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Pope Commemorates World Food Day

Pontiff Highlights Fundamental Right of People to 'Sufficient and Healthy Nutrition'

VATICAN CITY, OCT. 17, 2012 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- In a statement to the Director General of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, José Graziano da Silva, Pope Benedict XVI stated that Church regards agricultural initiatives important in feeding the hungry. The statement was made by the Holy Father to mark World Food Day.

Highlighting the importance of World Food Day particularly with the current economic crisis, the Holy Father stated that it was "the fundamental right of every person" to have access to "sufficient and healthy nutrition."

"Hence I greet with particular satisfaction the choice to dedicate this Day to reflection on the topic 'Agricultural Cooperatives Feed the World.' It is not only about giving support to cooperatives as an expression of a different way of economic and social organization, but of considering them a real instrument of international action," the Pope said.

The Supreme Pontiff said that the Catholic Church supports agricultural cooperatives as a means of living an experience of unity and solidarity that contributes not only to the economy, but to the social, cultural and moral growth of the community.

"In fact, cooperatives are a concrete expression not of a sterile complementarity, but of true subsidiarity, a principle that the Social Doctrine of the Church puts as the foundation of a correct relation between the person, the society and the institutions," he stated.

Pope Benedict XVI also called attention to the "irreplaceable role of women" who are "often called to direct the activity of cooperatives to maintain family bonds and to safeguard those precious elements and techniques proper to the rural world."

Concluding his statement to Mr. da Silva, the Holy Father said that the experience of agricultural cooperatives embodies a new type of economy that is at the service of people while fostering ways of solidarity and fraternity. "It is to be hoped that in this new context the young generations will be able to look to their future with renewed confidence, maintaining the links with the work of fields, the rural world and their traditional values," the Pope said.

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