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Message of the Holy Father for the national campaign against violence against women, organized by RAI Radio1 Grl and Cadmi D.I.Re

The following is the text of the Message sent by the Holy Father Francis for the national campaign against violence against women, organized by RAI Radio1 Grl and Cadmi D.I.Re:

Message of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning to you all!

I thank the promotors of the initiative “Un’onda lunga contro la violenza maschile sulle donne” (“A long wave against male violence against women”), which enables us to reflect on a very topical theme. Indeed, violence against women is a poisonous weed that plagues our society and must be pulled up from its roots. And these roots are cultural and mental, growing in the soil of prejudice, of possession, of injustice.

In too many places, and in too many situations, women are put in second place, they are considered 'inferior', like objects: and if a person is reduced to an item, then her dignity is no longer seen; she is considered merely a possession that can be appropriated for anything, even to the point of suppressing her.

How many women are overcome by the burden and tragedy of violence! How many are mistreated, abused, enslaved, victims of the arrogance of those who would make use of their body and their life, forced to surrender to the greed of men.

Unfortunately, the mass media still play an ambiguous role in this. On the one hand, they favour respect and the promotion of women; but on the other, they continually transmit messages imprinted with hedonism and consumerism, whose models, both male and female, obey the criteria of success, self-assertion, competition, the power to attract others and dominate them.

But where there is domination there is abuse! It is not love that demands prisoners. The Lord wants us to be free and in full dignity. Faced with the scourge of the physical and psychological abuse of women, there is an urgent need to rediscover just and balanced forms of relationships, based on mutual respect and recognition. All kinds of conditioning must be countered with educational action that, starting from the family, places the person, with his or her dignity, at the centre.

It is our duty, the responsibility of each person, to give a voice to our voiceless sisters: the women who are victims of abuse, exploitation, marginalization and undue pressures. Let us not remain indifferent! It is necessary to act immediately, at all levels, with determination, urgency and courage.

Salvation came into the world from the heart and flesh of a women; from how we treat women, in all their dimensions, our degree of humanity is revealed.

Dear friends, I hope that this “wave”, which you are launching today, will truly be long and may contribute to a change of mindset. I bless you and encourage you to continue in this effort. Thank you, and all the best in your work!

From the Vatican, 27 October 2023

FRANCIS