



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY
AND THE FIRST WORLD CONGRESS
PROMOTED BY THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL
FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE**

Friday, 29 October 2004

*Your Eminence,
Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate and the Priesthood,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

1. I am pleased to welcome you at this special Audience. First of all, I greet the members of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, which in these days has been holding its Plenary Assembly, aiming to identify the best methods for the *new evangelization of society* that is so necessary and urgent.

My affectionate greeting goes to the participants in the *First World Congress of Ecclesial Organizations Working for Justice and Peace*. Keeping in mind the Church's social doctrine, dear friends, you have reflected on the most suitable ways to proclaim the *Gospel* in the complex reality of our times.

I greet in particular Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino and thank him for the wishes he has expressed to me on your behalf.

2. The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* has just been published. It is an instrument designed to help Christians in their daily commitment to make the world more just, in the Gospel perspective of a *true humanism in solidarity*. This social doctrine "is an essential part of the Christian message" (*Centesimus Annus*, n. 5) and should be ever better known, integrally circulated and witnessed to through constant and consistent pastoral action.

In particular, in times like ours that are characterized by the globalization of the social issue, the Church invites everyone to recognize and assert the *centrality of the human person in every social environment and structure*.

3. Dear Brothers and Sisters, the Church's social teaching calls you especially, lay Christians, to live in society as a "*witness to Christ the Saviour*" (*Centesimus Annus*, n. 5), and opens you to the horizons of charity. Indeed, this is the *time for charity*, also *social and political charity*, that with the grace of the Gospel will be able to enliven the human realities of work, the economy and politics, designing the paths of peace, justice and friendship among peoples.

This is the *time for a renewed season of social holiness*, for saints who manifest to the world and in the world the perennial and inexhaustible fruitfulness of the Gospel.

Dear lay faithful, work constantly for justice and peace. May Mary, the faithful disciple of Christ, accompany you and protect you. I assure you of my prayers and I bless you all from my heart.