



WORKSHEET 3: READING AND REFLECTION MATERIAL

RESOURCES 1

“FRATELLI TUTTI” SOCIAL ENCYCLICAL OF POPE FRANCISCO

¹Fraternity and social friendship are the ways indicated by the Pontiff to build a better, more just and peaceful world, with the commitment of all: people and institutions. He strongly reaffirmed the rejection of war and the globalization of indifference.

What are the great ideals, but also the concrete paths to be followed by those who want to build a more just and fraternal world in their daily relationships, in social life, in politics and in institutions? The Pope defines it as a “social encyclical” (6) that takes its title from the “Admonitions” of St. Francis of Assisi, who used these words “to address all his brothers and sisters and to propose to them a way of life with a Gospel flavor” (1).

The Encyclical seeks to promote a worldwide aspiration to fraternity and social friendship. Starting from a common belonging to the human family, from the fact of recognizing ourselves as brothers and sisters because we are children of the same Creator, all in the same boat and therefore in need of becoming aware that in a globalized and interconnected world we can only be saved together. An inspiring motif cited several times is the Document on Human Fraternity signed by Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar in February 2019.

Fraternity must be promoted not only with words, but with deeds. Deeds that are concretized in the “best politics”, that which is not subject to the interests of finance, but at the service of the common good, capable of placing at the center the dignity of every human being and ensuring work for all, so that each one can develop his or her own abilities.

GLOBAL PROBLEMS REQUIRE GLOBAL ACTION, NOT THE “CULTURE OF WALLS”

Opened by a brief introduction and divided into eight chapters, the Encyclical gathers together - as the Pope himself explains - many of his reflections on fraternity and social friendship, but placed “in a broader context” and complemented by “numerous documents and letters” sent to Francis by “so many persons and groups throughout the world” (5). Moreover, today, there is a deterioration of ethics (29) to which, in a certain way, the mass media contribute, shattering respect for the other and eliminating all modesty, creating isolated and self-referential virtual circles, in which freedom is an illusion and dialogue is not constructive (42-50).

1 Fratelli tutti, here is the social encyclical of Pope Francis. Isabela Piro. www.Vaticannews.va

LOVE BUILDS BRIDGES: THE EXAMPLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

To many shadows, however, the Encyclical responds with a luminous example, a harbinger of hope: that of the Good Samaritan. The second chapter, “A Stranger on the Way,” is dedicated to this figure, and in it the Pope stresses that, in an ailing society that turns its back on pain and is “illiterate” in caring for the weak and fragile (64-65), we are all called - like the Good Samaritan - to be close to the other (81), overcoming prejudices, personal interests, historical or cultural barriers. We are all, in fact, co-responsible for building a society that knows how to include, integrate and lift up those who have fallen or are suffering (77). Love builds bridges and we are “made for love” (88), the Pope adds, exhorting Christians in particular to recognize Christ in the face of all the excluded (85). The principle of the capacity to love according to “a universal dimension” (83) is also taken up in the third chapter, “Thinking and creating an open world”: in it, Francis exhorts us to “go out of ourselves” to find in others “a growth of their being” (88), opening ourselves to others according to the dynamism of charity that makes us tend towards “universal communion” (95). After all - the Encyclical reminds us - the spiritual stature of human life is defined by love, which is always “the first thing” and leads us to seek the best for the life of others, far from all selfishness (92-93).



RIGHTS HAVE NO BORDERS, ETHICS IS NECESSARY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

A fraternal society will be one that promotes education for dialogue in order to defeat the “virus of radical individualism” (105) and allow everyone to give the best of themselves. Starting from the protection of the family and respect for its “primary and indispensable educational mission” (114). Two are, in particular, the “instruments” to achieve this type of society: benevolence, that is, the concrete desire for the good of others (112), and solidarity that deals with fragility and is expressed in the service of persons and not ideologies, fighting against poverty and inequality (115). The right to live with dignity cannot be denied to anyone, says the Pope, and since rights have no borders, no one can be excluded, regardless of where he or she was born (121). From this point of view, the Pope also reminds us that we must think of “an ethics of international relations” (126), because every country also belongs to a foreigner and the goods of the territory cannot be denied to those in need who come from elsewhere. Therefore, the natural right to private property will be secondary to the principle of the universal destination of created goods (120). The Encyclical also specifically underlines the question of foreign debt: without prejudice to the principle that it must be repaid, it is hoped, however, that this will not compromise the growth and subsistence of the poorest countries (126).



