

Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation

Welcoming Address to the Holy Father 2022 by Chairwoman V6, 8 October 2022

Your Holiness,

on behalf of all the members of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation I thank you from the bottom of my heart for once again giving us the joy of meeting you personally at the end of our International Convention.

You know the Foundation, we are a group of lay people: entrepreneurs, bankers, managers, professionals, academics, who aim to study, deepen, disseminate and above all concretely apply the SDC in their respective spheres of activity, conscious that example is the best means of dissemination.

2022 has been a difficult year for Centesimus on the internal front, but thanks to everyone's commitment and passion we have managed to carry on fulfilling our dual statutory purpose: the dissemination of the SDC and of Your Holiness' Magisterium as well as our support to your works of charity.

We have grown: we now have 31 groups operating in 15 countries; to our great satisfaction, we are present in East Africa with a group open to young entrepreneurs.

During the Audience that Your Holiness graciously granted me on 4th July, you advised me to avoid being 'indietristi' (backward-looking) i.e. not to look at the past with the nostalgic eyes of those who do not want to change things but to be future-oriented.

I assure you, Your Holiness, that our main objective is precisely to look to the future guided by the SDC, firm in its principles yet dynamic in the way it approaches problems, capable of grasping the evolving context and pointing out to everyone the new issues to be addressed in pursuit of the new just, inclusive and fully sustainable world. Our in-depth study of the SDC is not an end in itself, but rather aims to find new ways of doing things, to grasp positive examples of business and leadership models to disseminate, to arouse interest and stimulate new research.

This year we have tackled the theme of poverty in its various forms, and tried to identify its causes, remedies, the link with integral sustainability and peace in the light of the strong message of brotherhood and social friendship of your encyclical Fratelli tutti. As you teach us Your Holiness, poverty cannot be addressed in the long-term unless we change the growth model and adopt a new concept of peace.

Unfortunately, after years of reducing poverty and hunger in the world, poverty and hunger have increased again since 2020 due to the climate crisis, the pandemics and wars. As many International Agencies have reported, an unprecedented food crisis is looming.

Your Holiness, we know that the future we must look to is complex and highly uncertain. We are hopeful, we will continue to seek and propose Holy Father in all our actions and relationships the pursuit of "new models of economic-social development...", to rediscover the "meaning of life, the meaning of the person, the meaning of God". To work with faith in Christ.

In 2023, we intend to address the issues of growing inequality, the climate, social and economic crises including the impact of rising inflation, the demographic issue, integral sustainability and changes in the world of work, in the light of the teaching of Fratelli tutti.

These are all issues that interconnect and mutually influence each other, whose correct and effective management, enlightened by faith, will bring about the change in lifestyles and business, political, and social models that you advocate.

In addressing these issues, we will increasingly involve

- young people; we started to do so in 2020-2021, we will continue; we have great confidence in their proactive capacity
- new areas of the world; we have started to operate in Africa, Australia and Canada, encountering much interest, involvement, ideas and proposals, even new ones. We are planning to set up our own groups in Asia, South America and Eastern Europe.

We will also strengthen dialogue and collaboration with entities that share the same goals, in a spirit of openness and active collaboration as we did with SACRU.

Holy Paul VI in his address to the UN on 4th October 1965 stated that " Yes, the time has come for "conversion," for personal transformation, for interior renewal. We have to get used to a new way of thinking about man, a new way of thinking about man's community life, and, last of all, a new way of thinking about the pathways of history and the destinies of the world" It is the teaching of Fratelli Tutti that spurs us to rethink, to reflect, to pray. We are trying to do so.

This meeting with you, Holy Father, supports and encourages us along our path; Your Holiness, we will listen attentively to your message, which will be a teaching and a spur for us. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your closeness and your teaching.