

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 211014c

Friday 14.10.2022

Message of the Holy Father for World Food Day

The following is the Message sent by the Holy Father Francis to the director general of the Food and Agriculture Association (FAO), Qu Dongyu, on the occasion of World Food Day 2022:

Message of the Holy Father

To His Excellency

Mr. Qu Dongyu

Director-General of FAO

Excellency,

Thank you for your kind letter inviting me to participate in the celebration of World Food Day 2022, the 77th anniversary of the founding of FAO. This institution was established in order to respond to the needs of so many people who were suffering from destitution and hunger in the context of the Second World War. Today, unfortunately, we are also living in a context of war, which we could call a "third world war". The world is at war, and this should give us food for thought.

The theme of the Day this year is: "*Leave no one behind, through Better Production, Better Nutrition, a Better Environment, and a Better Life*". Certainly, it will not be possible to tackle the many crises affecting humanity if we do not work and walk together, leaving no one behind. This demands, first and foremost, that we see others as our brothers and sisters, as members of the same human family, whose sufferings and needs affect us all, for "if one part suffers, all the others suffer with it" (cf. *1 Cor 12:26*).

The "four Betters" – better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life for all – which make up

this year's theme, allow me to mention the importance of the FAO's *Strategic Framework 2022-2031*, and to highlight the need for interventions to be planned and programmed so that they contribute to the total eradication of hunger and malnutrition, and are not simply the response to circumstantial shortfalls or emergency appeals. To achieve just and lasting solutions, the urgency of tackling the problem of poverty, which is closely linked to the lack of adequate food, must be reiterated together and at all levels.

However, the goals set are ambitious and may seem unattainable. How can we achieve them? First of all, by not losing sight of the fact that at the heart of any strategy are the people, with concrete stories and faces, who live in a given place; they are not numbers, data or endless statistics. Also, by introducing "the category of love" into the language of international cooperation, to clothe international relations with humanity and solidarity, in pursuit of the common good. We are therefore called to refocus our gaze on what is essential, on what has been freely given to us, focusing our work on care for others and for creation (cf. Encyclical *Letter Laudato Si'*, 216 ff.).

Mr Director-General, I reiterate once more the commitment of the Holy See and the Catholic Church to walk alongside the FAO and other intergovernmental organizations working for the poor, putting fraternity, harmony and mutual collaboration first, in order to discover prospects that will bring genuine benefit to the world, not only today, but also for generations to come. I raise my prayer to God Almighty for this intention, knowing that every creature receives sustenance from his hand, and that he richly blesses those who break bread with the hungry.

From the Vatican, 14 October 2022

FRANCIS