MIGRANTS: GLOBAL GOVERNANCE FOR LONG-TERM PROJECTS

Part of the second and all of the fourth chapter, “A Heart Open to the Whole World,” is dedicated to the theme of migration, with its “lives that are torn apart” (37), fleeing from wars, persecutions, natural disasters, unscrupulous traffickers, uprooted from their communities of origin, migrants must be welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated. Unnecessary migrations must be avoided, the Pontiff affirms, by creating in the countries of origin concrete possibilities to live in dignity. But at the same time, the right to seek a better life elsewhere must be respected. In the countries of destination, the right balance will be that between pro-

tecting the rights of citizens and guaranteeing reception and assistance to migrants (38-40). Specifically, the Pope points to some “indispensable responses” especially for those fleeing “grave humanitarian crises”: increasing and simplifying the granting of visas; opening humanitarian corridors; guaranteeing housing, security and essential services; offering work and training opportunities; encouraging family reunification; protecting minors; guaranteeing religious freedom; and promoting social inclusion. The Pope also invites us to establish the concept of “full citizenship” in society, renouncing the discriminatory use of the term “minorities” (129-131). What is needed above all - reads the document - is global governance, an international collaboration for migrations that sets in motion long-term projects that go beyond individual emergencies (132), in the name of a development in solidarity with all peoples based on the principle of gratuitousness. In this way, countries can think as “one human family” (139-141). The other who is different from us is a gift and an enrichment for all, Francis writes, because differences represent a possibility for growth (133-135). A healthy culture is a welcoming culture that knows how to open itself to others, without renouncing itself, offering them something authentic. As in a polyhedron - an image appreciated by the Pontiff - the whole is more than the individual parts, but each of them is respected in its value (145-146).

POLITICS, ONE OF THE MOST PRECIOUS FORMS OF CHARITY

The theme of the fifth chapter is “The best politics”, that is, one of the most precious forms of charity because it is at the service of the common good (180) and knows the importance of the people, understood as an open category, available for confrontation and dialogue (160). This is, in a certain sense, the popularism indicated by Francis, which is opposed to that “populism” that ignores the legitimacy of the notion of “people”, attracting consensus in order to instrumentalize it in its own service and encouraging egoism to increase its popularity (159). But the best policy is also the one that protects work, “an indispensable dimension of social life” and tries to ensure that everyone has the possibility of developing their own capacities (162). The best help for the poor, the Pope explains, is not only money, which is a temporary remedy, but the fact of allowing them to live a dignified life through work. The true strategy for fighting poverty does not aim simply to contain or render the destitute harmless, but to promote them from the point of view of solidarity and subsidiarity (187). It is also the task of politics to find a solution to everything that threatens fundamental human rights, such as social exclusion; trafficking in organs, tissues, arms and drugs; sexual exploitation; slave labor; terrorism and organized crime. Strong is the Pope’s call to definitively eliminate trafficking, the “shame for humanity” and hunger, which is “criminal” because food is “an inalienable right” (188-189).

THE MARKET ALONE DOES NOT SOLVE EVERYTHING. UN REFORM IS NEEDED

The policy that is needed, Francis stresses, is one that says no to corruption, inefficiency, the misuse of power, and the lack of respect for the law (177). It is a policy centered on human dignity and not subject to finance because “the market alone does not solve everything”: the “havoc” caused by financial speculation has demonstrated this (168). Popular movements assume, therefore, a particular importance: true “social poets” and “torrents of moral energy”, they must be involved in social, political and economic participation, subject, however, to greater coordination. In this way - the Pope affirms - it is possible to move from a policy “towards” the poor to a policy “with” and “of” the poor (169). Another hope of the Encyclical concerns the reform of the United Nations: in the face of the predominance of the economic dimension which overrides the power of the individual State, the task of the United Nations will be to give substance to the concept of the “family of nations” by working for the common good, the eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights. By tirelessly resorting to “negotiation, good offices and arbitration” - the pontifical document affirms - the UN must promote the force of law over the law of force, favoring multilateral agreements that best protect even the weakest States (173-175).

THE MIRACLE OF KINDNESS

From the sixth chapter, “Dialogue and Social Friendship,” emerges the concept of life as “the art of encounter” with everyone, including the peripheries of the world and indigenous peoples, because “we can learn something from everyone; no one is useless” (215). True dialogue, in fact, is that which allows us to respect the

point of view of the other, his legitimate interests and, above all, the truth of human dignity. Relativism is not a solution - the Encyclical states - because without universal principles and moral norms prohibiting intrinsic evil, laws become nothing more than arbitrary impositions (206). In this perspective, a particular role is played by the media, which, without exploiting human weaknesses or bringing out the worst in us, should be oriented towards a generous encounter and closeness to the least of these, promoting closeness and a sense of the human family (205). Particular, then, is the Pope's appeal to the "miracle of a kind person," an attitude that must be recovered because it is "a star in the midst of darkness" and "a liberation from the cruelty that sometimes permeates human relationships, from the anxiety that does not let us think of others, from the distracted urgency" that prevails in contemporary times. A kind person, Francis writes, creates healthy coexistence and opens the way where exasperation destroys bridges (222-224).



