



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE 32nd CONFERENCE OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION*

Friday, 5 December 2003

Mr President,

Mr Director-General,

Your Excellencies,

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*1. I am pleased to welcome you, the distinguished participants in the *32nd Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*. My cordial greeting goes to the Honourable Jim Sutton, Minister of Agriculture of New Zealand, who is presiding over the present session, and to the Director-General, Mr Jacques Diouf. Our meeting today allows me to express the appreciation of the Catholic Church for the important service which FAO renders to humanity. Today this service is more urgently needed than ever. Hunger and malnutrition, aggravated by growing poverty, represent a grave threat to the peaceful coexistence of peoples and nations. By its efforts to combat the nutritional insecurity which affects vast areas of our world, FAO makes a significant contribution to the advancement of world peace.2. Given this close relationship between hunger and peace, it is clear that economic and political decisions and strategies must increasingly be guided by a commitment to global solidarity and respect for fundamental human rights, including the right to *adequate nourishment*. Human dignity itself is compromised wherever a narrow pragmatism detached from the objective demands of the moral law leads to decisions which benefit a fortunate few while ignoring the sufferings of large segments of the human family. At the same time, in conformity with the principle of subsidiarity, individuals and social groups, civil associations and religious confessions, governments and international institutions, are all called, according to their specific competencies and resources, to share in this commitment to solidarity in promoting the common good of humanity.3. For this reason I am confident that the work of FAO in establishing an *International Alliance Against Hunger* will bear fruit in practical choices and political decisions inspired by the awareness that humanity is one family. As in every family, concern must be shown above all to those who are disadvantaged and in need. The world may not remain deaf to the plea of those who demand the food they need in order to survive!4. In this conviction, I offer prayerful good wishes that the present Conference will help FAO to pursue ever more successfully its noble aims and objectives. Upon all of you I cordially invoke God's blessings of wisdom, perseverance and

peace.

*AAS 96 (2004), p.277-278. *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, vol. XXVI, 2, p.884-885. *L'Osservatore Romano* 6.12.2003 p.5. *L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English* n.51/52 p.13. © Copyright 2003 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

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