

---

## **Pope Francis: audience, “to emerge from a pandemic, we need to look after and care for each other”. “Do not cast the elderly aside”. “Contemplation” is the “vaccine”**

The “cuidarores” (caretakers) “play an essential role in today’s society, even if they often do not receive the recognition and recompense they deserve. In today’s general audience catechesis, delivered in the San Damaso courtyard in the presence of some 500 faithful, the Pope used this Spanish word to define those who take care of the sick. “To emerge from a pandemic, we need to look after and care for each other”, he began: “And we must support those who care for the weakest, the sick and the elderly”. “There is the tendency to cast the elderly aside, to abandon them. And this is bad”, he added off the cuff. “Caring is a golden rule of our nature as human beings, and brings with it health and hope”, Pope Francis explained. “Taking care of those who are sick, of those who are in need, of those who are cast aside: this is a human, and also Christian, wealth”, he added off the cuff. “All forms of life are interconnected, and our health depends on that of the ecosystems that God created and entrusted to us to care for”, the Pope said, referring to his encyclical “Laudato Si’”: “Abusing them, on the other hand, is a grave sin that damages us, and harms us, and makes us sick”. “The best antidote against this misuse of our common home is contemplation”, Pope Francis argued: “If someone has not learned to stop and admire something beautiful, we should not be surprised if he or she treats everything as an object to be used and abused without scruple”. “But how come? Isn’t there a vaccine for this, for the care of the common home?”, the Pope went on to ask off the cuff: “What is the antidote against the sickness of not taking care of our common home? It is contemplation”.

Valentina Bombelli