THE ART OF PEACE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Reflecting on the value and promotion of peace, instead, the seventh chapter, "Paths of Reunion" in which the Pope stresses that peace is linked to truth, justice and mercy. Far from the desire for revenge, it is "pro-active" and aims to form a society based on service to others and the search for reconciliation and mutual development (227-229). In a society, everyone must feel "at home" - writes the Pope -. For this reason, peace is an "office" that involves and concerns everyone and in which everyone must play his or her role. The task of peace is relentless and never ends, the Pope continues, and it is therefore necessary to place the human person, his dignity and the common good at the center of every action (230-232). Linked to peace is forgiveness: one must love everyone without exception, says the Encyclical, "but to love an oppressor is not to consent

to his remaining so; nor is it to make him think that what he does is acceptable ". Moreover, those who suffer injustice must firmly defend their rights in order to safeguard their dignity, a gift of God (241-242). Forgiveness does not mean impunity, but justice and memory, because forgiveness does not mean forgetting, but renouncing the destructive force of evil and the desire for revenge. We must never forget "horrors" such as the Shoah, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the persecutions and ethnic massacres - the Pope exhorts -. They must always be remembered, once again, so as not to anesthetize us and to keep alive the flame of the collective conscience. It is equally important to remember the good, those who have chosen forgiveness and fraternity (246-252).



NEVER AGAIN WAR, FAILURE OF HUMANITY

Part of the seventh chapter dwells on war: it is not "a ghost of the past" - Francis emphasizes - but "a constant threat" and represents the "denial of all rights", "a failure of politics and humanity", "a shameful surrender, a defeat in the face of the forces of evil". Moreover, because of the nuclear, chemical and biological weapons that strike many innocent civilians, today we can no longer think, as in the past, of a possible "just war", but must firmly reaffirm "Never again war!" And considering that we are living "a third world war in stages", because all conflicts are connected, the total elimination of nuclear weapons is "a moral and humanitarian imperative". Rather - the Pope suggests - with the money invested in armaments, a World Fund for the elimination of hunger should be created (255-262).

THE DEATH PENALTY IS INADMISSIBLE, IT SHOULD BE ABOLISHED WORLDWIDE

Francis expresses an equally clear position on the death penalty: it is inadmissible and must be abolished throughout the world. "Not even the murderer loses his personal dignity - writes the Pope - and God himself becomes his guarantor". Hence two exhortations: not to see punishment as revenge, but as part of a process of healing and social reintegration, and to improve prison conditions, respecting the human dignity of prisoners, also thinking that life imprisonment "is a hidden death penalty" (263-269). The need to respect "the sacredness of life" (283) is reaffirmed wherever today "parts of humanity seem to be sacrificed," such as the unborn, the poor, the disabled, the elderly (18).

GUARANTEE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT

In the eighth and last chapter, the Pontiff deals with "Religions at the service of fraternity in the world" and reiterates that violence is not based on religious convictions, but on their deformations. Acts as "excusable" as terrorist acts, therefore, are not due to religion, but to erroneous interpretations of religious texts, as well as to policies of hunger, poverty, injustice and oppression. Terrorism must not be supported either with money or weapons, nor with media coverage, because it is an international crime against world security and peace and as such must be condemned (282-283). At the same time, the Pope stresses that a path of peace among religions is possible and that it is therefore necessary to guarantee religious freedom, a fundamental human right for all believers (279). In particular, the Encyclical reflects on the role of the Church: she does not relegate her mission to the private sphere - she affirms -, she is not on the margins of society and, although she does not engage in politics, she does not renounce the political dimension of existence. Attention to the common good and concern for integral human development, in fact, concern humanity and all that is human concerns the Church, according to the principles of the Gospel (276-278).



Thank you for reading



WORKSHEET 3: READING AND REFLECTION MATERIAL

RESOURCES 2

ENCYCLICAL “LAUDATO SI”.

1 In nature everything is interrelated. Human beings - despite our specificity - are not outside nature, but are part of it. Care for nature, justice for the poor and inner peace are inseparable realities. Using nature as an object of use and domination leads to the exclusion of the poor and to our own human and spiritual impoverishment.

The Pope begins the encyclical by stating bluntly that his intention is to enter into dialogue with believers and non-believers about “our common home”. He also says that, as when he was proclaimed Pope, his inspiration has been St. Francis of Assisi who “saw how inseparable are concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society and inner peace”.

CHAPTER I. WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR HOUSE

WE ARE TURNING THE EARTH INTO A GARBAGE DUMP

Pollution is a health problem, especially for the poorest, causing millions of premature deaths. A purely technological solution is insufficient and often even counterproductive. We are turning the earth into a garbage dump and the measures, when taken, come too late. The root of the problem lies in the throwaway culture. This culture affects not only things, but also many human beings who are excluded.

GLOBAL WARMING

Scientists agree that global warming is a fact with serious consequences. These consequences particularly affect many poor people in the face of general indifference. Forced to migrate, the international community does not recognize them as refugees, many of those who wield economic or political power remain indifferent, merely masking the problems, without tackling their causes. Indicators of the current situation are the depletion of natural resources and the deterioration of water quality. Water is becoming a commodity in the hands of multinationals.



