



## **NEW FORMS OF BONDAGE THAT ENSLAVE THE POOR IDENTIFIED**

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### **VATICAN -**

The Holy Father, Pope Francis has expressed deeper concern on the situation of the widening gap between the rich and the poor of the world noting that the situation has become more contentious with “today’s new forms of bondage that enslave millions of men, women, young people and children”.

The Pope’s observation was contained in his third World Day of the Poor message, released recently by the Vatican, to mark this year’s day of the poor, noting that the demeaning disparity has hunted the world for several centuries

Using several passages of the bible and other documents of the Church to emphasize the position of the Church on this contentious issue, which is premised on the fact that hope is not lost for the poor; Pope Francis stated that: “The hope of the poor will not perish forever” (Ps 9:19). He added: “These words of the Psalm express the profound truth that faith impresses above all on the hearts of the poor, restoring lost hope in the face of injustice, sufferings and the uncertainties of life.

Noting that for centuries, “the inequitable distribution of wealth created a significant number of poor people, whose condition appeared all the more dramatic in comparison with the wealth attained by a privileged few; the Pope stated that the Psalmist gave a vivid picture of this realistic situation.

And comparing the present with the past, the Holy Father stated that the past “was time when arrogant and ungodly people hounded the poor, seeking to take possession even of what little they had, and to reduce them to bondage.” He continued: “The situation is not much different today. The economic crisis has not prevented large groups of people from accumulating fortunes that often appear all the more incongruous when, in the streets of our cities, we daily encounter great numbers of the poor who lack the bare necessities of life and are at times harassed and exploited.”

Speaking on the new forms of bondage ravaging the world and enslaving millions of people, the Pope remarked: “Daily we encounter families forced to leave their homeland to seek living elsewhere; orphans who have lost their parents or were violently torn from them by brutal means of exploitation; young people seeking professional fulfilment but prevented from employment by shortsighted economic policies; victims of different kinds of violence, ranging from prostitution to the narcotics trade, and profoundly demeaned.

He added: “How can we overlook, too, the millions of immigrants who fall victim to many number of concealed interests, often exploited for political advantage, and are refused solidarity and equality? And all the homeless and ostracized persons who roam the streets of our cities.”

Expressing fear that there is “no end to the tunnel of extreme poverty in the world”; the Holy Father outlined ways of addressing the global challenge posed by this disparity gap. Noting that the Lord does not abandon those who seek and call upon His name, Pope Francis called on “all Christian communities, and all those who feel compelled to offer hope and consolation to the poor to help ensure that this World Day of the Poor will encourage more and more people to cooperate effectively so that no one will feel deprived of closeness and solidarity.”