

Papal Message for World Food Day

(Taken from the November 2011 J/P Alert of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men)

The Holy Father sent the following message to Jacques Diouf, director general of the United Nation's Rome-based Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) for World Food Day (16 October).

"The theme of this year's World Food Day, is a timely reminder that everyone needs to make a commitment to give the agricultural sector its proper importance. Everyone - from individuals to the organizations of civil society, States and international institutions - needs to give priority to one of the most urgent goals for the human family: freedom from hunger. In order to achieve freedom from hunger it is necessary to ensure not only that enough food is available, but also that everyone has daily access to it: this means promoting whatever resources and infrastructures are necessary in order to sustain production and distribution on a scale sufficient to guarantee fully the right to food.

"If the international community is to be truly 'united' against hunger, then poverty must be overcome through authentic human development, based on the idea of the person as a unity of body, soul and spirit. Today, though, there is a tendency to limit the vision of development to one that satisfies the material needs of the person, especially through access to technology; yet authentic development is not simply a function of what a person 'has', it must also embrace higher values of fraternity, solidarity and the common good.

"In this context, FAO has the essential task of examining the issue of world hunger at the institutional level and proposing particular initiatives that involve its member States in responding to the growing demand for food. Indeed, the nations of the world are called to give and to receive in proportion to their effective needs, by reason of that 'pressing moral need for renewed solidarity, especially in relationships between developing countries and those that are highly industrialized.'"