

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

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N. 201130d

Monday 30.11.2020

Video Message of the Holy Father Francis - Greeting to participants in the international Conference of judges, members of Social Rights Committees of Africa and America

The following is the text of the video message sent by the Holy Father Francis to the participants in the international conference of the judges serving on committees for social rights in Africa and America, taking place from 30 November to 1 December 2020 on the theme of "The construction of social justice. Towards the full application of the fundamental rights of people in conditions of vulnerability":

Greeting of the Holy Father

Dear judges of Africa and America, good morning!

I am happy to be able to address these words to you before you begin the good work you have set out to do. I congratulate you on this initiative to conceive of, to decode and to build the "new" social justice.

It is good that you can take a break from your ordinary work to think and to reflect. I am sure that this practice will help you to acquire a more complete dimension of your mission and social responsibility.

Faced with a society that today looks with a certain distrust and suspicion at those who hold the power to decide what is right, this event is a healing balm.

I told you some time ago, when you met in the Casina Pio IV, that, like the social movements, you too were poets. I would like to return once more to this idea.

The poet needs to contemplate, think, and understand the music of reality and shape it in words. In each decision, in each sentence, you are faced with the happy possibility of making poetry: a poetry that heals the wounds of the poor, that integrates the planet, that protects mother earth and all her descendants. Poetry that repairs, redeems, nourishes.

Judges, do not give up this possibility. Assume the grace of which you are holders, with decision and courage. Be aware that everything you can do to help, through your rectitude and commitment, is very important.

And please always remember that when a justice is truly just, that justice makes people happy and its inhabitants worthy. No sentence can be just, nor can any law be legitimate if what it produces is more inequality, if what it produces is a greater loss of rights, if it produces indignity or violence.

Brothers and sisters, make your poetry a practice and you will be better poets and better judges. And never forget that poetry that does not transform is just a bunch of dead words. I wish you a successful meeting.
