



The Holy See

**VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE 11th FESTIVAL
OF THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH**

Verona, 25-28 November 2021

[Multimedia]

A warm greeting to all of you who are taking part in the eleventh edition of the Festival of the Social Doctrine of the Church. The theme you have chosen this year is: “Bold in hope - Creative with courage”. It is a theme that sums up the attitude with which we have tried to face this time, which is still conditioned by the pandemic. Boldness, hope, creativity and courage are not synonymous, but represent a connection of intentions, virtues, openness and views of reality that strengthen the human soul. But not only that...

You will remember the parable of the talents told in the Gospel of Matthew (25:14-30). “He who had received the five talents went at once and traded them; and he made five talents more”, we read in verse 16. This parable is the last parable before the text in which it is said that we shall be judged on charity (*Mt 25:31-46*). So, the one about the talents seems to be Jesus' programmatic discourse on the boldness that is necessary to be a Christian.

Against all do-goodism and fatalism, Jesus invites the crowds to use their talents with courage. It does not matter how many or what one's talents are. Jesus asks them to take risks and invest them in order to multiply them. When we remain closed in on ourselves with the sole objective of preserving what exists, we are losers in the eyes of the Gospel: in fact, even what is left will be taken away. Boldness, hope, creativity and courage are words that outline the spirituality of the Christian. “For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance, but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away” (*Mt 25:29*).

In the Encyclical *Fratelli tutti* I recall that “the pandemic enabled us to recognise and appreciate

once more all those around us who, in the midst of fear, responded by putting their lives on the line. We began to realise that our lives are interwoven with and sustained by ordinary people valiantly shaping the decisive events of our shared history: doctors, nurses, pharmacists, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning personnel, caretakers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety, volunteers, priests and religious”, and so forth... These people understood “that no one is saved alone”, no one is saved alone (*FT* 54). Here are talents put to use.... Here is the hope that sustains and guides creativity with boldness and courage. Therefore, I renew my invitation to walk in the hope that “is bold, can look beyond personal convenience, the petty securities and compensations which limit our horizon, and can open us up to grand ideals which make life more beautiful and worthwhile” (*FT* 55; *Greeting to young people at the Fr. Félix Varela Cultural Centre*, Havana – Cuba, 20 September 2015).

Hope, I have said on other occasions, is like “dropping anchor on the other shore”. It is this boldness that inspires new actions, guides skills, stimulates commitment, gives life to life.

Those who hope know that they are part of a story built by others and received as a gift, just as in the parable of the talents. And they also know that they must make this gift bear fruit.

One more word to the various protagonists of social life gathered in Verona for the Festival: entrepreneurs, professionals, representatives of the institutional world, of cooperation, of the economy and culture, continue to commit yourselves by following the path that Fr. Adriano Vincenzi traced with you for knowledge and training in the social doctrine of the Church. As the slogan of this edition says: Wherever you are, build change! Wherever you are, build change, because we know that we do not come out of the crisis the same: we come out better or worse.

May the Lord bless you, may Our Lady protect you and please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you.

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