

**Meeting Agenda for the Society of Apostolic Executives
at the Pacific Club, 4110 MacArthur Blvd, Newport Beach
September 22, 2009, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.**

Pope's New Encyclical: Workforce Reductions a Sin?

Join the Society for Apostolic Executives for a lively discussion and prayer at the Pacific Club. \$10 at the door. Mass will be said by Bishop Dominic and begin promptly at 5 p.m. At 5:30, over wine and cheese, our program begins and ends by 7 p.m.

Set forth below is a portion of Item 32 of the recently published ENCYCLICAL LETTER CARITAS IN VERITATE (Charity in Truth) OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF BENEDICT XVI:

“The dignity of the individual and the demands of justice require, particularly today, that economic choices do not cause disparities in wealth to increase in an excessive and morally unacceptable manner[83], and that we continue to prioritize the goal of access to steady employment for everyone. All things considered, this is also required by “economic logic”. Through the systemic increase of social inequality, both within a single country and between the populations of different countries (i.e., the massive increase in relative poverty), not only does social cohesion suffer, thereby placing democracy at risk, but so too does the economy, through the progressive erosion of “social capital”: the network of relationships of trust, dependability, and respect for rules, all of which are indispensable for any form of civil coexistence.”

We will discuss the following hypothetical, in an open forum, welcoming debate and comment.

John started a small software company 20 years ago in his house, in order to be able to control his schedule and spend more time with his three children. He was successful and grew the business to 20 persons, operating out of an office near his home. John has one child in college and the two other children are close to finishing high school. John has saved some money for college but he has also put money into his company in order to help grow its revenues (and hence hire more employees). The business' revenues are down 30% as a result of the recession and John needs to cut costs. His only options are to reduce headcount by 5 persons or reduce the money he is extracting from the business profits for his ongoing and future college tuition costs. John has worked 50 to 80 hour weeks for the last 20 years in order to build the business to the point that it would finance the tuition costs of his children, without the need to go into debt.

1. What action does Encyclical #32 require John to take?
2. Does Encyclical #32 suggest that full employment legislation be enacted which prohibits layoffs for economic reasons?
3. Does Encyclical #32 advocate a socialist economy and the end of privately run businesses?
4. What do you think Encyclical #32 means?