

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 190210a

Sunday 10.02.2019

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 Saint 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 (cf. *Lk* 5: 1-11) offers us, in Luke's account, the calling of Saint Peter. His name – we know – was Simon, and he was a fisherman. Jesus, on the bank of the Sea of Galilee, sees him while he is tending to his nets, along with the other fishermen. He finds him weary and disappointed, as that night he had not caught anything. And Jesus surprises him with an unexpected gesture: he gets into the boat and asks him to set out a little farther from the land as he wants to speak to the people from there – there were many people. So Jesus sits in Simon's boat and teaches to the crowd gathered along the shore. But his words re-open also Simon's heart to trust. Then Jesus, with another surprising "move", says to him, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch" (v. 4).

Simon answers with an objection: "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything". And as an expert fisherman, he could have added, "If we haven't caught anything during the night, we certainly won't catch anything by day". Instead, inspired by Jesus' presence and enlightened by His Word, says, "But because you say so, I will let down the nets" (v. 5). It is the answer of faith, which we too are called to give; it is the attitude of

willingness that the Lord asks of all His disciples, especially those who have tasks of responsibility in the Church. And Peter's trustful obedience gives rise to a prodigious result: "When they had done so, they caught ... a large number of fish" (v. 6).

It is a miraculous catch, a sign of the power of Jesus' word: when we place ourselves with generosity at His service, He performs great things in us. In this way He acts with each one of us: He asks us to receive Him on the boat of our life, to set out again with Him and to navigate a new sea, which shows itself to be full of surprises. His invitation to set out into the open sea of the humanity of our time, to be witnesses of goodness and of mercy, gives new meaning to our existence, which often risks becoming flat. At times we can be surprised and hesitant when faced with the Divine Master's call to us, and we are tempted to reject it on account of our inadequacy. Peter too, after that incredible catch, said to Jesus: "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man" (v. 8). It is beautiful, this humble prayer: "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man". But he says so kneeling before Him Whom he now acknowledges as the "Lord". and Jesus encourages him by saying: "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people" (v. 10), since God, if we trust in Him, frees us from our sin and opens up before us a new horizon: collaborating in His mission.

The greatest miracle performed by Jesus for Simon and the other dismayed and weary fishermen is not so much the net full of fish, but rather that he helped them not fall victim to disappointment and discouragement in the face of defeat. He opened them up to becoming heralds and witnesses of His word and of the Kingdom of God. And the disciples' response was prompt and full: "They pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed Him" (v. 11). May the Holy Virgin, model of prompt obedience to the will of God, help us to feel the attraction of the call of the Lord, and make us willing to collaborate with Him to spread His word of salvation everywhere.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Two days ago, on the liturgical memorial of Saint Josephine Bakhita, the fifth "World Day against Human Trafficking" was held. The motto this year is: "Together against trafficking" [applause in the Square] – Once more! – [applause]. "Together against trafficking"! Let us not forget this. I invite you to join forces to defeat this challenge. I thank all those who combat on this front, in particular the many women religious. I make an appeal especially to governments, so that the cause of this scourge may be faced and the victims protected. However, we all can and must collaborate to denounce the cases of exploitation and slavery of men, women and children. Prayer is the force that supports our joint commitment. Therefore, I invite you to recite with me the prayer to Saint Josephine Bakhita, which has been distributed in the Square. Let us pray together.

Saint Josephine Bakhita, as a child you were sold as a slave and had to face difficulties and unspeakable sufferings.

Once freed from your physical slavery, you found true redemption in the encounter with Christ and His Church.

Saint Josephine Bakhita, help all those who are ensnared in slavery.

On their behalf, intercede with the God of Mercy, so that the shackles of their imprisonment may be broken.

May God Himself free all those who are threatened, wounded or mistreated as a result of trafficking in human beings. May He bring relief to those who survive this slavery and teach them to see Jesus as a model of faith and hope, so that their wounds may be healed.

We implore you to pray and intercede for all of us: so that we do not fall into indifference, so that we open our

eyes and are able to see the sufferings and wounds of so many of our brothers and sisters, deprived of their dignity and of their freedom, and that we hear their cry for help. Amen.

Saint Josephine Bakhita, pray for us!

I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims! In particular the faithful of Verona and the group "Mendicanti di Sogni", Mendicants of Dream, from Schio.

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