic of the Gospel.

After the Angelus:

Dear brothers and sisters, remember this well: Do not be afraid to go against the current! Be courageous! And like this, just as we do not want to eat food that has gone bad, we will not carry with us rotten values, that ruin life and take away our hope. Forward!

I greet you all with affection: the families, parish groups, associations and schools. I greet alumni of the Diocesan school of Vipàva, Slovenia; the Polish community of Ascoli Piceno; UNITALSI of Ischia di Castro; the boys of the Oratory of Ugnano — I see their flag here, well done, you are very good! — the faithful of Pordenone; the Sisters and workers of the hospital “Miulli”, Acquaviva delle Fonti; a group of trade union delegates from Venice.

I wish you all a good Sunday! Pray for me and have a good lunch!

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