



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 approximately twelve thousand faithful gathered in Saint Peter's Square.

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

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

Today the Gospel of the Liturgy tells us about the miracle of the loaves and fishes (cf. *Jn* 6:1-15). A miracle, that is a "sign", a "sign", whose protagonists perform three gestures that Jesus will come to repeat at the Last Supper. What are these gestures? *Offering, giving thanks, and sharing.*

The first: *to offer*. The Gospel tells us about a boy who has five loaves and two fish (*Jn* 6:9). It is the gesture with which we acknowledge we have something good to give, and we say our "yes", even if what we have is too little compared to what is needed. This is emphasized, during the Mass, when the priest offers the bread and wine on the altar, and each person offers himself, his own life. It is a gesture that may seem small, when we think of the immense needs of humanity, just like the five loaves and two fish in front of a crowd of thousands; but God makes it the material for the miracle, the greatest miracle there is – that in which He Himself makes Himself present among us, for the salvation of the world.

And so, we understand the second gesture: *giving thanks* (cf. *Jn* 6:11). The first gesture is *offering*, the second is *giving thanks*. It is saying to the Lord humbly, with also with joy: "All that I have is your gift, Lord, and to thank you I can only give back to you what You gave me first, together with your Son Jesus Christ, adding what I can; every one of us can add a little something. What can I give to the Lord? What little thing can I give? My feeble love". To give... to say to the Lord, "I love you"; but we, poor things, our love is so small, but if we give it to the Lord, the Lord receives it. *Offering, giving thanks, and the third gesture is sharing.*

In the Mass, it is the Communion, when together we approach the altar to receive the Body and Blood of Christ:

the fruit of everyone's gift transformed by the Lord into food for all. It is a beautiful moment, that of communion, which teaches us to live every gesture of love as a gift of grace, both for those who give it and those who receive it.

Brothers, sisters, let us ask ourselves: do I truly believe that, by the grace of God, I have something unique to give to my brothers and sisters, or do I feel anonymously "one among many"? Am I active in giving good? Am I grateful to the Lord for the gifts with which He continuously manifests His love? Do I live sharing with others as a moment of encounter and mutual enrichment?

May the Virgin Mary help us to live every Eucharistic celebration with faith, and to recognize and savour every day the "miracles" of God's grace.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters!

I assure my prayer for the victims of the major landslide that has swept through a village in the south of Ethiopia. I am close to that sorely tried population, and to those who are bringing relief.

And while there are many people in the world who suffer due to disasters and hunger, we continue to produce and sell weapons and burn resources fueling wars, large and small. This is an outrage that the international community should not tolerate, and it contradicts the spirit of brotherhood of the Olympic Games that have just begun. Let us not forget, brothers and sisters: war is defeat!

Today we celebrate World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, on the theme "Do not cast me off in my old age" (cf. Psalm 71:9). The abandonment of the elderly is indeed a sad reality to which we must not grow accustomed. For many of them, especially in these summer days, loneliness risks becoming a difficult burden to bear. The Day calls us to listen to the voice of the elderly who say, "Do not abandon me!", and to answer, "I will not abandon you!". Let us strengthen the alliance between grandparents and grandchildren, between young people and the elderly. Let us say "no" to the loneliness of the elderly! Our future depends a great deal on how grandparents and grandchildren learn to live together. Let us not forget the elderly! And a round of applause for all the grandparents, all of them!

I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims from various parts of Italy and the world. In particular, I greet the participants in the General Congress of the Union of the Catholic Apostolate; the young people of Catholic Action of Bologna, and those of the Riviera del Po-Sermide pastoral unit, in the diocese of Mantua; the group of eighteen-year-olds from the diocese of Verona; and the animators of the "Carlo Acutis" Oratory of Quartu Sant'Elena.

I send my greeting to those who are taking part in the conclusion of the Feast of the Madonna del Carmine in Trastevere: this evening there will be the procession of the Madonna "fiumarola" on the River Tiber. Let us learn from Mary, our Mary, how to put the Gospel into practice in everyday life! I heard a Neocatechumenal song... I would like to hear it again later!

I wish you all a good Sunday. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch, and *arrivederci!*