¹ Summary of the Encyclical LAUDATO SI, by María ángeles navarro Girón. Ecology and Christianity. www.ubiesdomine.com

GREED AND IMMEDIATISM

The immediatist way of understanding commercial and productive activity is a source of depredation of natural resources. Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God with their existence. We have no right to do so. Not only mammals and birds, but also fungi, algae, worms, insects, reptiles and an innumerable variety of necessary microorganisms. When only quick economic profit is sought, there is no interest in the preservation of ecosystems. In the long term, the damage far outweighs the benefits. Examples of this are the proposals for the internationalization of the Amazon, the selective forms of fishing that waste a large part of the species harvested and the damage suffered by many coral reefs. All creatures are interconnected and each one of them should be valued with affection and admiration. All beings need each other. Human beings are also one of this world. Environmental degradation also affects us.

THE POOR ARE EXCLUDED

The human environment and the natural environment are degraded together. Millions of people are excluded, invisible to the media. Instead of putting themselves in the place of the poor and thinking of a different world, some think that the only solution is to reduce the birth rate. Inequality affects not only individuals, but entire countries. The external debt of poor countries has become an instrument of control. However, for centuries, the North has been plundering natural resources in the South and this “ecological debt” is not recognized. The groaning of sister earth joins the groaning of the abandoned of the world. A cry that calls for a different direction.



CHAPTER II. THE MYSTERY OF THE UNIVERSE

LIVING BEINGS ARE NOT THINGS

The human being implies a novelty that cannot be fully explained by evolution. We consider the human being as a subject and can never be reduced to the category of object. It would be wrong to think that other living beings should be considered as mere objects subject to arbitrary human domination. The ideal of Jesus is at the antipodes of such a model. The ultimate end of other creatures is not us. The end of all creatures is God. With us and through us they advance towards the transcendent fullness where the risen Christ embraces and illumines everything.

DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

Our responsibility is to care for creation, not forgetting the dignity of the human person. The incoherence of those who fight against the trafficking of animals in danger of extinction, while remaining indifferent to human trafficking, neglecting the poor, or striving to destroy another human being they dislike, is evident. The same misery that leads to the mistreatment of an animal does not take long to manifest itself in relation to human beings.

CHAPTER III. HUMAN ROOTS OF THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

TECHNOSCIENCE AS IDEOLOGY

The fundamental problem is, however, deeper. Human beings have assumed technology and its development as a homogeneous and universal paradigm. In this way, nature has been considered as something formless and totally available for manipulation. This has led to the idea of unlimited growth, which is the lie of an infinite availability of the planet's goods; the economy assumes all technological development as a function of profit, without paying attention to possible negative consequences for human beings.

NEED TO BROADEN HORIZONS

The ecological culture cannot be reduced to a series of urgent and partial answers to the problems that are appearing around the degradation of the environment, the depletion of natural reserves and pollution. We need to look at things from a different perspective and broaden our horizons. We live, moreover, accelerated and it is difficult to recover the depth of life. A courageous cultural revolution is needed. We need to take up the positive and sustainable advances and, at the same time, to recover the values and the great goals that have been devastated by a megalomaniacal abandonment.

DEHUMANIZING ANTHROPOCENTRISM

Modern anthropocentrism has placed technical reason above reality. An inadequate presentation of Christian anthropology has contributed to this, as if the care of nature were a matter for the weak. That man is "lord" of the universe cannot be interpreted as despotic dominion, but as responsibility. Since everything is related, neither is the defense of nature compatible with the justification of abortion. When human beings place themselves at the center, they end up giving absolute priority to their circumstantial conveniences, and everything else becomes relative. If there are no objective truths or solid principles, apart from the satisfaction of one's own projects and immediate needs, what limits can there be to human trafficking, organized crime, drug trafficking, the trade in blood diamonds or animal skins on the verge of extinction?

WORK IS A HUMAN REALITY, NOT JUST AN ECONOMIC REALITY.

Work has value in itself. Giving money to the poor should be a one-time thing. The poor should be enabled to earn a living for themselves. Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth. In this sense, helping the poor with money should always be a temporary solution to solve emergencies. The great objective should always be to enable them to live a dignified life through work.

For this to be possible, it is imperative to promote an economy that favors productive diversity and entrepreneurial creativity. In fact, there is a great variety of peasant food systems that continue to feed the majority of the world's population with a much smaller expenditure of land and water. An economic freedom only proclaimed deteriorates the access to work and leaves out the majority.

CHAPTER IV. AN INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ecology studies the relationships between living organisms and the environment in which they develop.

When we speak of "environment" we are referring to the relationship that exists between nature and the society that inhabits it. This prevents us from understanding nature as something alien to us, as a mere framework for our lives. There is not one environmental crisis and another social crisis, but a single, complex socio-environmental



crisis. Everything is related and, therefore, the health of a society's institutions has consequences on the environment and on the quality of human life. Moreover, what happens in one region has repercussions on the others.

