



# Current Issues in Prayer

April 2018

Welcome! The Pope invites people of different faiths to come together and pray:

**That economists may have the courage to reject any economy of exclusion and know how to open new paths.**



## Getting started:

I sit down in a comfortable place and put aside my daily worries and preoccupations as I become aware of God's presence.



## Short story:

Michael and Charmaine held hands to give each other the courage before facing their employees. They were back from court after losing their case.

A few years ago the government had offered incentives to encourage energy saving. Companies with expertise in building insulation were given preferential tax rate. Only those companies that offered this service on its own could benefit from this offer. After some time however, the companies entitled for this incentive began to offer other services while still paying the preferential tax rate despite not being entitled for it anymore. This created direct competition in Michael and Charmaine's area of business. As a result, those companies that were paying the full tax rate could not keep up with the competition and gradually started to lose business.



Charmaine and Michael decided to challenge this unfair practice in court. After numerous hearings however, the new companies won the case because of a legal loophole. The court ruling allowed them to keep paying the lower tax rate even though this meant that a number of companies would suffer. Michael and Charmaine had no other option but to regretfully lay people off.



## Time to reflect:

Does it make sense to offer certain groups or companies preferential tax rates?

Is it fair when the state influences the economy in a way that goes against the common good?



## Let us pray:

Lord we pray for those who take or influence economic decisions that they may wisely and freely make them based on justice and that they work for the common good and not only for the good of a select few.



## Inspiration:

"There are two ways to become wealthy: to create wealth or to take wealth away from others."

*Joseph E. Stiglitz, Nobel Prize laureate.*



## Hands on:

I think about how economic decisions taken in my country affect different people. Would I consider contacting members of parliament who represent me to make them aware about an unjust measure that is making people suffer? Would I be ready to suggest that they work in favour of measures that benefit the common good?