



UP TO THE SOURCE

Adoratio with St. John Paul II

FOR PARISH GROUPS

Businessmen and Financiers

From the Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II *Centesimus annus*, May 1, 1991.

The earth, [...] is God's first gift for the sustenance of human life. But the earth does not yield its fruits without a particular human response to God's gift, that is to say, without work. It is through work that man, using his intelligence and exercising his freedom, succeeds in dominating the earth and making it a fitting home. In this way, he makes part of the earth his own, precisely the part which he has acquired through work; this is the origin of individual property. (31).

In our time, in particular, there exists another form of ownership which is becoming no less important than land: the possession of know-how, technology and skill. [...] Besides, many goods cannot be adequately produced through the work of an isolated individual; they require the cooperation of many people in working towards a common goal. Organizing such a productive effort, planning its duration in time, making sure that it corresponds in a positive way to the demands which it must satisfy, and taking the necessary risks – all this too is a source of wealth in today's society. In this way, the role of disciplined and creative human work and, as an essential part of that work, initiative and entrepreneurial ability becomes increasingly evident and decisive.

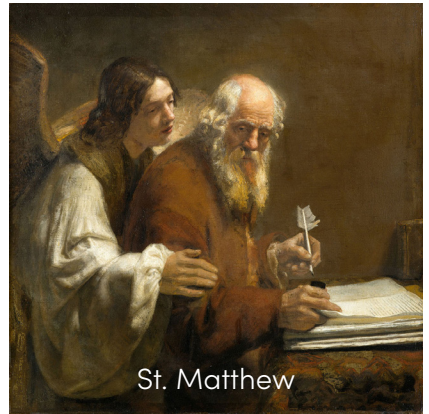
This process, which throws practical light on a truth about the person which Christianity has constantly affirmed, should be viewed carefully and favourably. Indeed, besides the earth, man's principal resource

is man himself. His intelligence enables him to discover the earth's productive potential and the many different ways in which human needs can be satisfied. It is his disciplined work in close collaboration with others that makes possible the creation of ever more extensive working communities which can be relied upon to transform man's natural and human environments. Important virtues are involved in this process, such as diligence, industriousness, prudence in undertaking reasonable risks, reliability and fidelity in interpersonal relationships, as well as courage in carrying out decisions which are difficult and painful but necessary, both for the overall working of a business and in meeting possible set-backs. (32).

The Church acknowledges the legitimate role of profit as an indication that a business is functioning well. When a firm makes a profit, this means that productive factors have been properly employed and corresponding human needs have been duly satisfied. But profitability is not the only indicator of a firm's condition. It is possible for the financial accounts to be in order, and yet for the people — who make up the firm's most valuable asset — to be humiliated and their dignity offended.

Besides being morally inadmissible, this will eventually have negative repercussions on the firm's economic efficiency. In fact, the purpose of a business firm is not simply to make a profit, but is to be found in its very existence as a community of persons who in various ways are endeavouring to satisfy their basic needs, and who form a particular group at the service of the whole of society. Profit is a regulator of the life of a business, but it is not the only one; other human and moral factors must also be considered which, in the long term, are at least equally important for the life of a business. [...]

The integral development of the human person through work does not impede but rather promotes the greater productivity and efficiency of work itself, even though it may weaken consolidated power structures. A business cannot be considered only as a "society of capital goods"; it is also a "society of persons" in which people participate in different ways and with specific responsibilities, whether they supply the necessary capital for the company's activities or take part in such activities through their labour (34).



St. Matthew

Litany of Patron Saints

St. Joseph, Carpenter	<i>Pray for us.</i>
St. Matthew, Apostle, patron saint of accountants and bankers	<i>Pray for us.</i>
St. Paul, Apostle and Crafter	<i>Pray for us.</i>
Saint Homobonus, merchant, patron saint of the business people	<i>Pray for us.</i>
St. Bernardine of Siena, preacher of just business	<i>Pray for us.</i>
St. Benedict, Founder of monasteries	<i>Pray for us.</i>
St. Nicolas, Bishop, Patron Saint of Merchants	<i>Pray for us.</i>
St. Basil the Great, Doctor of the Church and promoter of social justice	<i>Pray for us.</i>
St. Thomas Aquinas, Doctor of the Church	<i>Pray for us.</i>
St. Ranieri of Pisa, merchant and monk	<i>Pray for us.</i>
St. Bernardine of Siena, patron saint of advertising	<i>Pray for us.</i>
St. John Paul II, Pope	<i>Pray for us.</i>



Prayer

Almighty Father, thank you for the business you have enabled me to begin and sustain. Enlighten my way in leading and inspiring people engaged in the business organizations, industry, and communities that I serve.

Allow us the mastery of your will for the role you would want this business to play in your divine plan. Provide us all the resources, human and material for this enterprise. Sustain us financially for growth and development, and keep us humble with our successes and make us innovative and creative in our endeavors.

Help us in our crises, and guide us in every step we take as we run and manage our business. Let our business involvements be models of inspired integrity and allow it to bring good health, wealth, and prosperity among your people.



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