A CULTURAL WEALTH THAT IS IN DANGER

Many cultures are in danger of extinction and this is worrying. Ecology also implies caring for the richness of different cultures, not only of the past, but especially of the present. Today's globalized economy tends to homogenize cultures. The immense cultural variety is a treasure that we cannot do without. Even the notion of quality of life cannot be imposed. It is essential to pay special attention to aboriginal communities and their cultural traditions. For them, the land is not an economic good, but a gift from God and from their ancestors who rest on it. It is a sacred space with which to interact in order to maintain their identity and values.

SOCIAL CRISIS

Sometimes it is commendable the human ecology that the poor can develop in the midst of so many limitations, for the inhabitants of very precarious neighborhoods. Not only the poor, but a large part of society suffers serious difficulties in gaining access to their own housing. Owning a home has a lot to do with the dignity of people and the development of families. Therefore, if chaotic conglomerations of precarious houses have already developed in a place, it is a matter of urbanizing these neighborhoods, not of eradicating and expelling them. The quality of life in cities has a lot to do with transportation, which is often the cause of great suffering for the inhabitants. There, where essential services often do not reach and there are workers reduced to situations of slavery, without rights or expectations of a more dignified life.

THE COMMON GOOD

The common good presupposes respect for the human person. It also calls for social welfare in a special way for the family, which is the basic cell of society. Finally, the common good requires social peace. This peace does not come about without particular attention to distributive justice. The whole of society - especially the State - has the obligation to defend and promote the common good. In the present conditions of world society, where more and more people are being discarded, the principle of the common good becomes a call to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest.



CHAPTER V. SOME LINES OF ORIENTATION AND ACTION

A global consensus is essential to address the underlying problems. The global environmental movement has already come a long way thanks to the efforts of many civil society organizations. However, due to a lack of political resolve, the world environmental summits have failed to reach truly meaningful and effective global environmental agreements.

BEYOND SCIENCE

It cannot be maintained that the empirical sciences fully explain life, the interweaving of all creatures and the whole of reality. That would be to unduly overstep their methodological boundaries. On the other hand, whatever technical solutions the sciences claim to provide will be powerless to solve the world's serious problems if humanity loses its way. In any case, believers must be challenged to be consistent with their own faith and not to contradict it by their actions. Most of the world's inhabitants declare themselves to be believers. For this reason, there should be an interreligious dialogue on the care of nature and the defense of the poor. A dialogue between the sciences themselves is also imperative. Finally, it is necessary that environmentalists themselves leave behind their ideological differences.

CHAPTER VI. EDUCATION AND ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY

AN ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY

I would like to propose to Christians some lines of ecological spirituality that are born of the convictions of our faith. What the Gospel teaches us has consequences for our way of thinking, feeling and living.

But we must also recognize that some committed and prayerful Christians, under the guise of realism, often scoff at environmental concerns. Others are passive and become incoherent. Living the vocation of being protectors of God's work is not something optional, nor is it a secondary aspect for the Christian. However, personal conversion is not enough. The ecological conversion that is required must also be a community conversion. It is not easy to develop this healthy humility if we exclude God from our life, if our self takes his place.

THE STRUGGLE FOR A BETTER WORLD

We need to feel again that we need each other, that we are responsible for others and for the world, that it is worthwhile to be good and honest. When someone recognizes God's call to intervene together with others in these social dynamics, he should remember that this is part of his spirituality, that it is an exercise of charity and that in this way he matures and is sanctified. Not everyone is called to work directly in politics, but in society there are many associations that intervene in favor of the common good by preserving the natural and urban environment.

FINDING GOD IN ALL THINGS

The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior in order to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to come to encounter him in all things. In the Eucharist the created finds its highest elevation. In the Eucharist the fullness is realized, and it is the vital center of the universe, the overflowing focus of love and inexhaustible life. United with the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God. Mary, the mother who cared for Jesus, now cares for this wounded world with maternal affection and sorrow. Together with her, the figure of St. Joseph stands out. He cared for and defended Mary and Jesus with his work and generous presence. That is why he was declared custodian of the universal Church. He can also teach us to take care of this world that God has entrusted to us. Eternal life will be a shared wonder, where every creature, luminously transformed, will take its place. Together with all creatures, we walk this earth seeking God. He does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love always leads us to find new paths.





FICHA 3: MATERIAL DE LECTURA Y REFLEXIÓN

RECURSO 3



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO THE SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE MARIST
BROTHERS ON THE OCCASION OF THE
BICENTENARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE
CONGREGATION**

To Brother Emili Turú Rofes
Superior General of the Marist Brothers

Dear brother:

I am pleased to greet you, and through you, the whole Marist family, on the occasion of the bicentenary of the foundation of your Congregation, during which you will hold the 22nd General Chapter, to take place in Colombia. This event has been prepared with the motto “a new beginning”, which summarizes a whole program of renewal, intending to look with gratitude to the past, to discern the present, and to open with hope to the future.

