

Ambassadors, Farmers, Ladies and Gentlemen

Welcome!

At the beginning of this meeting, I bring to you all the greetings of Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, President of the Pontifical Academy for Life, and Msgr Renzo Pegoraro, Chancellor.

We gladly accepted the invitation to host this second roundtable of African farmers.

It may seem strange to some that it is this Vatican institution that is hosting this meeting.

Actually, I think such collaboration is pertinent to the Academy's mission for at least three reasons:

because we care about people's lives. All of them and always. When Pope Francis renewed the Academy in 2016, he said that human life must be defended always: of course at the beginning and at the end (the classic issues of Catholic bioethics: abortion, euthanasia, etc.) but also in the eighty years in between.

Because we understood that in this hyper-technological era we cannot avoid thinking seriously, scientifically, about the impact that new technologies have on human life and the planet we inhabit. We do so without apocalyptic overtones but with the responsibility of those who care about individuals and the social bond that unites them.

Because we are different. We have different histories and different positions. This, far from being a problem, constitutes the most serious reason for our gathering here. Challenges are faced together, problems are solved together.

For these three reasons we sincerely say welcome and good work to you!