

POPE'S U.N. SPEECH IS WIDE RANGING

In a wide-ranging speech before the United Nations General Assembly, Pope Francis' central message was fraternity: the obligations that men and women have to each other, and to the environment.

Interestingly, he did not call for all nations in the international community to have an equal voice; rather, he emphasized equity, or fairness. Moreover, instead of calling upon nations to expand their powers, he called for them to exercise restraint. The "effective distribution of power," and the creation of an impartial "juridical system for regulating claims and interests," he said, "are one concrete way of limiting power." That he said this to an assembly of potentates was something to relish.

Pope Francis spent much time exhorting the nations of the world not to abuse the environment, for when we do, the poor suffer the most. He graphically described their condition as a "culture of waste."

Without mentioning Islam by name, he emphasized the right to education—"also for girls (excluded in certain places)." He also condemned radical Islam, without naming it, for Christian persecution in the Middle East and disrespect for the rights of religious minorities.

The Holy Father's condemnation of "the marketing of human organs and tissues" was an oblique shot at Planned Parenthood. By punctuating how "we recognize a moral law written into human nature itself, one that includes the natural difference between man and woman, and absolute respect for life in all its stages and dimensions," he made clear his rejection of the conventional wisdom on this subject. Similarly, he railed

against “an ideological colonization” which seeks to impose “anomalous models and lifestyles”; he called them “irresponsible.” This was a veiled shot at cohabitation and gay marriage.