Gratitude is the first feeling that comes from the heart. This attitude of recognition is needed to value the great works that God has done through you. Likewise, giving thanks makes us good; it helps us to recognize that we are small in the eyes of the Lord, and heirs to a tradition that has been given to us without us having done anything on our part. You belong to a large rich family of witnesses who have known how to donate their lives for the love of God and neighbour in that spirit of brotherhood that characterizes the Congregation and which makes the other “brother dear to me” (Phil. 16). These two centuries of existence have been transformed into a great history of efforts in favour of children and young people, who have been welcomed the length and breadth of the five continents and trained to be good citizens and, above all, Good Christians. These works of good are an expression of the goodness and mercy of God who, despite our limitations and torpor, never forgets his children.

However it is not enough to contemplate the past; it is also necessary to carry out a discernment of the present moment. It is right for you to examine yourselves and it is good to do so in the light of the Spirit.

To discern is to recognize with objectivity and charity the present state, comparing it with the

foundational spirit. St. Marcellin Champagnat was an innovator for his time in the field of education and training. He himself experienced the need for love in order to bring out the potentialities that each child has hidden within him. His holy Founder said: “Education is for the child what the crop is for the countryside. No matter how good it may be, if one does not till the land, it produces nothing but brambles and weeds”. The task of the educator is one of constant commitment and has a sacrificial burden; however, education is a thing of the heart, and this makes it different and sublime. Being called to cultivate requires you first of all to cultivate yourselves. The religious-educator has to take care of his inner field, his human and spiritual reserves, in order to be able to go out to plant and care for the land entrusted to him. You must be aware that the ground you work and shape is “sacred”, seeing in it the love and imprint of God. With this dedication and effort, faithful to the mission received, you will contribute to the work of God, who calls you to be simple instruments in his hands.

Finally, I encourage you to open yourself with hope to the future, walking with renewed spirit; it is not a different route, but is quickened in the Spirit. Today’s society needs people who are steadfast in their principles, who can build a better world for all and give testimony of what they believe. The motto of your religious institute is already a project of life: “All to Jesus for Mary, all to Mary for Jesus”. It means trusting Mary and being guided by her in her humility and service, in her promptness and silent surrender; these are attitudes that the good religious and educator must convey by example. Young people will recognize in their way of being and acting that they have something extraordinary, and will understand that it is worthwhile not only to learn these values, but above all to internalize and imitate them. Mary will accompany you in this purpose and, along with it, will confirm your vocation, contributing to the creation of a new humanity, where the vulnerable and discarded are valued and loved. This future that you desire and dream of is not an illusion, but is constructed starting from today, by saying “yes” to the will of God in the certainty that He, as a good Father, will not delude our hope.

I thank the Lord and Mary, our Good Mother - as Saint Marcellin liked to call her – for the presence of your vocation and service in the Church, and I ask for you the gift of the Holy Spirit so that, moved by Him, you bring God’s closeness and tenderness to children and young people, and to all those in need.

Vatican City, April 10, 2017

Francis

Copyright © Dicastery for Communication - Vatican Publishing
Library Vatican



Audience of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, to the participants of the General Conference of the Marist Brothers

24.03.2022

Dear brothers, good morning and welcome.

I thank the Superior General for his words and I greet all of you who are taking part in the General Conference of your Institute, a very important event that brings you together every eight years, between two General Chapters.

It is therefore a significant moment of reflection, of reading the signs of the times, and also of checking how the journey is going and how you are following through on the directions set by your last Chapter. Not to look backwards but always forward! Like those at the helm of a boat: they do not look at the wake behind them to see if they are on the right course, but look ahead, keeping an eye on two or three



points of reference to orient themselves. I imagine that you too have checked your course using a few fixed points. The first such fixed point is the Word of God. We are in Lent, and Mother Church calls us to return things to their right order: God and God's Word come first. This is easy to say, but hard to do! Especially when the Word asks us to "look further ahead", to "look beyond", as the title of your Conference says. Beyond what? Beyond a worldly mentality, beyond short-term interests, beyond a partial perspective, in order to take in the horizon of universal brotherhood. Always beyond...

It seems to me that this is precisely the perspective you have chosen for your work over these days, for the sake of giving the best possible service to your family - that of the Marist Brothers - which is multicultural and multi-ethnic, and which therefore is asking you to cross boundaries, not so much geographical, but in terms of mentality. This does not mean detaching yourselves from your roots, absolutely not! There is no contradiction between fidelity to one's roots and universal openness, it is continuity, it is normal growth. On the contrary, according to the example of Christ the Lord, it is precisely by remaining faithful till the end to the commitment of love we have with the people entrusted to us that our service becomes fruitful for all, through the power of God's grace. It is for this fruitfulness that we look ahead with a strong sense of purpose.

For Marist Brothers, this means remaining faithful to the service of educating and evangelizing young people, according to the charism of Saint Marcellin Champagnat. He knew how to "look beyond", and to teach young people to "look beyond", to open themselves to God, to the horizons of Gospel love.



