



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

At midday today, Solemnity of All Saints, 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 are the Pope's words of introduction to the Marian prayer:

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno*, and happy feast day!

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints. In the light of this feast day, let us pause and think a little on holiness, in particular on two of the characteristics of true holiness: it is a *gift* – it is a gift, it cannot be bought – and at the same time it is a *journey*. A *gift* and a *journey*.

First of all, a *gift*. Holiness is a gift from God which we have received with Baptism: if we let it grow, it can completely change our life (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate*, 15). Saints are not unreachable or distant heroes, but people like us, our friends, whose starting point is the same gift we have received: Baptism. Indeed, if we think about it, we have certainly met some of them, some everyday saints: some righteous person, someone who lives the Christian life seriously, with simplicity... they are those I like to call "the saints next door", who live normally among us. Holiness is a gift offered to everyone for a happy life. And after all, when we receive a gift, what is our first reaction? It is precisely that we are happy, because it means that someone loves us; and the gift of holiness makes us happy because God loves us.

But every gift, however, must be accepted, and it carries with it the responsibility of a response, a "thank you". But how can we say this "thank you"? It is an invitation to commit oneself so that it is not squandered. All the baptized have received the same calling to hold on to and complete in our lives the holiness we have received (cf. *Lumen gentium*, 40). This is how we come to the second point –holiness is also a *journey*, a journey to be made together, helping each other, united with those excellent companions who are the Saints.

They are our elder brothers and our sisters, on whom we can always count: the saints support us and, when we take a wrong turn along the way, with their silent presence they never fail to correct us; they are sincere friends, whom we can trust, because they desire our wellbeing. In their lives we find an example, in their prayers we receive help and friendship, and with them we are bound in a bond of brotherly love.

Holiness is a journey, it is a gift. So, we can ask ourselves: do I remember having received the gift of the Holy Spirit, who calls me to holiness and helps me arrive there? Do I thank the Holy Spirit for this, for the gift of holiness? Do I feel that the saints are close to me, do I talk to them, do I turn to them? Do I know the story of some of them? It is good for us to know the lives of the saints and to be moved by their examples. And it does us a great deal of good to address them in prayer.

May Mary, Queen of all Saints, make us feel the joy of the gift received and increase in us the desire for the eternal destination.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters!

I greet you all affectionately, pilgrims from various countries, families, parish groups, associations and school groups.

In particular, I greet the faithful of Allensbach, Germany, those of Monterrey, Mexico, and the students of the School of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Nykøbing Falster in Denmark, as well as the Roman Group of volunteers of the National State Police Association.

I welcome with pleasure the participants in the *Corsa dei Santi*, the race organized by the "Don Bosco Missions" Foundation to live the feast of All Saints in a popular dimension. Thank you for your fine initiative and for your presence!

Tomorrow morning, I will celebrate Mass in the Cemetery for the Fallen of the Commonwealth during the Second World War.

And let us continue to pray for the populations who suffer due to today's wars. Let us not forget tormented Ukraine, let us not forget Palestine, let us not forget Israel and let us not forget the many other regions where war still rages.

And I wish you all a happy feast in the spiritual company of the Saints. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch, and *arrivederci!*
