

Recognise human dignity in every person, says pope

"If we do not take care of one another, starting with the least... we cannot heal the world"

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A handout picture provided by Vatican Media shows Pope Francis during his weekly general audience, held inside the Library of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican, 12 August 2020. (Photo by EPA-EFE/VATICAN MEDIA HANDOUT/MaxPPP)

Christians are called to combat all violations of human dignity as contrary to the Gospel and to work for the wellbeing of the whole human family and our common home, Pope Francis said at his General Audience.

"If we do not take care of one another, starting with the least, with those who are most impacted, including creation", he said, "we cannot heal the world."

Pope Francis is continuing his catechesis on the effects of the pandemic and how COVID-19 has highlighted how vulnerable and interconnected everyone is.

Speaking from the Apostolic Library, Francis commended the efforts of those "who have been offering evidence of human and Christian love for neighbour, dedicating themselves to the sick even at the risk of their own health."

"The coronavirus is not the only disease to be fought, but rather, the pandemic has shed light on the broadest social ills...a distorted view of the person, a gaze that ignores his or her dignity and relational character", he said.

Unfortunately, many are seen as objects to be "used and discarded" and that "this type of gaze blinds and fosters an individualistic and aggressive throw-away culture, which transforms the human being into a consumer good", he said.

But if we are guided by faith we recognize God creates men and women, not as objects, "but as people loved and capable of loving, in His image and likeness" he said.

"Faith exhorts us to commit ourselves seriously and actively to combat indifference in the face of violations of human dignity; faith always requires us to let ourselves be healed and to convert from our individualism, both personal and collective", Pope Francis said.

May the Lord "restore our sight ... so as to rediscover what it means to be members of the human family," he prayed.

Taken from La Croix International