

*Pope John Paul II and sport*

“The values of sport, like all human values, are not automatically ensured in our days. Temptations are sometimes very strong to deflect sport from its properly human aim, which is the optimal use of the gifts of the body and thereby of the person. The proper running of sports competitions can be upset, or they can be used for other purposes. Those who really love sport and also society as a whole would not be able to suffer such deviations, which are in fact regressions. There again, the defence of man merits vigilance and struggle. I hope that I join with you in being concerned about this.”

Extract from a pontifical declaration at an audience granted to the representatives of the European Union of Football Associations (UEFA).