He was guided by the example of the Virgin Mary, our “Good Mother”, as he used to say: Mary was an insignificant woman from a remote village, but her heart looked beyond; she looked forward to the Kingdom of God, she was open. And this shines through in the Magnificat, where God’s plan of salvation resounds through the voice of this humble servant. What could be more beautiful and more effective than the *Magnificat* for educating a girl or boy to be open to God and God’s plan of love? The *Magnificat* contains a vision of life and history; it is a school of faith and prayer, which frees people from being closed in on themselves and from any spiritualising. It shows the joy of believing, hoping and loving inspired by the Gospel of Christ.

All this, dear brothers, is your birthright, it is the essence of your roots and your heritage. It demands that you always combine it with a consciousness of the changing reality of the world and of the characteristics of today’s generation. For example, young people are showing sensitivity and an interest in ecology. Here there is a great field for education, because unfortunately a worldly mentality - allow me the pun - also pollutes ecology, cheapens it, makes it ideological and superficial. Instead, God’s horizon is that of an integral ecology, which always holds the environmental and social dimensions together, the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor. Children and young people are ready to become stewards of creation, but they need to learn that this is not just some slogan, it is not just about criticism. Rather, it is a way of life; it requires patience, strength of character, temperance, and justice. In short, no-one is born a steward of creation, but becomes one through formation in such values.

This is also your birthright. And the example I have just given regarding ecology can be applied to other



fields, such as social and political commitment, the field of communication, or even more basically that of study and work, viewed from the perspective of integral human development. But above all, as religious, spiritual education, the basis for integral growth, is what you are good at. Spiritual education flows from who you are as religious. Jesus Christ is the Master of life and truth, the way to follow to become fully human, and the Holy Spirit is the interior Master who forms Christ in us. What a vocation, what a mission, brothers, to cooperate with Christ and the Spirit as you accompany young people on this adventure! It really asks too much of us, poor sinners that we are. But God, as our Mother reminds us, loves to do great things with the little ones and the poor, as long as they humbly welcome God into their lives and accept God's Word, ready for whatever may be asked of them.

This is what I wish for you and for all your brothers and sisters throughout the world. To look beyond so as to educate others to look beyond, with Mary, in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus. Make no mistake, this is a powerful critique of the Enlightenment concept of education that emphasises rational ideas, ideas, ideas... No. Educating others to look beyond and teaching them how to look beyond runs counter to the whole fixed, "enlightened", ideological concept of education. Education, rather, encompasses the whole person: head, heart and hands. And this means 'looking beyond'.

On life's journey and in your service may the Holy Spirit always guide and comfort you. And may my blessing accompany you too. Please, do not forget to pray for me as well, because my work is not easy!

Franciscus





FICHA 3: MATERIAL DE LECTURA Y REFLEXIÓN

RESOURCES 4

THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH, ITS ROLE IN SOCIETY AND IN THE CHURCH TODAY

WHAT IS THE SDI (SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH)?¹

The SDC can be defined as the set of principles and values that the Church has rescued and proposed based on the Gospel, to address the social, political and economic reality of all humanity and thus, make an attempt to solve the various problems of this kind.

Among the objectives of the Social Doctrine of the Church are the following: To guide the reflection and conduct of individuals and the entire human community worldwide, in the task of building a just and fraternal social order, which contributes to peaceful coexistence and integral human development.

The sources of Social Doctrine are found in the revelation contained in Sacred Scripture, which presents the fundamental teachings of faith and the demands of otherness, fraternity, community, sociability, generosity, justice, mercy, gratuitousness and fraternal love.

¹ Knowing the Social Doctrine of the Church. Andrés Piña. [www. Catoliscopio.com](http://www.Catoliscopio.com)



PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH²

1. THE COMMON GOOD

The principle or criterion of the common good is a fundamental principle of human life and human relationships. For the social doctrine of the Church, the principle of the common good is the first of all principles: all goods that exist are goods for all human beings.

The conception is clear: God created everything that exists for all human beings, not for a single person. Hence the principle of the common good wants to look not only at one individual but at all individuals, not at one person but at all people.

Therefore, this principle of the common good is a task that is incumbent upon all of us, and hence the goods that exist on earth must reach all human beings. For us, it is a criterion that must always be clear and it is the criterion that is required in the conduct of political life; therefore, a politician is the one who must work for the common good and he or she colludes with this principle when seeking his or her own interests, his or her own goods or the particular good; and the goods that exist in a nation, if we look at them well, are for all and that is why we look for equality in the distribution of goods. Reflecting again and again on the common good places us in a key principle in the development and progress of every human being and of all human beings.

2. THE UNIVERSAL DESTINATION OF GOODS

The principle of the common good that guides the Church's social doctrine is closely linked to the principle of the universal destination of goods. This principle reminds us that everything that exists has a universal dimension. We speak of the right to property.

The right to private property also has its meaning. Private property helps people to have a minimum of living space, so that their freedom is respected; however, when private property exceeds and violates the universal principle of goods, then private property must be subject to what is this universal principle of goods. Pope John Paul II repeated that: "Above all private property, there is a mortgage of goods that must reach everyone". And this reaching out to all is reaching out to every human being and to all human beings, and we have to repeat it continually: God created all things, not for one group, but for all. In such a way that we must seek ways for a just distribution of goods and riches, whatever they may be.

