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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

At the end of the celebration of Palm Sunday and the Passion of the Lord, before the apostolic blessing, the Holy Father Francis led the recitation of the Angelus prayer.

The following are the Pope's words of introduction to the Marian prayer:

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters!

I greet all of you, people from Rome and pilgrims, especially those who have come from far away. I thank you for your participation and also for your prayers, which intensified during these past days. Thank you indeed!

I extend a special blessing to the Caravan of Peace that, during these days, departed from Italy bound for Ukraine, promoted by a variety of associations: Pope John XXIII, FOCSIV, Pro Civitate Christiana, Pax Christi and others. Along with basic necessities, they are bringing the closeness of the people of Italy to the battered people of Ukraine, and today, they are offering olive branches, symbols of the peace of Christ. Let us unite ourselves to this gesture with our prayer, which will be more intense during the days of Holy Week.

Brothers and sisters, we have begun Holy Week with this celebration. I invite all of you to live it as the tradition of the holy, faithful people of God teaches us, that is, accompanying the Lord Jesus with faith and love. Let us learn from our Mother, the Virgin Mary. She followed her Son with the closeness of her heart. She was of one soul with Him. And, together with him, even though not understanding everything, she abandoned herself completely to the will of God the Father. May Our Lady help us stay close to Jesus, present in the people who suffer, are cast out, abandoned. May Our Lady lead us by the hand to Jesus present in these people.

I wish everyone a good journey toward Easter!