



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO CESENA ON THE THIRD CENTENARY OF THE BIRTH OF POPE PIUS VI
AND BOLOGNA FOR THE CONCLUSION OF THE DIOCESAN EUCHARISTIC CONFERENCE

ENCOUNTER WITH THE WORLD OF WORK, UNEMPLOYED, REPRESENTATIVES OF
UNINDUSTRIA,
TRADE UNIONS, THE NATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF COOPERATIVES AND LEGACOOOP

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER

Piazza Maggiore (Bologna)

Sunday, 1 October 2017

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I greet all of you from the world of labour, in all its different aspects. Among these however, there is also a negative one, that is, the difficult, at times distressing, situations of unemployment. Thank you for your welcome!

You represent different social entities, often in bitter disagreement with each other, but you have also learned that, only together can one resolve the crisis and build a better future. Only dialogue between the reciprocal parties can lead to finding efficient and innovative solutions for everyone, including working conditions, and in particular the crucial *welfare* [system]. Some people call this “Emilia’s system”. Try to develop this. There is a need to ensure stable farsighted solutions capable of answering the needs of people and of families.

Your territory has a longstanding experience of cooperation borne from the fundamental value of solidarity. It still has much to offer today, also in aiding the many people in difficulty and in need of that “social lift”, which according to some, is completely disregarded. Let us never bend solidarity

to the logic of financial profit, also because in this way, we take it away from — I could say rob — the weaker ones who are in great need of it. Seeking a society that is more just is not a dream of the past, but rather a commitment, a task that requires everyone's contribution today.

The situation of youth unemployment and that of the many who have lost their jobs and are not able to re-integrate, are realities to which we cannot become accustomed, treating them as mere statistics. And this is the temptation.

Hospitality and the battle against poverty are largely related to employment. One cannot offer effective help to the poor without also giving them the opportunity to find employment and dignity. This is the pressing challenge, as in the post-war years of reconstruction to overcome the chronic poverty [the conflict] left in its wake. The Recent "Work Pact" signed by all the social parties, including the Church in a joint commitment to help each other in the search for long-lasting responses, not alms, is an important tool which I hope will bring the desired results.

The economic crisis has a European and a global dimension; and as we know, it is also an ethical, spiritual and human crisis. At its base, there is the betrayal of the common good, both by individuals and by groups in power. Therefore, the laws governing profit need to be changed to serve the individual and the common good. However, in order for this to happen effectively and not merely be proclaimed in words, opportunities for dignified work must be increased. This is a task which appertains to society as a whole: in this phase in particular, the whole of society in its various components, is called to make every effort to ensure that labour, which is the primary factor for dignity, be one of the main preoccupations.

We are here before Saint Petronius, remembered as *Pater et Protector* and always depicted holding your city in his hands. From here, we can physically see three fundamental aspects of your city: the Church, the Municipality and the University. When they are in dialogue and cooperate with each other, the precious "*humanism*" that they express is strengthened and the city — so to speak — "breathes", has a horizon and is not afraid to face the challenges which arise. I encourage you to treasure this humanism of which you are custodians, to search for wise, farsighted solutions to the complex problems of our time, seeing them as difficulties, yes, but also as opportunities for growth and improvement. And what I am saying also concerns Italy in general and the whole of Europe.

Dear friends, I am particularly close to you and place into the hands of the Lord and Our Lady of Saint Luke, all your anxieties and worries. Let us turn to her with the prayer of the *Angelus*, she who is so venerated by all the people of Bologna.

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