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# **BOLLETTINO**

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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!

Today's Gospel reading (cf. *Lk* 13. 22-30) presents Jesus Who passes, teaching, through cities and villages, headed for Jerusalem, where He knows He must die on the cross for the salvation of all of us. In this context, there is the question of a man who addresses Him, saying "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?" (23). The question was debated at that time – how many will be saved, now many not – and there were various ways of interpreting the Scriptures in this regard, according to the texts they took. However, Jesus overturns the question – which focuses on the quantity, that is, "Are they only a few?" – and instead positions the reply on the level of responsibility, inviting us to use the present time well. Indeed, He says, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to" (24).

With these words, Jesus makes it understood that it is not a question of numbers; there is no "limited number" in Paradise! Instead it is a matter of taking the right passage, and this right passage is *for all*, but *it is narrow*. This is the problem. Jesus does not want to delude us, saying, "Yes, be calm, it's easy, there is a nice highway and at the end, a big door...". He does not say this: he speaks to us about the narrow door. He tells us things as

they are: the passage is narrow. In what sense? In the sense that, to save oneself, it is necessary to love God and our neighbour, and this is not easy! It is a “narrow door” because it is demanding, love is always demanding, it requires commitment, rather, “effort”, that is a decisive and persistent will to live in accordance with the Gospel. Saint Paul calls it “the good fight of the faith” (1Tim 6: 12). It takes effort all day, every day to love God and our neighbour.

And, to explain Himself better, Jesus recounts a parable. There is the master of a house, who represents the Lord. His home symbolizes eternal life, that is, salvation. And here the image of the *door* recurs. Jesus says, “Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, ‘Sir, open the door for us’. But he will answer, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from’” (25). These people will then try to make themselves known, reminding the master of the house: “I ate with you, I drank with you ... I listened to your advice, your public teachings...” (cf. 26), “I was there when you gave that conference...”. But the Lord will repeat that He does not know them, and He calls them “evildoers”. Here is the problem! The Lord will recognize us not for our titles – “But look, Lord, I belong to that association, I was a friend of that *monsignore*, that cardinal, that priest...”. No, titles do not count, they do not count. The Lord will recognize us only for a humble life, a good life, a life of faith that is translated into deeds.

And for us, Christians, this means that we are called to establish a true communion with Jesus, praying, going to Church, partaking in the Sacraments and nourishing ourselves with His Word. This keeps us in faith, nourishes our hope, revives charity. And in this way, with God’s grace, we can and we must spend our life for the good of our brothers, fighting against every form of evil and injustice.

May the Virgin Mary help us in this. She passed through the narrow door that is Jesus. She welcomed Him with all her heart and followed Him every day of her life, even when she did not understand, even when a sword pierced her soul. This is why we invoke her as the “Gate of Heaven”. Mary, Gate of Heaven, a gate that traces exactly the form of Jesus; the door to the heart of God, a demanding heart but open to us all.

### After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims.

I greet in particular the community of the Pontifical North American College, especially the new seminarians who have just arrived. Dear seminarians, I urge you to spiritual commitment and fidelity to Christ, to the Gospel and to the teaching of the Church. Without building on these columns, it will be impossible to truly edify your vocation. I greet the young people of Catholic Action of the diocese of Bologna; the young people of the pastoral Unit of Rovato, diocese of Brescia; and those of Ponte Nossa, diocese of Bergamo.

We are all concerned about the vast conflagrations that have developed in Amazonia. Let us pray that, with the effort of all, they will be brought under control as soon as possible. That forest lung is vital for our planet.

I see that there are many of my Argentine compatriots here, and I greet them!

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

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