



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 3 March 2024

[[Multimedia](#)]

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*

Today the Gospel shows us a harsh scene: Jesus who drives the merchants out of the temple (cf. *Jn 2:13-25*), Jesus who expels the sellers, overturns the money changers' tables, and admonishes everyone, saying, "you shall not make my Father's house a house of trade". (v. 16). Let us focus a little on the contrast between *house* and *market*: indeed, these are two different ways of approaching the Lord.

In the temple understood as a *marketplace*, in order to be at peace with God, all one had to do was buy a lamb, pay for it and consume it on the altar coals. One *bought, paid, consumed* and then everyone went home. In the temple understood as a *house*, on the other hand, the opposite happens: we go there to encounter the Lord, to be united to him, to be close to our brothers and sisters, to share joys and sorrows. Moreover, all prices are negotiated in the market whereas at home, there is no calculation. One seeks one's own interests in the market while one gives freely at home. And Jesus is harsh today because he does not accept that the *market-temple* replaces the *house-temple*. He does not accept that our relationship with God is distant and commercial instead of intimate and trusting. He does not accept that market stalls replace the family table, that prices replace embraces, and that coins replace caresses. And why does Jesus not accept this? Because in this way, a barrier is created between God and man and between brother and brother, whereas Christ came to bring communion, to bring mercy, that is, forgiveness, and to bring closeness.

The invitation today, also for our Lenten journey, is to build a *greater sense of home* and less of a *sense of the market* in ourselves and around us. First of all, towards God, by praying a lot, like children who knock confidently and tirelessly at the Father's door, and not like greedy and distrustful merchants. So, firstly, by praying. And then by spreading fraternity: there is great need for fraternity! Think of the embarrassing, isolating, at times even hostile silences one finds in many places.

Thus, let us ask ourselves first of all, what is my prayer like? Is it a price to be paid, or is it a moment of trusting abandon, when I do not look at the clock? And how are my relationships with others? Am I capable of giving without expecting anything in return? Do I know how to take the first step to break down the walls of silence and the voids of distance? We should ask ourselves these questions.

May Mary help us to "build a home" with God, among ourselves and around us.

After praying the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, I carry daily in my heart with sorrow, the suffering of the people of Palestine and Israel, caused by the ongoing hostilities. The thousands of dead, wounded, displaced, and the immense destruction bring suffering, and this has tremendous consequences on the small and the defenceless, who see their future compromised. I ask myself: do we really think we can build a better world in this way? Do we really think we can achieve peace? Enough, please! Let us all say it: enough, please! Stop! I encourage the continuation of negotiations for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and in the entire region, so that the hostages may be freed immediately and return to their anxiously awaiting loved ones, and so that the civilian population can have safe access to urgently needed humanitarian aid. And please, let us not forget tormented Ukraine, where so many die every day. There is so much pain there.

The 5th of March marks the second International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness. How many resources are wasted on military spending which, as a result of the current situation, sadly continues to increase! I sincerely hope that the international community understands that disarmament is first and foremost a duty: disarmament is a moral duty. Let us keep this clearly in our minds. And this requires courage from all members of the great family of nation, to move from an equilibrium of fear to an equilibrium of trust.

I greet you all, people of Rome and pilgrims from various countries. In particular, I greet the students of the Universidade Sénior of Vila Pouca de Aguiar in Portugal, the students of the "Rodríguez Moñino" Institute of Badajoz, and the parish groups from Poland.

I greet the confirmation candidates from Rosolina, in the Diocese of Chioggia and their families; the faithful from Padua, Azzano Mella, Capriano and Fenili, Taranto, and the parish of *Sant'Alberto Magno* in Rome.

I affectionately greet the young Ukrainians brought together by the Community of Sant'Egidio [to discuss] the theme, "Conquer evil with good. Prayer, the poor, peace". Dear young people, thank you for your commitment towards those who suffer most as a result of war. Thank you!

And I wish you all a happy Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch.
Arrivederci!