

**ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS TO THE  
BISHOPS OF THE EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC  
OF CONGO ON THEIR "AD LIMINA" VISIT**

*Consistory Hall*

*12 September 2014*

[Link](#)

[...] It would be preferable, in the spirit of solidarity and sharing, that closer collaboration be developed with all agents of pastoral care engaged in the various areas of the apostolate and in social care, especially in education, healthcare and charitable assistance. Many expect vigilance and concern from you in the defence of spiritual and civic values: you are called to offer direction and solutions for the promotion of a society founded on respect for the dignity of the human person. In this respect, attention to the poor and the many in need, such as the elderly, people who are sick or disabled, should be the object of pastoral care that is appropriate and continually reexamined. In fact, the Church is called to concern herself with the wellbeing of these people and to draw the attention of society and of the public authorities to their situation. I greet and I encourage the work of all missionaries, priests, men and women religious and other pastoral agents who expend themselves serving life's wounded, the victims of violence, especially in the remotest and most isolated areas of the country. In mentioning this theme, I address a special thought to the internal refugees and to the many who come from neighbouring countries. [...]