***THIS IS AN ABRIDGED VERSION OF POPE FRANCIS’ MESSAGE
FOR THE SIXTH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR***

**Slide 1**.

 “Jesus Christ… for your sakes became poor.” With these words, the Apostle Paul addresses the first Christians of Corinth in order to encourage their efforts to show solidarity with their brothers and sisters in need.

**Slide 2**

The World Day of the Poor comes this year as a healthy challenge, helping us to reflect on our style of life and on the many forms of poverty all around us.

 Several months ago, the world was emerging from the tempest of the pandemic, showing signs of an economic recovery that could benefit millions of people reduced to poverty by the loss of their jobs.

**Slide 3 and slide 4**

Now, however, a new catastrophe, the war in Ukraine has appeared on the horizon, destined to impose on our world a very different scenario where reciprocal extortionate demands made by a few potentates are stifling the voice of a humanity that cries out for peace.

**Slide 5 and slide 6**

 What great poverty is produced by the senselessness of war! Millions of women, children and elderly people are being forced to brave the danger of bombs just to find safety by seeking refuge as displaced persons in neighbouring countries. How many others remain in the war zones, living each day with fear and the lack of food, water, medical care and above all human affections? How can we respond adequately to this situation, and to bring relief and peace to all these people in the grip of uncertainty and instability?

**Slide 7**

 In this situation of great conflict, we are asked to reflect on the summons of the Apostle to keep our gaze fixed on Jesus, who “though he was rich, yet for [our] sakes became poor, so that by his poverty [we] might become rich” During his visit to Jerusalem, Paul met with Peter, James and John, who had urged him not to forget the poor. The community of Jerusalem was experiencing great hardship due to a food shortage in the country and the Christians of Corinth were very understanding and supportive. At Paul’s request, on every first day of the week they collected what they were able to save and all proved very generous.

**Slide 8**

 It is something that Christians have always done with joy and a sense of responsibility, to ensure that none of our brothers or sisters will lack the necessities of life. I think at this time of the generosity that in recent years has led entire populations to open their doors to welcome millions of refugees from wars in the Middle East, Central Africa and now Ukraine. Families have opened their homes in order to enable them to live with the dignity that is their due. Even so, the longer conflicts last, the more families and communities begin to feel burdened by a situation that continues past the emergency stage.

**Slide 9**

This is the moment for us not to lose heart but to renew our initial motivation. The work we have begun needs to be brought to completion with the same sense of responsibility.

**Slide 10**

 That, in effect, is precisely what solidarity is: sharing the little we have with those who have nothing, so that no one will go without. The sense of community and of communion, as a style of life, increases and a sense of solidarity matures.

**Slide 11 Slide 12**

As Christians, let us always make charity, faith and hope the basis of our lives and our actions and as the apostle James writes “Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves.” Our most powerful motivation in the example of the Son of God, who chose to become poor.

**Slide 13 & Slide 14 & Slide 15**

Where the poor are concerned, it is not talk that matters; what matters is rolling up our sleeves and putting our faith into practice through a direct involvement, one that cannot be delegated. It is a sincere and generous concern that makes us approach a poor person as a brother or sister who lends a hand to help me shake off the lethargy into which I have fallen. At times, however, a kind of laxity can creep in and lead to inconsistent behaviour, including indifference about the poor. Attachment to money prevents us from seeing everyday life with realism; it clouds our gaze and blinds us to the needs of others chaining us to an ephemeral and bankrupt vision of life.

**Slide 16 & Slide 17**

 In [*Fratelli Tutti*](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html#169), I express an urgent need to find new solutions that can go beyond the approach of those social policies conceived as “a policy *for* the poor, but never *with* the poor and never *of* the poor, much less part of a project that brings people together,” We need instead to imitate the attitude of the Apostle, who could write to the Corinthians: “I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance.”

**Slide 18 & Slide 19**

 message of Jesus shows us the way and makes us realize that there is a poverty that humiliates and kills, and another poverty, Christ’s own poverty, that makes us rich, sets us free and brings us peace. *We would do well to meditate on these words of Brother Charles de Foucauld, “Let us not despise the poor, the little ones, the workers; not only are they our brothers and sisters in God, they are also those who most perfectly imitate Jesus in his outward life.*

**Slide 20 & Slide 21**

if we want life to triumph over death, and dignity to be redeemed from injustice, we need to follow Christ’s path of poverty, sharing our lives out of love, breaking the bread of our daily existence with our brothers and sisters, beginning with the least of them, those who lack the very essentials of life. This is the way to create equality, to free the poor from their misery and the rich from their vanity, and both from despair.

**Slide 22**

11. May this 2022 *World Day of the Poor* be for us a moment of grace. May it enable us to make a personal and communal examination of conscience and to ask ourselves whether the poverty of Jesus Christ is our faithful companion in life.