

Translation from original in Italian

Domus Sanctae Marthae, 1st April 2020

Mrs. Anna Maria Tarantola
Chairwoman, The *Centesimus Annus* Foundation

Dear Signora Anna Maria,

I would like to thank you for your letter as well as for your understanding and concern to try and "reset the wheel" and thus stimulate a concrete form of charity. In times when the search for the common good and public health asks us to remain confined to our own homes, it is also good to see how the Holy Spirit works to avoid other forms of solidarity being brought to a standstill or cut off. It comforts me and gives me hope to see how in the midst of suffering and pain - which still make themselves acutely felt in many Italian regions - testimonies arise capable of showing that we are not merely passive, touched by a problem that threatens us, but potential promoters of a good that drives us and awaits us. How good it is for us to let St. Paul's words resound in these times: "If one member suffers, all the members suffer together; and if a member is honoured, all the members rejoice together" (*1 Cor 12:26*). Thank you for your willingness to respond actively to the pandemic by trying to support, accompany and stimulate projects that help tackle this health emergency.

Right now, the cash donations I am receiving are being used for the purchase of respirators and other vital items that can help ensure the safety of the health care personnel (we must also take care of those who care for us). We have

already sent shipments to various hospitals in Italy, Spain, France and Madagascar. We need to prioritise support for hospitals in Africa, where health equipment and qualified human resources are already scarce, all the more so to deal with a pandemic of this magnitude; I fear that, in the not too distant future, they may collapse and end up doing great damage. I am happy to see that once again we can count on you to respond to the urgent needs of our brothers and sisters in conditions of greater vulnerability and most exposed to this pandemic, knowing that every time we do it for the least of our brethren, it is for Jesus Himself that we are doing it (cfr *Mt 25,40*).

May the Lord bless you and the Holy Virgin protect you. And please don't forget to pray for me.

Francesco