

## "POLITICS IS BROADEST FIELD FOR CHARITY"

### Papal Message to France's Social Weeks

VATICAN CITY, NOV 26 (ZENIT).- Christians must be protagonists of the new millennium with their commitment to a society that respects every human being, John Paul II said in a message sent to participants of the 74<sup>th</sup> edition of France's Social Weeks, which began in Paris yesterday and will conclude this Sunday, and which is focusing on the topic, "From One Century to the Next: the Gospel, Christians, and Society's Challenges."

"Politics is the broadest field for charity and solidarity." Therefore, "the lay faithful cannot in any way give up participation in politics, that is, in the multiform activity -- economic, social, legislative, administrative, cultural which has as its objective the promotion of the common good in an organic way and through institutions," the Pope explained.

John Paul II believes the promotion of the common good must be intimately linked to the promotion of the fundamental rights of the human being. In this context, he asked: "How is it possible to forget the primordial value of the couple and the family, which is the basic cell of society? When fundamental principles are not observed, when positive laws do not have the natural law as their reference, it is obvious that the whole of social life is increasingly compromised, threatened and headed toward dissolution. It is the task of the legitimate authority to insure the proper functioning of State structures, transparency in public administration, impartiality in public service, just and honest use of public funds, rejection of illicit means to obtain and keep power, in virtue of the value itself of the person and of objective moral exigencies."

After recalling the figures of those who in the past have contributed to the development of the French Christian social commitment -- names like Madeleine Delbrel, Raoul Follereau, Robert Schumann, Jacques Maritain and, of course, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, the Pope urged the participants of the Catholics' Social Weeks in France to "continue the task undertaken by your predecessors and become architects of public life."

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