



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE "NATIONAL DAY" OF THE HOLY SEE
AT EXPO 2017 IN ASTANA**

*Your Eminence,
My Brother Bishops,
Esteemed Authorities,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

I offer a warm greeting to all those taking part in the National Day of the Holy See at Expo 2017 in Astana. My greeting also goes to all who have helped in various ways with the planning and realization of this event, and to the many visitors in attendance.

I am pleased that Kazakhstan is hosting this International Exhibition devoted to the theme: *"Future Energy"*. Serious and responsible reflection is demanded on how mankind can, in coming years, draw on innovative technologies to make wise use of the energy resources that are our common legacy. We are all conscious of the fact that our use of those resources is critical for the health of our world and the welfare of our societies, a welfare that needs to be viewed in integral terms, and not simply as economic prosperity or greater capacity for consumption. We must act now to ensure that energy is used to improve our lives and to cause our human family to flourish, for by nature we are called to fruitful interaction, solidarity and love.

For this reason, energy resources must not be allowed to fall prey to unscrupulous financial speculation or to become a source of conflict. This calls for broad-ranging and frank dialogue on all levels and among different sectors of our societies. "Future energy" does not have to do with researchers, technicians and investors alone; it also represents a challenge to the worlds of culture, politics, education and religion. I gladly recall the growth of dialogue and cooperation between religions that has taken place in Kazakhstan, a land characterized by rich ethnic, cultural and spiritual traditions. It is my hope that the different religions will take part in this dialogue, for their writings contain insights that "prove meaningful in every age; they have an enduring power to

open new horizons... The ethical principles capable of being apprehended by reason can always reappear in different guise and find expression in a variety of languages, including religious language” (*Laudato Si'*, 199). It is important for all of us to discover in our own religious traditions the inspiration and criteria that foster a courageous commitment to perseverance in bettering our relations and in living together as brothers and sisters.

The way we use energy resources is a sign of how well we are carrying out the task that, according to many religious traditions, has been entrusted to us by God, namely to care for the world around us and for our fellow human beings of every time and place. If our generation and use of energy are sustainable and grounded in solidarity, we are doing our job well. Otherwise, we are not. At stake is our very dignity; at stake too are justice and peace. It is to promote an awareness of this that the Holy See has designed its pavilion at the Astana Expo on the theme: *“Energy for the Common Good: Caring for our Common Home”*.

May Almighty God, the Creator, grant that Expo 2017 provide timely lessons and lasting inspiration, and may he bless our common efforts to bring them to fruition.

From the Vatican, 2 September 2017

FRANCIS