

# Paus Franciscus: Geen leven is minder waard om geleefd te worden

**Pope: No Life Is Less Worthy of Being Lived**

*Zenit, 22 juni 2015*



During the first day of his two-day trip to Turin, Pope Francis stopped this afternoon to spend about an hour with sick and disabled persons, saying it is a “grave social sin” to consider that some lives are less worthy of being lived than others.

Out of respect for the patients, the Pope’s visit to the Little House of Divine Providence was not televised. The center is known as the “Cottolengo” from its founder, Giuseppe Benedetto Cottolengo, a canon of the Corpus Domini Church of Turin. Vatican Radio provided some excerpts from his address: *The exclusion of the poor, and the difficulties they face in receiving necessary care and assistance, is a situation that is unfortunately still with us today. Great progress in medicine and social assistance has been made, but it is diffused in a culture of waste, as a consequence of an anthropological crisis that puts consumption and economic interests in first place, rather than man. Among the victims of this culture of waste I want to recall in particular the elderly, who are welcomed in large numbers in this house. Their longevity is not always seen as a gift from God, but sometimes as a difficult weight to bear, especially when health is highly compromised.*

## **Developing “antibodies” and learning to see things differently**

This mentality does not bode well for society, and it is our duty to develop “antibodies” against this way of looking at the elderly or people with disabilities – as if their lives were less worthy of being lived. With what tenderness, instead has the Cottolengo loved these people! Here we can learn another way of looking at life and at the human person.

## **The example of Cottolengo**

From it we can learn the concrete reality of evangelical love, so that many poor and sick people can find a home, live as a family, feel that they belong to a community, and not be excluded, and supported.

## **Precious members of the Church**

Dear brothers who are sick, you are precious members of the Church, you are the flesh of Christ Crucified, who we have the honour to touch and to serve with love.

## **The Gospel, the raison d’être of Cottolengo**

The raison d’être of this Little House is not welfarism or philanthropy, but the Gospel: the Gospel of the Love of Christ and the strength that bore it and that carries it forward: the special love of Jesus for the most fragile and the most weak.

## **The charism of Cottolengo is fruitful**

It’s charism is fruitful, as Blessed Don Francesco Paleari and Blessed Brother Luigi Bordino, as well as the servant of God, the missionary Maria Carola Cecchin, have shown.

*Lees de tekst van de gehele toespraak*