



AMERICA/PANAMA - Archbishop Ulloa: "We cannot abandon the Christian meaning of Sunday, paganizing it or underestimating its importance."

Panama (Agenzia Fides) – The Archbishop of Panama, Archbishop José Domingo Ulloa Mendieta has rejected the government's intention to no longer consider Sunday as a day of required rest, supposedly to help entrepreneurs. "The dignity of man and woman is what must be upheld, if we do not want to become victims of economic interests. In every historical period it has been necessary to alternate work and rest, which today has become more urgent since science and technology have given a great power to man, which he exercises through his work," said the Archbishop of Panama.

Bishop Ulloa Mendieta has addressed the issue at a time when the country's main unions are preparing a strategy to oppose the government plan to make changes to labor legislation, arguing that these are necessary to help companies be open to the markets and globalization. He added that "for all men and women, not only for Christians, this has a great importance and significance, and this recognition should not be just formal but real, allowing the Sunday rest for all workers." "Today, Sunday has become a serious problem not only on religious and pastoral levels, but also in cultural, social, political spheres. When you try to approach not only considers the experience of faith and pastoral, but the complexity of social fabric," said the Archbishop. "We Christians cannot abandon the Christian meaning of Sunday, paganizing it or underestimating its importance. To fully live out Sunday, the Church invites us to participate in Sunday Mass, to wear our appropriate outfit, to share meals with the family and with friends."

The Archbishop of Panama said that "the Catholic Church is not a political but a social organism... our task is to form consciences, to defend justice, truth, and educate regarding individual and political dignity. The occasion of this speech was on his first celebration of Corpus Christi as the Archbishop of Panama (his appointment was February 18, 2010), before thousands of faithful, priests, and nuns and the Apostolic Nuncio, Andrés Carrascosa. "As a pastor I am increasingly convinced that this country, according to economic indicators, deserves that its people can enjoy health services, education, and a full supply of decent work for men and women, and this is possible by implementing a policy by the state, according to a vision of sustainable human development," said Archbishop Ulloa in his homily. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 08/06/2010)