



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 18 November 2018

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

In this Sunday's Gospel passage (cf. Mk 13:24-32), the Lord seeks to instruct his disciples on future events. Firstly, it is not a discourse on the end of the world, but rather an invitation to live the present well, to be vigilant and ever ready for when we will be called to account for 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 envision the first page of the Book of Genesis, the narrative of creation: the sun, the moon, the stars — which from the beginning of time shine in their order and bring light, a sign of life — are described here in their decline, as they fall into darkness and chaos, a sign of the end. Instead, the light that shines on that final 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 at last see his Face in the full light of the Trinity: a Face radiant with love, before which every human being will also appear in absolute truth.

Human history, like the personal history of each of us, cannot be understood as a simple succession of meaningless words and facts. Nor can it be interpreted in the light of a fatalistic vision, as if all were already preordained according to a fate that removes any space for freedom, preventing us from making choices as the fruit of true decision. In today's Gospel passage, however, Jesus says that the history of peoples and that of individuals have a purpose and an aim to fulfil: the definitive encounter with the Lord. We know neither the time nor the way in which it will come about: the Lord emphasized that "no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son" (v. 32); all is safeguarded in the secret of the mystery of the Father. We know, however, a

basic principle with which we must confront ourselves: “Heaven and earth will pass away”, Jesus says, “but my words will not pass away” (v. 31). This is the true crux. On that day, each of us will have to understand whether the Word of the Son of God has illuminated our personal existence, or whether we turned our back to it, preferring to trust in our own words. More than ever, it will be the moment in which to abandon ourselves definitively to the Father’s love and to entrust ourselves to his mercy.

No one can escape this moment, none of us! Shrewdness, which we often instil in our conduct in order to validate the image we wish to offer, will no longer be useful; likewise, the power of money and of economic means with which we pretentiously presume to buy everything and everyone, will no longer be of use. We will have with us nothing more than what we have accomplished in this life by believing in his Word: the all and nothing of what we have lived or neglected to fulfil. We will take with us only what we have given.

Let us invoke the intercession of the Virgin Mary that, with the verification of our impermanence on earth and of our limitations, she not allow us to collapse into anguish, but call us back to responsibility for ourselves, for our neighbour, for the entire world.

After praying the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, on the occasion of today’s World Day of the Poor, this morning in Saint Peter’s Basilica I celebrated a Mass in the presence of poor people, accompanied by parish groups and associations. Shortly I will participate in a lunch in the Paul VI Hall with many indigent people. Similar initiatives of prayer and sharing are being promoted in dioceses throughout the world, to express the closeness of the entire Christian community to those who live in conditions of poverty. This Day, which involves more and more parishes, associations and ecclesial movements, seeks to be a sign of hope and an incentive to become instruments of mercy within the social fabric.

Sadly, I heard the news of the slaughter committed two days ago in a camp for displaced people in the Central African Republic, in which two priests were also killed. I express my closeness and my love to this people so dear to me, where I opened the first Holy Door of the Year of Mercy. Let us pray for the dead and the wounded, and that all violence may cease in that beloved country that has so much need of peace. Let us pray together to Our Lady. [*Hail Mary...*]

A special prayer goes to those affected by the fires that are lashing California, and now also to the victims of the freezing conditions on the East Coast of the United States. May the Lord welcome the departed into his peace, comfort family members, and sustain those who are engaged in providing aid.

And now I greet you, families, parishes, associations and individual faithful, who have come from Italy and from many parts of the world. In particular I greet the pilgrims from Union City and Brooklyn, USA, those from Puerto Rico with the Bishop of Ponce, and the group of priests from Campanha, Brazil with their Bishop; as well as guides to the Marian Shrines of the world, the Italian Confederation of former Catholic school students, the faithful from Crotone, and the Roncegno Terme choir.

I wish everyone a happy Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch.

Arrivederci!