



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS TO THE DELEGATION OF THE "ITALIAN FAMILY BUSINESS" ASSOCIATION - AIDAF

Saturday, 5 October 2024

[Multimedia]

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

I welcome you, who represent the “Italian Family Business” Association. The Church is the family of God, and looks kindly on everything that is family. First individuals and then the family: no! First the family and, within the family, the people. Isolated people are in orbit around humanity and also in orbit around the Christian community. Community first. The Church is the family of God. In your case, you are characterized by the delicate balance between family and work, which is expressed in entrepreneurial courage and responsibility. It is good, it is constructive when courage and responsibility go together. Action that comes from the heart is bold, it does not retreat into itself, but knows how to look far ahead; and responsibility, then, is the secret of business, a word that means “housekeeping” – “*oikos nomos*” – and is therefore an expression of care. Care for your business, care for the family, care for our common home, care for future generations.

Like the mission of the Church, your activity is generally rooted in a territory, which you are called upon to enrich, both with the witness of family bonds and the seriousness of your professional commitment. May the gift of faith increasingly guide your presence in local realities, and strengthen your participation in the fortunes of humanity. Let us not forget that everything is connected, nothing is isolated. Only the neurotic are isolated. Everything else is connected. Even though fraternity between people and peoples is greatly wounded and the common home bears the marks of unjust human greed, everything is connected. Even bad things have a connection with all of us. May you inhabit the local dimension with a universal heart! And when you work in and for different parts of the world, spread the value of being “family”. The family at the beginning, not the people. The family.

I encourage you to keep going, to feel that you are part, in the Church, of a larger family and a greater undertaking, which is service to the Kingdom of God and to its justice. I therefore invite you to enlarge your heart and broaden your outlook, to nurture listening, at home and in business, between different generations – this is important, listening between different generations; grandparents with grandchildren, this is very important. Believe in the vocation of your children – whatever it may be – and open doors and windows to those who wish to travel a stretch of the road with you. Let us remember the parable of the talents: none of what has been entrusted to you should be “buried”! Do not be afraid, and keep going with confidence.

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