

# German prelate lauds world leaders for hearing church on global crisis

MUNICH, Germany - A German archbishop who joined other church leaders at the recent World Economic Forum in Switzerland has praised government and business leaders for being open to religious voices during the current global economic crisis.

Archbishop Reinhard Marx of Munich and Freising said economic experts told him they wanted to hear the church's arguments for tackling economic problems, even if they did not always agree with the church.

"Although Catholic social teaching isn't a book of recipes to be dipped into, it's nevertheless a great treasure which we've worked on. We have very good principles and ideas, and we can provide an orientation that assumes practical form," he told the archdiocesan radio, Munchner Kirchenradio, Feb. 2.

"We can't just stand up and say we have some kind of teaching to offer. It's essential to show we have good arguments and aren't just presenting Catholic social teaching as a moral instruction," added the archbishop, whose comments were also published by the Austrian Catholic news agency, Kathweb.

Archbishop Marx, who heads the German bishops' social action committee, attended the Jan. 27-31 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The 2,500 participants included 30 heads of state and government, as well as ministers and central bank representatives from around the world.

The archbishop spoke at a Davos press conference Jan. 28 to launch a 77-page interfaith report, "Faith and the Global Agenda: Values for a Post-Crisis Economy," which urged a "fundamental rethink" of the "moral framework and regulatory mechanisms" underpinning the world economy.

The report's 16 religious contributors included Anglican Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury, England, who also addressed the forum, as well as Lesley-Anne Knight, secretary-general of Caritas Internationalis, the Rome-based network of Catholic charitable agencies.