



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE TWENTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS
OF THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

1 June 1979

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you heartily for the noble resolutions and sentiments you have just expressed to me. I appreciated your desire to meet me, on the occasion of your twenty-seventh international Congress. I accede to it willingly, although, as you know, I am preparing for a great journey in my native country, a pastoral journey, which I recommend to your prayer.

Your Congress also comprises, moreover, according to its programme, a good number of visits or journeys, of a cultural nature, through Italy! I do not doubt that it has also given you the opportunity for interesting, fruitful and comforting exchanges for you, ladies, who have the heavy responsibilities of heads of businesses in your different countries.

Until quite a recent date, it is a fact that men had almost the monopoly of these responsibilities in the industrial, economic and social fields. You wish, rightly, that women should participate more in them. It is a way of making use of your real capacities, and I understand that you should feel satisfaction and personal fulfilment. It is also a way of making your specific contribution to the service of society. In fact, you then take a very active part in a world centred on work and production and which requires thorough organization: is this not an opportunity to let it benefit from your feminine qualities which, combined of course with the high professional qualifications necessary, can ensure a happy complementarity for the commitments of men. I say "complementarity", for you have the wisdom to want to work in collaboration and harmony with your masculine partners, "in the same management".

My wishes in this connection will be simple: be yourselves; be at once very competent to run your

enterprises, and very human to promote just relations and conditions of work that are as human as possible among executives and all employees. Your sense of interpersonal relations should help you to do so.

It is natural, too, that you should seek representation with public authorities, private, national or international organizations, and at present European ones, in order to make your questions and points of view heard. Yes, make your contribution to the climate of peace, understanding and brotherhood which our societies need so much.

I wish you personally great courage, for, as is stressed in article 3 of the statutes of the Italian Association A.T.D.D.A. (Italian Association of Women Company Managers), you need understanding and support to carry out your double function as women—often mothers of a family—and company managers. I express the wish that you will bear your professional responsibilities in the best possible way, in these difficult times for the economy and the maintenance of employment. And I express good wishes also for your homes, your children, who need your presence, your love, your care in upbringing. For no mother can forget this essential mission which permits her not only to find fulfilment but also to prepare for society young people whose affective, intellectual and spiritual balance has matured in a united, happy and open home.

Yesterday, we were celebrating, in the Catholic Church, the Visitation of Mary. We contemplated Mary, the future mother of the Saviour, full of energy, joy, pride and also humility and hope, because of the love of God who took the initiative of the gift towards her. I will pray to her for each of you, particularly before the image at Jasna Gora, so venerated in my country. And on all of you, on your dear ones, on those who accompany you here. I implore the Blessings of the Lord and especially, in this time of Pentecost, the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

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