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The Pope's words at the Angelus prayer

Before the Angelus

After the Angelus

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 is the Pope's introduction to the Marian prayer:

Before the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

The first of today's readings, from the Book of Revelation, speaks to us of heaven and places us before "a great multitude", incalculable, "from every nation, tribe, people and language" (Rev, 7: 9). They are the saints. What are they doing "up there"? They sing together, they praise God with joy. It would be beautiful to listen to their song... But we can imagine it: do you know when? During Mass, when we sing, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts...". It is a hymn, the Bible says, that comes from heaven, that is sung there (cf. *Is* 6: 3; *Rev* 4. 8), a hymn of praise. So, singing the "Holy", not only do we think of the saints, but we also do what they do: in that moment, in the Mass, we are united to them more than ever.

And we are united to *all* the saints: not only to the most well-known, in the calendar, but also those "next door", our relatives and acquaintances who now form part of that immense multitude. Today, then, is a *family feast*. The saints are close to us: indeed, they are our truest brothers and sisters. They understand us, they wish us well, they know what is truly good for us, they help us and they await us. They are happy and want us to be joyful with them in paradise.

Therefore, they invite us on the way of happiness, indicated in today's Gospel, so beautiful and well-known: "Blessed are the poor in spirit ... Blessed are the meek ... Blessed are the pure in heart" (cf. *Mt 5: 3-8*). But how? The Gospel says blessed are the poor, whereas the world says blessed are the rich. The Gospel says blessed are the meek, whereas the world says blessed are the arrogant. The Gospel says blessed are the pure, whereas the world says blessed are the cunning and pleasure-seekers. This way of beatitude, of holiness, seems to lead to defeat. And yet – the first Letter reminds us of this again – the saints hold "palm branches in their hands" (v. 9), that is, symbols of victory. They have won, not the world. And they exhort us to choose their side, that of God Who is Holy.

Let us ask ourselves on what side we are: that of heaven or that of earth? Do we live for the Lord or for ourselves, for eternal happiness or for satisfaction now? Let us ask ourselves: do we truly want holiness? Or do we settle for being Christians who are neither good nor bad, who believe in God and respect their neighbour but without exaggerating? The Lord "asks everything of us, and in return He offers us true life, the happiness for which we were created". (Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete ed exsultate*, 1). In short, either holiness or nothing! It does us good to let ourselves be provoked by the saints, that did not live by half-measures here, and cheer us on from there, so that we choose God, humility, meekness, mercy, purity, so that we are impassioned by heaven rather than earth.

Today our brothers and sisters do not ask to hear once again a nice passage from the Gospel, but for us to put it into practice, for us to journey on the way of the Beatitudes. It is not a question of doing extraordinary things, but of following every day this path that leads us to heaven, that leads us to the family, that leads us home. Today, then, let us glimpse our future and celebrate that for which we were born: we were born to die no more, we were born to experience God's joy! The Lord encourages us, and to those who set out on the way of the Beatitudes He says: "Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven" (*Mt 5: 12*). May the Holy Mother of God, Queen of saints, help us to follow with determination the road of holiness; may she, who is the Gate to heaven, introduce our departed loved ones to the celestial family.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

I greet you all with affection, pilgrims from Italy and various countries, families, and groups from parishes, associations and schools.

I address a special greeting to the participants in the *Corsa dei Santi*, the *Race of Saints*, sponsored by the "Missioni Don Bosco" Foundation, to live the feast of All Saints the form of a popular celebration. Thank you for your good initiative and for your presence!

Tomorrow afternoon I will go to the Laurentino Cemetery in Rome: I invite you to accompany me with prayer in this day of remembrance of those who have preceded us in the sign of faith and who repose in peace.

I wish you all a good feast day in the spiritual company of the Saints. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch, and goodbye.
