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Francis receives French politicians from the Rhône-Alpes region: deepen the values of liberty, equality and fraternity, whose origin is transcendent

This morning in the Clementine Hall of the Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father received in audience the participants in the pilgrimage of French elected representatives from the region of Rhône-Alpes, accompanied by the cardinal archbishop of Lyon, Philippe Barbarin, and by the bishops of the province of Lyon.

In his address, Francis emphasised that the current international context, “characterised by frustration and fears, intensified by the attacks and blind violence that has so deeply lacerated your country, it is ever more important to seek out and develop the sense of common good and general interest”.

“Therefore I would like, along with the bishops of France, to underline the need, in a changing world, to rediscover the meaning of politics”, he said, referring to the document drafted by French bishops. He recalled that twenty years ago the prelates published the text “Rehabiliter la politique”, which “did great good. And now there is this other, which will also do good”.

“There is no doubt”, he continued, “that French society is rich in potential, diversity that is called to become opportunity, provided that the Republic’s values of liberty, equality and fraternity are not merely proclaimed in an illusory fashion, but are instead deepened and understood in relation to their true foundation, which is transcendent. A genuine debate on the values and directions that are recognised as common to all is currently underway. In this debate, Christians are called to participate with believers of every faith and all men of good will, also non-believers, in order to promote the growth of a better world”.

“In this sense, the search for the common good that inspires you, leads you to listen with particular attention to all people in precarious conditions, without forgetting the migrants who have fled their countries as a result of war, poverty and violence. In this way, in exercising your responsibilities, you will be able to contribute to the building of a more just and humane society, a welcoming and fraternal society”.

The Pope concluded by commending their pilgrimage to Christ, “wellspring of our hope and our commitment to the service of the common good”, invoking the Lord’s blessing upon those present.

