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BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE  
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLIS

# BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 180526d

Saturday 26.05.2018

## Audience with the Members of the “Centesimus Annus – Pro Pontifice” Foundation

At 11.30 this morning, in the Sala Regia of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the members of the *Centesimus Annus – Pro Pontifice* Foundation on the 25 th anniversary of its institution, participating in the international conference on the theme “New Policies and Life-Styles in the Digital Age” (Vatican City, 24-26 May 2018)

### Address of the Holy Father

Dear Friends,

I greet all of you gathered for the 2018 International Conference of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation. In a particular way, in this, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Foundation’s establishment by Saint John Paul II, I express my gratitude for your work in making known the wisdom of the Church’s social teaching with those involved in the business and economic sectors of civil society. After a quarter-century, this task remains more necessary than ever, as the social and financial challenges faced by the international community have become increasingly complex and interrelated.

The current difficulties and crises within the global economic system have an undeniable ethical dimension: they are related to a mentality of egoism and exclusion that has effectively created a culture of waste blind to the human dignity of the most vulnerable. We see this in the growing “globalization of indifference” before obvious moral challenges confronting our human family. I think especially of the manifold obstacles to the integral human development of so many of our brothers and sisters, not only in materially poorer countries but increasingly amid the opulence of the developed world. I think too of the urgent ethical issues associated with global movements of migration.

Your Foundation has a vital role to play in bringing the light of the Gospel message to these pressing humanitarian concerns, and in assisting the Church to carry out this essential aspect of her mission. By continuing to engage with business and finance leaders, as well as union officials and others in the public sector,

you seek to ensure that the intrinsic social dimension of all economic activity is adequately safeguarded and effectively promoted.

All too often, a tragic and false dichotomy – analogous to the artificial rift between science and faith – has developed between the ethical teachings of our religious traditions and the practical concerns of today's business community. But there is a natural circularity between profit and social responsibility. There is in fact an "indissoluble connection [...] between an ethics respectful of persons and the common good, and the actual functionality of every economic financial system" (*Oeconomicae et pecuniariae quaestiones*, 17 May 2018, 23). In a word, the ethical dimension of social and economic interaction cannot be imported into social life and activity from without, but must arise from within. This is, of course, a long-term goal requiring the commitment of all persons and institutions within society.

Your Conference has chosen for its title this year "New Policies and Life-Styles in the Digital Age". One of the challenges linked to this theme is the threat families are facing from uncertain job opportunities and the impact of the digital cultural revolution. As the preparation process for this year's Synod on Young People has made clear, this is a vital area in which the solidarity of the Church is actively needed. Your own contribution is a privileged expression of the Church's concern for the future of young people and families. Indeed this is an activity where ecumenical cooperation is of especial importance and the presence of Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople at your Conference is an eloquent sign of this common responsibility.

Dear friends, by sharing your own knowledge and expertise, and by making known the richness of the Church's social doctrine, you seek to form the consciences of leaders in the political, social and economic sectors. I encourage you to persevere in these efforts which contribute to the building of a global culture of economic justice, equality and inclusion. With gratitude and appreciation for what you have already accomplished, I prayerfully entrust your future commitment to the providence of Almighty God. Upon you, your colleagues and your families I willingly invoke an abundance of the Lord's blessings.

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