



The Holy See

VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE INAUGURATION OF EXPO MILAN 2015

Friday, 1st May 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

I am thankful for the opportunity to add my voice to those who have gathered for this inauguration. It is the voice of the Bishop of Rome, who speaks on behalf of the pilgrim people of God from the entire world. It is the *voice of the many poor* who are part of this people and who, with dignity and the sweat on their brow, seek to earn bread. I would like to make myself spokesperson of our brothers and sisters, Christians and non-Christians, whom God loves as children and for whom He gave his life, broke the bread of the flesh of His Son made Man. The Son taught us to ask God the Father: “Give us our daily bread”. The Expo is a fitting occasion to *globalize solidarity*. Let us try not to waste it but to value it completely!

In particular, the theme “*Feeding the planet, energy for life*” brings us together. We must also thank the Lord for this; for choosing such an important theme, so essential... may it not be only a “theme”, may it always be accompanied by the *conscience of the “faces”*: the faces of the millions of people who today are hungry, who do not eat in a way which is worthy of humanity. Beginning today, I would like that every person, every person who, passing the marvelous pavilions, visits the Milan Expo, may perceive the presence of those faces. It is a hidden presence but one which in reality must be the true *protagonist of the event: the face of the men and women who are hungry*, who fall ill, and who even die of an inadequate or harmful diet.

The “*paradox of abundance*” — an expression used by St John Paul II when he spoke to the FAO (*Address to the First Conference on Nutrition, 1992*) — still persists, despite the efforts made and with various positive results. Even the Expo in some respects is part of this “paradox of abundance”, if it obeys the throw-away culture, the culture of waste, and does not contribute to a model of fair and sustainable development. Let us thus make this Expo an occasion for a change in mentality, to stop thinking that our daily action — at every level of responsibility — does not

impact the lives of those, whether near or far, who are suffering from hunger. I am thinking of the many men and women who suffer from hunger, especially the many children who are dying of hunger in the world.

There are other faces who will have an important role in the world's fair: the many workers and researchers of the field of nutrition. May the Lord grant each one of them the wisdom and courage, because their responsibility is great. My wish is that this experience will permit entrepreneurs, merchants, academics to feel involved in the *great project of solidarity*: to feed the planet in respect for every man and woman who inhabits it and in respect for the natural environment. This is a great challenge to which God calls the people of the 21st century: it's time to stop abusing the garden that God has entrusted to us, so that everyone can eat the fruits of this garden. Taking on this great project gives full dignity to the work of those who produce and those who research in the field of food and nutrition.

Everything starts from perceiving the faces. Thus I do not want to forget *the faces of all the workers who laboured for the Milan Expo*, especially the most anonymous, the most hidden who, thanks to Expo, have earned bread to take home. May no one be deprived of this dignity! And may no bread be the result of a work unworthy of man!

May the Lord help us to take up this responsibility on this grand occasion. May He, who is Love, give us true "energy for life": love to share bread, "our daily bread" in peace and fraternity. And may neither bread nor dignity never run short for any man or woman.

Thank you.