



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATIONS
"ENTRAIDE ET FRATERNITE" AND "ACTION VIVRE ENSEMBLE"**

In 1961, the bishops of Belgium took the initiative to launch the "Share Lent" campaign and invited Catholics to share their resources with newly-independent Congo. To this end, they founded your association and named it *Entraide et Fraternité*. You have been preparing and organising Share Lent in Belgium for sixty years, during which you have extended your activity to countries all over the world. In 1971, the bishops launched the *Action Vivre ensemble*, to organise the Advent campaign and to help associations fighting poverty in Belgium itself. Your associations' principal field of action is the support of the social activities of partners in the South of the world as well as in Belgium.

I congratulate your two organisations for their faithfulness in carrying out their mission and I thank from the bottom of my heart all those who commit themselves to it as volunteers, professionals or benefactors.

The challenges you face are aggravated by the crisis of COVID-19, which is affecting the whole world, but in particular the poorest and most neglected. It is therefore more important than ever to continue and develop the action you have undertaken. I therefore wholeheartedly encourage your *Entraide et Fraternité* and *Action Vivre ensemble* teams, as well as the many volunteers who support your work in the parishes and within civil society; I encourage your partners who are fighting against unacceptable poverty on a daily basis, as well as the donors who support you through financial contributions. We all have the same objective: to build a more just and fraternal world.

I impart the heartfelt Apostolic Blessing, and encourage you to continue tirelessly on your path of social friendship and fraternity, with the grace of Christ, the quintessential Good Samaritan! And do not forget to pray for me and for the Church throughout the world.

From the Vatican, 8 January 2021

FRANCIS

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