

Pope's Address to Centesimus Annus Foundation

"Elaborate a Vision of the Modern Economy That Is Respectful"

VATICAN CITY, JUNE 26, 2009 (Zenit.org).- Here is a Vatican translation of the address Benedict XVI gave June 13 upon receiving in audience members of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation on the occasion of their international congress on: "The Values and Rules for a New Model of Development."

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Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate and in the Priesthood,

Distinguished and Dear Friends,

Thank you for your visit which fits into the context of your annual meeting. I greet you all with affection and am grateful to you for all that you do, with proven generosity, at the service of the Church.

I greet and thank your President, Count Lorenzo Rossi di Montelera, who has expressed your sentiments with fine sensitivity, giving an overview of the Foundation's work.

I also thank those who, in various languages, have wished to express your common devotion. Our meeting today acquires special meaning and value in the light of the situation that humanity as a whole is experiencing at this time.

Indeed, the financial and economic crisis which has hit the industrialized, the emerging and the developing countries, shows clearly that certain economic and financial paradigms which prevailed in recent years must be rethought.

Therefore, at the international congress which took place yesterday your Foundation did well to address the topic of the search for, and identification of, the values and rules which the economic world should abide by in order to evolve a new model of development that is more attentive to the requirements of solidarity and more respectful of human dignity.

I am pleased to learn that you examined in particular the interdependence between institutions, society and the market, in accordance with my venerable Predecessor John Paul II's encyclical, "Centesimus Annus." The Encyclical states that the market economy, understood as: "an economic system which recognizes the fundamental and positive role of business, the market, private property and the resulting responsibility for the means of production, as well as free human creativity in the economic sector" (n. 42), may be recognized as a path to economic and civil progress only if it is oriented to the common good (cf. n. 43).

However, this vision must also be accompanied by another reflection which says that freedom in the economic sector must be circumscribed "by a strong juridical framework which places it at the service of human freedom in its totality", a responsible freedom, "the core of which is ethical and religious" (n. 42).

The above-mentioned Encyclical appropriately states: "just as the person fully realizes himself in the free gift of self, so too ownership morally justifies itself in the creation, at the proper time and in the proper way, of opportunities for work and human growth for all" (n. 43).

I hope that by drawing inspiration from the eternal principles of the Gospel it will be possible, with the research inherent in your work, to elaborate a vision of the modern economy that is respectful of the needs and rights of the weak.

My Encyclical dedicated to the vast topic of the economy and work is, as you know, due to be published shortly. It will highlight what for Christians are the objectives to pursue and the values to promote and to defend tirelessly, if we are to achieve a truly free and supportive human coexistence.

I likewise note with pleasure all that you do for the Pontifical Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies (PISAI), to whose goals you and I attribute great value for an increasingly fruitful interreligious dialogue.

Dear friends, thank you once again for coming! I assure each one of you of my remembrance in prayer, while I warmly bless you all.

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