



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE  
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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 St. Peter's Square.

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

### Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

Jesus' parabolic discourse, which groups together seven parables in the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, ends with today's three similitudes: the hidden treasure (v. 44), the precious pearl (v. 45-46) and the fishing net (v. 47-48). I will focus on the first two, which emphasize the protagonists' decision to sell everything to obtain what they have discovered. In the first case it is a farmer who by chance encounters a hidden treasure in the field where he is working. Since the field is not his property, he must acquire it if he wants to possess the treasure: so he decides to risk all his wealth so as not to miss that truly exceptional opportunity. In the second case we find a merchant of precious pearls; as an expert connoisseur, he identifies a pearl of great value. He also decides to stake everything on that pearl, to the point of selling all the others.

These similarities make evident two characteristics regarding the possession of the Kingdom of God: *search* and *sacrifice*. It is true that the Kingdom of God is offered to all – it is a gift, it is a present, it is grace — however, it is not made available on a silver plate; it requires dynamism: one has to search, walk, to make an effort. The attitude of search is the essential condition to find; the heart must burn with the desire to reach the precious

asset, namely, the Kingdom of God that makes itself present in the person of Jesus. He is the hidden treasure; He is the pearl of great value. He is the fundamental discovery, Who can turn our life around decisively, filling it with meaning.

Faced with an unexpected discovery, both the farmer and the merchant realize they have before them a unique opportunity they must not miss. Therefore, they sell everything they possess. The appraisal of the inestimable value of the treasure leads to a decision that also implies *sacrifice*, detachment and renunciations. When the treasure and the pearl were discovered, when, that is, we have found the Lord, this discovery must not be left sterile, but we must sacrifice for it every thing else. This does not mean showing contempt for the rest, but rather subordinating it to Jesus, putting Him in the first place – grace in the first place. Christ's disciple is not one who has deprived himself of something that is essential. He is one who has found much more: he has found the full joy that only the Lord can give. It is the evangelical joy of the healed sick, of the forgiven sinners, of the thief for whom the door of Paradise opens.

The joy of the Gospel fills the heart and whole life of those that encounter Jesus. Those who let themselves be saved by Him are freed from sin, from sadness, from interior emptiness, from isolation. With Jesus Christ, Joy is always born and reborn (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 1). Today we are urged to contemplate the joy of the farmer and of the merchant of the parables. It is the joy of each one of us when we discover the closeness and consoling presence of Jesus in our life — a presence that transforms the heart and opens us to the needs and the acceptance of our brothers, especially the weakest.

By the intercession of the Virgin Mary, let us pray that each one of us is able to witness, with daily words and gestures, the joy of having found the treasure of the Kingdom of God, namely, the love the Father has given us through Jesus.

### **After the Angelus**

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today is World Day against trafficking, organized by the United Nations. Every year, thousands of men, women and children are innocent victims of forced labour, sexual exploitation and organ trafficking, and it would appear that we are so accustomed to this that we consider it a normal situation. This is ugly, cruel and criminal! I wish to engage the efforts of all in adequately countering this aberrant scourge. Let us pray together to the Virgin Mary that she may support the victims of trafficking and convert the hearts of traffickers. Let us pray to Our Lady together:

*Hail Mary...*

I now greet all pilgrims from Italy and from different countries, especially the Murialdine Sisters of St. Joseph, the Novitiates of the Sisters of Mary Help of Christians, the ministrants of various Italian parishes, and the Italian Women's Hockey Club of Buenos Aires.

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

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