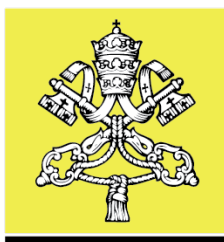


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## The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

### Before the Angelus

### After the Angelus

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 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 today's Gospel reading (see *Lk* 12: 49-53), Jesus warns the disciples that the moment of reckoning has come. Indeed, His coming in the world coincides with the time to make definitive choices: the option for the Gospel can no longer be postponed. And to make this request understood, He uses the image of the fire that He Himself came to bring to earth. He says. "I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!" (49). These words are intended to help the disciples to abandon every attitude of laziness, apathy, indifference and narrow-mindedness, so as to receive the fire of God's love; that love that, as Saint Paul recalls, "has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (*Rm* 5: 5). Because it is the Holy Spirit that makes us love God and makes us love our neighbour; it is the Holy Spirit that we all have within.

Jesus reveals to His friends, and to us too, His most ardent desire: to bring on earth the fire of the Father's love, which ignites life and through which man is saved. Jesus calls us to spread this fire throughout the world, thanks to which we will be recognized as His true disciples. The fire of love, ignited by Christ in the world by means of the Holy Spirit, is a fire without limits, it is a universal fire. This has been seen since the earliest times of

Christianity: the witness of the Gospel has spread like a conflagration, overcoming every division between individuals, social categories, peoples and nations. The witness of the Gospel burns, burns every form of particularism and keeps charity open to all, with a preference for the poorest and the excluded.

Adhesion to the fire of love that Jesus has brought to the world encompasses our entire existence and demands worship of God and also the willingness to serve our neighbour. Worship of God and also the willingness to serve our neighbour. The first, worshipping God, also means learning the prayer of adoration, which we usually forget. This is why I invite you all to discover the beauty of the prayer of adoration, and to practise it often. And then the second, the willingness to serve our neighbour: I think with admiration of the many communities and groups of young people who, even during the summer, devote themselves to the sick, the poor, and people with disabilities. To live in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel it is necessary that, faced with the ever new needs that emerge in the world, there be disciples of Christ who know how to respond with new initiatives of charity. And in this way, with worship of God and service to our neighbour – both of them together, worshipping God and serving our neighbour – the Gospel is made manifest truly like the fire that saves, that changes the world starting from the change in the heart of each person.

From this perspective, we can understand the other affirmation that Jesus makes in today's reading, which at first glance seems disconcerting: "Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division" (Lk 12: 51). He came to "separate with fire". To separate what? Good from evil, just from unjust. In this sense He came to "divide", to disrupt – but in a healthy way – the life of His disciples, shattering the easy illusions of those who believe they can combine Christian life and worldliness, Christian life and compromises of every type, religious practices and attitudes against others. Some think they can combine true religiosity with superstitious practices: how many self-styled Christians go to the fortune teller to have their palm read! And this is superstition, it is not of God. It means not living in a hypocritical way, but rather being willing to pay the price of consistent decisions – this is the attitude that each one of us should seek in life. Consistency – paying the price of being consistent with the Gospel. Consistency with the Gospel. Because it is good to say we are Christians, but above all to *be* Christians in concrete situations, bearing witness to the Gospel which is essentially love for God and for our brothers.

May Mary Most Holy help us to let our heart be purified by the fire brought by Jesus, so as to propagate it in our life, through decisive and courageous choices.

### After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

I address a cordial greeting to you all, Roman faithful and pilgrims from Italy and from various countries.

In particular, I greet the "Divine Love" group from Canada, Scouts from Rio de Loba, Portugal, and Polish faithful.

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

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