



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS *ANGELUS* Saint Peter's Square

Sunday, 27 September 2020 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

Dear brothers and sisters,

In my land we say: “A good face in bad weather”. With this “good face” I say Good Morning to you.

With his preaching on the Kingdom of God, Jesus opposes a religiosity that does not involve human life, that does not question the conscience and its responsibility in the face of good and evil. He also demonstrates this with the parable of the two sons, which is offered to us in the Gospel of Matthew (cf. 21:28-32). To the father’s invitation to go and work in the vineyard, the first son impulsively responds “no, I’m not going”, but then he repents and goes; instead the second son, who immediately replies “yes, yes dad”, does not actually do so; he doesn’t go. Obedience does not consist in saying “yes” or “no”, but always in taking action, in cultivating the vineyard, in bringing about the Kingdom of God, in doing good. With this simple example, Jesus wants to go beyond a religion understood only as an external and habitual practice, which does not affect people’s lives and attitudes, a superficial religiosity, merely “ritual”, in the ugly sense of the word.

The exponents of this “façade” of religiosity, of which Jesus disapproves, in that time were “the chief priests and the elders of the people” (*Mt* 21:23), who, according to the Lord’s admonition, will be preceded in the Kingdom of God by “tax collectors and prostitutes” (cf. v. 31). Jesus tells them: “the tax collectors, meaning the sinners, and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you”. This affirmation must not lead us to think that those who do not follow God’s commandments, those who do not follow morality, saying, “In any case, those who go to Church are worse than us”, do well. No, this is not Jesus’ teaching. Jesus does not indicate publicans and prostitutes as models of life, but as “privileged by Grace”. And I would like to underscore this word, “grace”. Grace. Because conversion is always a grace. A grace that God offers to anyone who opens up and converts to him. Indeed, these people, listening to his preaching, repented and changed their lives. Let us think of Matthew, for example. Saint Matthew, who was a publican, a traitor to his homeland.

In today's Gospel, the one who makes the best impression is the first brother, not because he said "no" to his father, but because after his "no" he converted to "yes", he repented. God is patient with each of us: he does not tire, he does not desist after our "no"; he leaves us free even to distance ourselves from him and to make mistakes. Thinking about God's patience is wonderful! How the Lord always waits for us; he is always beside us to help us; but he respects our freedom. And he anxiously awaits our "yes", so as to welcome us anew in his fatherly arms and to fill us with his boundless mercy. Faith in God asks us to renew every day the choice of good over evil, the choice of the truth rather than lies, the choice of love for our neighbour over selfishness. Those who convert to this choice, after having experienced sin, will find the first places in the Kingdom of heaven, where there is greater joy for a single sinner who repents than for ninety-nine righteous people (cf. *Lk 15:7*).

But conversion, changing the heart, is a process, a process that purifies us from moral encrustations. And at times it is a painful process, because there is no path of holiness without some sacrifice and without a spiritual battle. Battling for good; battling so as not to fall into temptation; doing for our part what we can, to arrive at living in the peace and joy of the Beatitudes. Today's Gospel passage calls into question the way of living a Christian life, which is not made up of dreams and beautiful aspirations, but of concrete commitments, in order to always open ourselves to God's will and to love for our brothers and sisters. But this, even the smallest concrete commitment, cannot be made without grace. Conversion is a grace we must always ask for: "Lord, give me the grace to improve. Give me the grace to be a good Christian".

May Mary Most Holy help us to be docile to the action of the Holy Spirit. He is the One who melts the hardness of hearts and disposes them to repentance, so we may obtain the life and salvation promised by Jesus.

After the Angelus the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, there has been worrying news of conflicts in the area of the Caucasus. I pray for peace in the Caucasus and I ask the parties in conflict to perform concrete acts of good will and brotherhood that may lead to resolve the problems, not with the use of force and arms, but through dialogue and negotiation. Let us pray together in silence for peace in the Caucasus.

Yesterday in Naples, Maria Luigia of the Blessed Sacrament, in the world Maria Velotti, was proclaimed Blessed; she was the Foundress of the Congregation of Franciscan Sisters Adorers of the Holy Cross. Let us give thanks to God for this new Blessed, an example of contemplation of the mystery of Calvary and tireless in the exercise of charity.

Today the Church celebrates [the World Day of Migrants and Refugees](#). I greet the refugees and migrants present in the Square around the monument entitled "Angels, unawares" (cf. *Heb 13:2*),

which I blessed one year ago. This year I wished to dedicate my Message to the internally displaced, who are forced to flee, as also happened to Jesus and his family. “Like Jesus, forced to flee”, likewise the displaced, migrants. Our remembrance and our prayer go to them, in a particular way, and to those who assist them.

Today is also World Tourism Day. The pandemic has harshly struck this sector that is so important to many countries. I offer my encouragement to those who work in tourism, particularly small family businesses and young people. I hope that everyone may soon pick themselves up again from the current difficulties.

And I now greet you, dear faithful of Rome and pilgrims from various parts of Italy and the world. There are so many different flags! I offer a special thought to women and to all the people committed in the fight against breast cancer. May the Lord sustain your commitment! And I greet the pilgrims from Siena who have come to Rome on foot.

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