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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

Before the Angelus

After the Angelus

At the end of the Holy Mass celebrated on the occasion of the Second World Day of the Poor, 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 Saint Peter's Square.

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

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

In this Sunday's Gospel reading (cf. *Mk* 13: 2-32), the Lord wishes to instruct His disciples on future events. It is not first and foremost an address on the end of the world; rather, it is an invitation to live the present well, and to be vigilant and always ready for when we are called to give an account of our life. Jesus says: "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from Heaven" (vv. 24-25). These words make us think of the first page of the Book of Genesis, the account of the creation: the sun, the moon, the stars, which at the beginning of time shine in their order and bring light, sign of life, are described here in their decay, while they plummet down into the darkness and chaos, sign of the end. Instead, the light that will shine on that last day will be unique and new: it will be that of the Lord Jesus Who will come in glory with all the Saints. In that encounter we will finally see His Face in the full light of the Trinity; a Face radiant with love, before which every human being will also appear in total truth.

The history of humanity, as the personal history of each one of us, cannot be understood as a simple succession

of words and events without meaning. Nor can it be interpreted in the light of a fatalistic vision, as if everything was already pre-ordained according to destiny, which removes all space for freedom, impeding the fulfilment of choices, which are the fruit of true decision. Rather, in today's Gospel Jesus says that the history of peoples and that of the individual have an end and a goal to reach: the definitive encounter with the Lord. We do not know the time or the way in which it will happen; the Lord confirmed: "no one knows, not even the Angels in Heaven nor the Son" (v. 32); everything is guarded in the secret of the mystery of the Father. However, we know a fundamental principle which we must address: "Heaven and earth will pass away — says Jesus —, but my words will not pass away" (v. 31). This is the true crucial point. On that day, each one of us will have to understand whether the Word of the Son of God has illumined our personal existence, or if we have turned our back on it, preferring to trust in our own words. It will be more than ever the moment in which we abandon ourselves definitively to the Father's love and trust in His mercy. No one can flee from this moment, not one of us! The cunning, which we often add to our behaviour to give credit to the image we want to present, will no longer be useful; in the same way, the power of money and of the economic means, with which we pretend with presumption to buy everything and everyone, will no longer be able to be used. We will have nothing other with us than what we have done in this life, believing in His Word: the all and the nothing we lived or neglected to fulfil. We will bring with us only what we have given.

Let us invoke the intercession of the Virgin Mary, so that the ascertainment of our provisional stay on earth and our limitation will not make us sink into anguish, but call us to responsibility towards ourselves, towards our neighbour and towards the world as a whole.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

On the occasion of the World Day of the Poor today, I celebrated Mass this morning in Saint Peter's Basilica in the presence of the poor, accompanied by associations and parish groups. I will shortly take part in a lunch in the Paul VI Hall with many destitute people. Similar initiatives of prayer and sharing are being organized in the dioceses of the world, to express the closeness of the Christian community to all those living in conditions of poverty. This Day, which involves ever more parishes, associations, and ecclesial movements, is intended to be a sign of hope and a stimulus to become instruments of mercy in the social fabric.

With sorrow, I learned the news of the slaughter carried out two days ago in a camp of displaced people in the Central African Republic, in which two priests were also killed. To this people, so dear to me, where I opened the first Holy Door of the Year of Mercy, I express all my closeness and love. Let us pray for the dead and wounded and for an end to all violence in that beloved country, which is in such need of peace. Let us pray together to Our Lady ... [*Hail Mary*].

A special prayer goes to all those affected by the fires scourging California, and now also the victims of the cold on the East coast of the United States. May the Lord receive the deceased in His peace, console the families and support all those involved in the rescue operations.

And now I greet you, families, parishes, associations and individual faithful, from Italy and from many parts of the world. In particular, I greet the pilgrims of Union City and Brooklyn, those of Puerto Rico with the bishop of Ponce, and the group of priests of Campanha, Brazil, with their bishop, as well as the accompaniers to the Marian Shrines in the world, the Italian Confederation of Former Students of Catholic Schools, the faithful of Crotona and the choir of Roncegno Terme.

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

