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OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE  
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLIS

# **BOLLETTINO**

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

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## **Audience with the Managers and Staff of the Italian Post Office**

At midday today, in the Clementine Hall of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the managers and Staff of the Italian Post Office (*Poste Italiane*).

The following is the Pope's address to those present:

### **Address of the Holy Father**

Dear brothers and sisters,

I welcome you and thank the President for his kind words. I extend my cordial greeting to the managers and employees of *Poste Italiane*, extending it to your colleagues who are not here today.

The *Poste Italiane* is inextricably linked to the life and history of Italy: it has accompanied the events in its history, starting from its emergence as a unitary state. In a certain sense, it helped to keep it united, keeping families and distant places in touch. We know how communication is at the heart of our society, and how different regions are able to make their common journey only in a continuous exchange of information and goods. This also directly affects the economic development of a country, which requires efficient, quality services.

On this journey, alongside the nation and the Italian people, *Poste Italiane* has had and has been able to renew itself, adapting itself to the times. Indeed, in the last few decades, almost all aspects of the life of the people and society have transformed, starting with the communications media and transport. The great acceleration, driven by an increasingly developed technology, omnipresent and not infrequently invasive, has changed the mentality and lifestyles, creating new needs and requiring ever greater efficiency. *Poste Italiane* has worked hard to address these epochal challenges with foresight, diversifying services and implementing an investment strategy that looks to the future, with a widespread use of new technologies and a continuous effort in research and innovation.

This view towards the future by *Poste Italiane*, in its choice of means of transport and in other programmatic decisions, has taken into account the protection of the natural environment. As I emphasized in the Encyclical *Laudato si'*, there cannot be true development that ignores the ability of nature to regenerate, or that conceives of it not as our common home, but as a warehouse full of resources to be consumed.

However, what is most important in the task of restructuring and renewal that you have accomplished the implementation of a business strategy faithful to your original vocation – to be at the service of citizens. While following a market logic, *Poste Italiane* has placed at the centre not profit but people, recalling that all the services offered would be emptied of their value if they were usable only by some, or if did not respond to users' real needs. This is all the more important in our economic and social context, which very often aims at obtaining an end in itself, forgetting that the true wealth lies in people, and therefore often treats them as faceless numbers: those with a high number are considered and respected, while those who are considered a zero are discarded: today's "throwaway culture".

Faced with this drama, the consequence of selfishness and profound spiritual short-sightedness, you are called always to assume the opposite logic, which focuses on the needs of and care for people. You have done this by adopting attention to the customer as the guiding principle of the company's strategic choices, setting standards to be achieved in performance and customizing services, taking care of the training of "contact personnel" and interacting with users.

I urge all of you who are in contact with the public everyday, seeking to respond to their needs, to maintain this attitude of willingness and benevolence towards those who address you.

It's important, when you go to a counter or an office, to encounter people who do their job well, who do not sigh and give the impression that they consider you a burden, or pretend not to see you. On the other hand, customers must be careful not to have – as unfortunately occurs! – an attitude of pretension or complaint, taking out on the employees their own frustrations or complaints about all the evils of society! How difficult it is, but also how important it is, in the thousand daily relationships between colleagues and citizens, to maintain a style of listening, availability and respect! And this takes effort – it is not easy. To succeed, it is essential to train yourself every day, educating yourself to act with mercy even in small gestures and thoughts. A smile, a smile! There arrives an old woman who is a little deaf, and you explain but she does not hear ... And you smile, instead of saying "Uff...". The smile is always a bridge, but it is a bridge of the "great" [of mind], because the smile goes from one heart to another. Do not forget to smile! This behaviour is infectious, because the smile is contagious, and peace that is sown never fails to bear fruit.

Care for the person, always taken by the *Poste Italiane* as a guiding principle, is expressed not only in the attention you have for your clients, but also for the employees themselves, who are the first to offer their energies and skills for the good of the company. How often the world of work ignores them, or pretends not to see, the special needs linked to being a mother, as well as the needs of the family, to be protected and favoured at all costs! The *Poste Italiane*, on the contrary, has always sought to take special care of female workers and their families, representing a sign for every working environment, and showing that the full respect for workers and their rights is not opposed to earnings and efficiency, but on the contrary, increases them.

In the difficult balance between the containment of costs and competitiveness, always be sure that attention to the budget does not detract from the quality of work; nor should it compromise that principle of universality in the availability of services, achieved through the capillary presence of post offices and counters throughout the national territory. The proximity to the people they provide must be maintained with all the necessary energies, because it guarantees to many, especially the weakest, a point of reference for their needs, and a form of defence.

Dear brothers and sisters, I thank you for the opportunity to have this meeting. I ask you, please, to pray for me. I invoke God's blessing on you, your families and your every good purpose. Thank you.

