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Francis blasts global economic system

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The Francis Chronicles

Pope Francis made one of his strongest attacks on the global economic system on Sunday, saying it could no longer be based on a "god called money" and urged the unemployed to fight for work, according to a Reuters news report.

Francis, at the start of a daylong trip to the Sardinian capital, Cagliari, put aside his prepared text at a meeting with unemployed workers, including miners in hard hats who told him of their situation, and improvised for nearly 20 minutes.

"I find suffering here ... It weakens you and robs you of hope," he said. "Excuse me if I use strong words, but where there is no work there is no dignity."

He discarded his prepared speech after listening to Francesco Mattana, a 45-year-old married father of three who lost his job with an alternative energy company four years ago.

Mattana, his voice trembling, told the pope that unemployment "oppresses you and wears you out to the depths of your soul".

The crowd of about 20,000 people in a square near the city port chanted what Francis called a prayer for "work, work, work". They cheered each time he spoke of the rights of workers and the personal devastation caused by joblessness.

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