



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

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!

Today's Gospel reading (cf. *Mt* 5: 17-37) is from the "Sermon on the Mount" and deals with the subject of the fulfilment of the Law: how I must fulfil the Law, how it is to be done. Jesus wants to help His listeners take the right approach to the prescriptions of the Commandments given to Moses, urging them to be open to God Who educates us to true freedom and responsibility through the Law. It is a matter of living it as an instrument of freedom. Let us not forget this: to live the Law as an instrument of freedom, which helps me to be freer, which helps me not to be a slave to passions and sin. Let us think about wars, let us think about the consequences of wars, let us think of that little girl who died of the cold in Syria the day before yesterday. So many calamities, so many. This is the result of passions, and people who wage war do not know how to master their passions. They do not comply with the law. When you give in to temptations and passions, you are not lords and agents of your own life, but you become incapable of managing it with will and responsibility.

Jesus' discourse is divided into four antitheses, each one expressed with the formula "You have heard that it was said... I say to you". These antitheses refer to as many situations in daily life: murder, adultery, divorce and oaths. Jesus does not abolish the prescriptions concerning these issues, but He explains their full meaning and indicates the spirit in which they must be observed. He encourages us to move from formal observance of the Law to substantive observance, accepting the Law in our hearts, which is the centre of the intentions, decisions, words and gestures of each one of us. From the heart come good and bad deeds.

By accepting the Law of God in the heart one understands that, when one does not love one's neighbour, to some extent one kills oneself and others, because hatred, rivalry and division kill the fraternal charity that is the basis of interpersonal relationships. And this applies to what I have said about wars and also to gossip, because language kills. By accepting the Law of God in your heart you understand that desires must be guided, because not everything you desire can be had, and it is not good to give in to selfish and possessive feelings. When one accepts the Law of God in one's heart, one understands that one must abandon a lifestyle of broken promises, as well as move from the prohibition of perjury to the decision not to swear at all, assuming the attitude of full sincerity with everyone.

And Jesus is aware that it is not easy to live the Commandments in such an all-encompassing way. That is why He offers us the help of His love: He came into the world not only to fulfil the Law, but also to give us His Grace, so that we can do God's will, loving Him and our brothers. We can do everything, everything, with the Grace of God! On the contrary, holiness is none other than guarding this gratuitousness that God has given us, this Grace. It is a matter of trusting and entrusting ourselves to Him, to His Grace, to that gratuitousness that He has given us, and welcoming the hand He constantly extends to us, so that our efforts and our necessary commitment can be sustained by His help, filled with goodness and mercy.

Today Jesus asks us to continue on the path of love that He has indicated to us and which begins from the heart. This is the way to live as Christians. May the Virgin Mary help us to follow the path traced out by her Son, to reach true joy and to spread justice and peace everywhere.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims; in particular, those from Croatia and Serbia; from Trappes, in France; from the diocese of Toledo, in Spain; and the students from the "Colegio Asunción Cuestablanca" of Madrid.

I greet the faithful of Biancavilla, Fiuggi, Aprilia, Pescara and Treviso, and the confirmands from Serravalle Scrivia, Quarto d'Altino and Rosolina.

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