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### **Sundays must be a day of rest dedicated to God, family, pope says**

By Carol Glatz  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The demands of work can't bully people out of needed time off, Pope Benedict XVI said.

**Sunday must be a day of rest for everyone, so people can be free to be with their families and with God, the pope said.**

**"By defending Sunday, one defends human freedom," he said during his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square June 6.**

In his catechesis, the pope told an estimated 15,000 pilgrims and visitors about his trip June 1-3 to Milan for the seventh World Meeting of Families.

He thanked everyone who made the "unforgettable and wonderful event" possible and praised the willingness he witnessed of people striving to live a "Gospel of the family."

"Humanity has no future without the family," he said. Young people need to be born and raised in "that community of life and love that God himself wanted," that is, a family based on marriage between a man and woman, he said.

He reminded young people that they, too, have a responsibility to contribute to the well-being of the family, such as by saying "yes" to God's will, working hard in their studies, being generous to others, being active in the community and using their talents to better the world.

The pope said when he met government representatives in Milan, he reminded them of the importance of policies and laws that protect the family. The most essential is the right to life, "whose its deliberate suppression can never be allowed." The identity of the family, based on marriage between a man and a woman, needs recognition, too, the pope said.

During an evening vigil of testimonies, the pope answered the questions of five families from different countries because "I wanted to show the open dialogue that exists between families and the church, between the world and the church," he said.

He said he was quite taken by people's testimonies, which dealt with "hot-button issues" such as the difficulties families experience because of separation, divorce, the economic crisis and long

hours on the job.

**The pope said he wanted to come to the defense of free time, which is "threatened by a kind 'bullying' by the demands of work."**

**"Sunday is the day of the Lord and of man, a day which everyone must be able to be free -- free for the family and free for God."**

Family, work, rest and celebration are gifts from God and important aspects of human life that must find a "harmonious balance" in order to build a more humane world, he said.

He said the World Meeting of Families was a way to send a message to the whole world that "it is possible and joyful, even if it takes work, to live love faithfully forever and be open to life" and that it's also possible for the whole family to take part in the mission of the church and help create a better world.

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