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Human Dignity and Development

Cardinal Pietro Parolin

Describing economics as “a practical and moral science,” the Vatican secretary of state told a conference sponsored by the University of Notre Dame’s Kellogg Institute for International Studies that economic policy must begin “with an integral understanding of the human person that is placed at the service of human development.” Cardinal Pietro Parolin also said an effective economic policy “is capable of orienting production and consumption to authentic human fulfillment in our relationship with God and with our neighbor.” The Conference on Human Dignity and Human Development, held Oct. 22-24 in Rome, brought together 25 leading development practitioners and scholars from

“What is at stake is the very understanding of man and our nature as social beings.”

around the world and marked the inauguration of the university’s Rome Global Gateway. In closing remarks to the conference Oct. 24, Cardinal Parolin said human beings “cannot be reduced to mere pawns of the market, means of production or consumers or both.” There is a “profound harmony” between the teachings of Pope Francis and his predecessors on this topic, he said. Both Pope Francis and retired Pope Benedict XVI “warn that the problems of development and the just regulation of the economy remain insoluble without a holistic vision of the human person and a commitment to constant and coherent moral standards firmly grounded in the natural law and the pursuit of the common good,” the cardinal said. The full text of his remarks follows.

■ I thank the Kellogg Institute for International Studies for its invitation to take part in this conference on human dignity and human development, which marks the inauguration of the University of Notre Dame Global Gateway.

In these closing remarks I would like to present some considerations drawn from the church’s social teaching and from the more recent magisterium of Pope Francis. I trust they will prove helpful for summarizing the discussion, stimulating deeper reflection and opening new avenues for the social action of Catholics and all those who seek a more humane and fraternal world.

The topics which have been discussed show that in speaking of the relationship

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