



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 1st October 2023

[Multimedia]

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today, the Gospel speaks about two sons, whose father asks them to go to work in the vineyard (cf. *Mt* 21:28-32). One of them responds “yes”, right away, but then does not go. The other one instead, says “no”, but then repents and goes.

What is there to say about the behaviour of these two? What quickly comes to mind is that going to work in the vineyard requires sacrifice, and making sacrifices is demanding. It does not come naturally, even with the beauty of knowing they are sons and heirs. But the problem here is not so much linked to a resistance to going to work in the vineyard, as much as it is to *sincerity*, or lack thereof, with the father and with themselves. Even though neither of the sons behaves impeccably; one lies, while the other one makes a mistake but remains sincere.

Let us look at the son who says “yes”, but then does not go. He does not want to do the father’s will, but neither does he want to get into a discussion or talk about it. Thus, he hides behind a “yes”, behind a false compliance that conceals his laziness, and he saves face for the time being. He is a hypocrite. He gets by without conflict, but he cheats and disappoints his father, disrespecting him in a way that is worse than if he had responded with a blunt “no”. The problem with those who behave this way is that they are not only *sinners*, but also *corrupt*, because they lie without difficulty to cover up and disguise their disobedience, rejecting any honest dialogue or feedback.

The other son, instead, who said “no” but then went, is sincere. He is not perfect, but sincere. Certainly, it would have been nice to hear him say “yes” right away. That did not happen, but at least he shows his reluctance honestly and, in a certain sense, courageously. That is, he takes responsibility for his behaviour and acts out in the open. Then, with this basic honesty, he ends up questioning himself until he understands he has made a mistake and retraces his steps. We could say he is a *sinner*, but he is not *corrupt*. Pay close attention to this: this son is a sinner, but he is not corrupt. And there is always hope of redemption for a sinner. For the corrupt on the other hand, it is much more difficult. In fact, the corrupt person’s false “yesses”, elegant but hypocritical façades and habitual false pretences, are like a thick “rubber wall”, behind which to take cover from qualms of conscience. And these hypocrites do so much evil! Brothers and sisters, sinners yes — we all are — corrupt no! Sinners yes, corrupt no!

Let us now look at ourselves and, in the light of all this, ask ourselves some questions. When faced with the difficulty of living an honest and generous life, of dedicating myself to the Father’s will, am I willing to say “yes” each day, even if it is demanding? And when I fail, am I sincere before God about my difficulties, my failings, my weaknesses? And when I say “no”, do I turn around after? Let us speak with the Lord about this. When I make a mistake, am I willing to repent and retrace my steps? Or do I pretend everything is okay and go through life wearing a mask, concerning myself only with appearing good and righteous? Finally, am I a sinner, like everyone, or is there something corrupt in me? Do not forget: sinners yes, corrupt no.

May Mary, mirror of holiness, help us be sincere Christians.

After praying the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, Father Giuseppe Beotti, killed in hatred of the faith in 1944, was beatified in Piacenza, Italy, yesterday. He was a pastor according to the heart of Christ who did not hesitate to give his life to protect the flock entrusted to him. A round of applause for the new Blessed!

Throughout these days, I have been following the tragic situation of displaced people in Nagorno-Karabakh. I renew my appeal for dialogue between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and hope that talks between the parties, with the support of the international community, may foster a lasting agreement to put an end to the humanitarian crisis. I assure you of my prayers for victims of the explosion in the fuel depot that occurred near the city of Stepanakert.

Today is the beginning of October, the month of the *Rosary* and of the *missions*. I encourage everyone to experience the beauty of praying the Rosary, contemplating the mysteries of Christ with Mary and invoking her intercession for the needs of the Church and of the world. Let us pray

for peace in battered Ukraine and in all the lands wounded by war. Let us pray for the evangelization of peoples. And let us also pray for the Synod of Bishops during this month in which the first Assembly on the theme of Synodality in the Church, takes place.

Today is the feast of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, the Little Flower, the saint of trust. An Apostolic Exhortation on her message will be published this coming 15 October. Let us pray to Saint Thérèse and to Our Lady: may Saint Thérèse help us to have trust and to work for the missions.

I greet all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims from Italy and from many countries. In particular, I greet the group from the Shrine of Our Lady of Revelation at Tre Fontane in Rome, the faithful from a parish in Catania, the confirmation candidates from Porto Sant'Elpidio, the scouts from Afragola and the confraternities, Arcieri Storici and the Knights of Saint Sebastian. I extend my thoughts and encouragement to the National Association of Women who have had Breast Operations.

As you can see, beside me today are five children who represent the five continents. I would like to announce along with them that on the afternoon of 6 November, in the Paul VI Hall, I will meet with children from all over the world. "Let us learn from boys and girls" is the theme for this event, sponsored by the Dicastery for Culture and Education. It will be a meeting to show the dream we all have: to go back to having the pure sentiments of children, because the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like children. Children teach us about transparency in relationships, about spontaneously welcoming those who are strangers, and about respect for all of creation. Dear children, I too look forward to learning from all of you!

I wish you all a happy Sunday. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch.
Arrivederci!