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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

Before the Angelus

After the Angelus

At midday today, Second Sunday of Lent, the Holy Father Francis appeared at the window of his study in the Vatican Apostolic Palace to pray the Angelus with the faithful and pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square.

The following is the Pope's introduction to the Marian prayer:

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

The Gospel of this second Sunday of Lent presents to us the account of Jesus' Transfiguration (cf. Matthew 17:1-9). Jesus took aside three of the Apostles, Peter, James and John, and led them up a high mountain, where this singular phenomenon happened: Jesus' face "shone like the sun, and His garments became white as light" (v. 2). The Lord thus made that divine glory shine in His person, which could be received with faith in His preaching and in His miraculous gestures. The Transfiguration on the mountain was accompanied by the apparition of Moses and Elijah, "talking with Him" (v. 3).

The "luminosity" that characterised this extraordinary event symbolised its purpose: to enlighten the minds and hearts of the disciples, so that they were able to understand clearly who their Master was. It was a sudden flash of light on the mystery of Jesus, illuminating His whole person and His whole story.

By now decisively on the way to Jerusalem, where he will be condemned to death by crucifixion, Jesus wishes to prepare His followers for this scandal – the scandal of the Cross – for this scandal that is too strong for their faith

and, at the same time, to announce in advance His resurrection, manifesting Himself as the Messiah, the Son of God. And Jesus prepares them for that sad moment of great pain. Indeed, Jesus is showing them a Messiah Who differs from their expectations, from what they imagined of the Messiah, of how the Messiah would be: not a powerful and glorious king, but a humble and disarmed; not a lord of great wealth, a sign of blessing, but a poor man with nowhere to rest His head; not a patriarch with many descendants but an unmarried man with neither house nor home. It is truly a revelation of God turned upside down, and the most disconcerting sign of this scandalous reversal is the cross. But it is precisely through the cross that Jesus will attain His glorious resurrection which will be definitive, unlike this transfiguration that lasted a moment, an instant. Jesus transfigured on Mount Tabor wished to show His glory to His disciples not to avoid their passing through the cross, but to show where the cross leads. He Who dies with Christ, will rise again with Christ. And the cross is the door of the Resurrection. Those who fight with Him will triumph with Him. This is the message of hope contained in Christ's cross, urging fortitude in our existence. The Christian Cross is not an ornament for the home or to wear; the Christian cross is an appeal to the love with which Jesus sacrificed Himself to save humanity from evil and from sin. In this Lenten Season, we contemplate with devotion the image of Jesus crucified on the cross: it is the symbol of the Christian faith; it is the emblem of Jesus, dead and risen for us. Let us therefore regard the Cross as marking the stages of our Lenten journey, to understand increasingly the gravity of sin and the value of the sacrifice with which the Redeemer saved us all.

The Holy Virgin was able to contemplate Jesus' glory hidden in His humanity. May she help us to be with Him in silent prayer, and may we let ourselves be enlightened by His presence, to keep in our heart, through the darkest nights, a reflection of His glory.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

I express my closeness to the people of Guatemala, who are in mourning for the grave and tragic fire that broke out inside the "Virgen de la Asunción" refuge house, claiming lives and causing injuries among the girls who lived there. May the Lord receive their souls, heal the wounded, console their grieving families and all the nation. I also pray, and ask you to pray with me for all the girls and boys who are victims of violence, mistreatment, exploitation and wars. This is a scourge, a hidden cry that we must all hear, and that we cannot pretend to neither see nor hear.

I address a warm greeting to all of you present here, faithful of Rome and from many parts of the world.

I greet pilgrims from Fribourg and Mannheim in Germany, and those from Lebanon and marathon runners from Portugal.

I greet parish groups from Gioiosa Ionica and Pachino; young people from Lodi preparing for the "Profession of faith"; students from Dalmine and Busto Arsizio - what you say is true: "No to the throwaway culture" [reading from banner]; and the "Goccia dopo goccia" youth choir of Bergamo.

I wish you all a good Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch, and goodbye.
