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Family Values the Solution to Economic Crisis, Says Pope

Notes Love, Gratitude and Gift Have Universal Dimension

VATICAN CITY, OCT. 18, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI says a key to solving the economic problem is strengthening the family, since it is in the family that a person learns how to interact in the world of work.

The Pope said this Saturday when he received in audience members of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation, which promotes the social doctrine of the Church.

Their meeting this year marked the 20th anniversary of Pope John Paul II's encyclical Centesimus Annus, published 100 years after Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum, as well as the 30th anniversary of the apostolic exhortation Familiaris Consortio.

Benedict XVI cited his predecessor in noting how a family teaches the values that society needs.

John Paul II wrote. "By respecting and fostering personal dignity in each and every one as the only basis for value, this free giving takes the form of heartfelt acceptance, encounter and dialogue, disinterested availability, generous service and deep solidarity.

"From this perspective," Benedict XVI said, "the family passes from being a mere object to being an active subject capable of recalling the 'human face' that the world of economy must have."

He said that the family's model of love, gratitude and gift can be applied to a universal dimension.

"Commutative justice -- 'give to have' -- and distributive justice -- 'give to owe' -- are not sufficient in social living," the Pontiff explained. "To have true justice it is necessary to arrive at gratuitousness and solidarity. 'Solidarity is first and foremost a sense of responsibility on the part of everyone with regard to everyone, and it cannot therefore be merely delegated to the State. While in the past it was possible to argue that justice had to come first and gratuitousness could follow afterwards, as a complement, today it is clear that without gratuitousness, there can be no justice in the first place."

There is no "market of gratuitousness" the Pontiff said, citing Caritas in Veritate, and "attitudes of gratuitousness cannot be established by law." But both market and politics need individuals open to "reciprocal gift."

So although the Church cannot define how to address the economic crisis, the Holy Father noted, it is the Church's members who "have the duty to denounce evils, to attest to and to keep alive the values on which the dignity of the person is founded, and to promote those ways of solidarity that foster the common good, so that humanity will become the family of God."

The Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation was founded by Pope John Paul II in 1993. As a lay foundation, it aims to promote the social doctrine of the Church in professional and business sectors.

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