

Cardinal Bertone Calls Business Leaders to Be Daring

Says Taking Social Doctrine Seriously Means Heading Into New Territories

ROME, JUNE 17, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI's secretary of state says that ethical business leaders today face the great challenge of aiming at a goal higher than profit, while not rejecting profit.

Business leaders who do this, says Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, are those who "see their activity as a task and a vocation."

The Vatican official said this Thursday when he opened a three-day conference on business ethics, sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

"Nowadays business leaders who want to take the Church's social teaching seriously will need to be more daring, not limiting themselves to socially responsible practices and/or acts of philanthropy -- positive and meritorious though these may be -- but striking out into new territories," the cardinal said.

He went on to mention two such areas.

The first dealt with the growing demand for employment.

"Innovation and new initiative are needed if business, the economy and the market are to include those presently excluded," Cardinal Bertone observed. "Today as in the past, the economy and the business sector fulfill their duty to serve the common good when they manage to incorporate broad sectors of the marginalized -- one need only think of the factory workers of the last century -- and to ensure that these people become, not problems, but resources and opportunities: for themselves, for business, and for society as a whole."

Proper management

Secondly, the cardinal spoke of the challenges regarding "common goods," such as water and energy.

"Business today has to become more and more involved with these common goods, since in a complex global economy it can no longer be left to the state or the public sector to administer them: the talent of the business sector is also needed if they are to be properly managed," he proposed.

"Where common goods are concerned, we urgently need business leaders for whom profit is not the exclusive goal. More and more, we need business leaders with a social conscience, leaders whose

innovation, creativity and efficiency are driven by more than profit, leaders who see their work as part of a new social contract with the public and with civil society."

The Pope's secretary of state spoke of two types of business leaders: They are "either 'civil,' in the sense that their commercial activity serves to build up the common good, the good of all and of every individual, or else they are the reverse, as when they fail to produce quality products, ignore innovation, fail to create wealth and jobs, and pay no taxes."

Cardinal Bertone affirmed that the Church, as an "expert in humanity," knows that "like other aspects of human life and perhaps even more so, the sector of economics and labor is prone to the temptations of selfishness and narrow self-interest."

"At the same time, though," he said, "the Church sees the world of economics, labour and business in a positive light as a significant sphere for creativity and service to society, a positive element in human affairs. Like any other component of the body politic, it can sometimes develop pathologies, yet its functioning is usually sound, civil and humane."

On ZENIT's Web page:

Full text: www.zenit.org/article-32880?l=english

| [More](#)

© Innovative Media, Inc.

Reprinting ZENIT's articles requires written permission from the [editor](#).