3. SUBSIDIARITY

In the quest for the progress and development of every human person, of every human being, of his or her dignity, there is a principle that is often not taken into account and that we must also frequently recall and turn our thoughts and gaze towards it. It is the principle of subsidiarity, a word that is not easy to pronounce, but which is extremely important. We human beings must produce what we must produce. Every human being has a responsibility, to himself and to others, like every group, like every society, but there are limitations that we have, and that is where subsidiary support is needed.

To come to the support of families, of individuals, of people, of groups, whatever they may be, that cannot reach the goals they should reach. Therefore, the State has the responsibility to take care, to see to it that each one of us does what we have to do, as well as that we can also receive support for what we cannot do. This principle of subsidiarity helps people to progress and groups to advance. And this must be said not only at the national level, but also at the universal level: we must accompany each other; even if this is not required by God, nor by the social doctrine of the Church, it is required by common sense and reason. We must support all those who cannot give all that they would or could give.

4. PARTICIPATION:

Another clear principle in the Church's social doctrine is the principle of participation. It is a theme to which we return again and again. Participation, as something inherent to the human being, is part of our existence. If the first principle tells us that as human beings we all have the same dignity, consequently we all have the

² Principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church - by Archbishop Ramon Benito de la Rosa y Carpio. Source www.Cscv.info

same right to participate in the development of society and be taken into account. Every day we find people who are discriminated against, mistreated, disrespected, and suffer different types of violence.

A person who does not participate in the expenses of a people, with his taxes, is a person who is not fulfilling his duty. A person who does not participate in elections, for example, is a person who feels limited in what is his right to participate in the election of those who lead him. This dimension of participation shows a right, but it also shows a duty. Right and duty, the right to participate and the duty to participate. Therefore, when people cannot participate as much as they can in national life, they feel limited.

Dictatorships limit participation, but participation also becomes a disorder when it is not regulated. Let us turn our minds again and again to participation, to our duty to participate in family life, in social life, in neighborhood life, in national life, in international life. Let us think of participation as a right and a duty.



5. SOLIDARITY

Solidarity is one of the great principles, or, if you will, one of the great values that is most discussed in today's world. Solidarity is showing us how humanity is one and how it has to support each other. The solidarity that moves us to see ourselves as solid as one shows us that people cannot exist if they are not in solidarity with each other and that humanity is also like that, and this can be seen very clearly in crises and problems. We are in solidarity, we have to be in solidarity, whether we want to be or not, but we have to do it consciously. The richer countries need to be in solidarity with others and the poorer countries also need to become aware of this.

The Amazon no longer belongs to Brazil or to the countries of the Southern Cone, it belongs to all humanity, because what happens there affects humanity. We are in solidarity, and human beings are like a bunch of bananas: either we walk together or we perish, but we must be together. The principle, the criterion, the value of solidarity is a theme that we must think about and return to again and again, because we must not only expect solidarity from others, but each one of us must do our bit on the road and in the construction of a world of solidarity.

6. FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

The subject of values is on the table. It is a subject to which we must return again and again, and we can ask ourselves about the many values that exist, and we can list dozens of values: which are the fundamental ones, which are the most important, those necessary for a society to function and which are also key to the progress of peoples? The four great values are these: Truth, freedom, justice and love. And I am going to refer now to the first three because love, which unites us to others, needs special treatment. "They shall know the truth and the truth shall set them free." Freedom is manifested in democracy, but we need a freedom wisely used. Therefore, turning our minds and eyes to freedom is key, especially in these times in which we enjoy freedom, so that we do not return to dictatorships, but also so that freedom does not become an enemy for

us. And the dimension of justice: if you want peace, work for justice. If we want to keep relationships as they should be, the value of justice is key and fundamental, who can deny it?

We know that we have many disorders when lies, licentiousness and injustice prevail. Therefore, in the social doctrine of the Church, these three values are fundamental and key to the life of any society.

7. THE WAY OF LOVE

We can talk about and touch on themes such as the common good, the universal destination of goods, participation, solidarity, the values of truth, justice and freedom. But we have to say that the bond that unites all this is love. Without love, we will not be able to achieve what we desire: a greater distribution of wealth, a world where truth, justice and freedom prevail; where goods are truly common, where the common good is sought.



We cannot ask politicians to look after the interests of the people and not their own interests

if they do not have love. We can ask them in the name of justice, in the name of respect for others; love is necessary for all this. We can ask a judge to do justice, but if that judge does not respect the human person, if that judge does not love the human being, he will be unjust. The values that we need to put into practice, and they are all necessary, need a foundation, a guide, which is love. Therefore, the progress of peoples, the welfare of peoples, the better distribution of wealth, all that we desire will not happen in effect and in truth, if human beings are selfish. Therefore, the way of love is and will continue to be the way of the development of peoples, of respect for persons and human rights.

It is important to value and reflect on the tools that our Church offers us to continue facing the crises of our reality and thus continue being builders of the Kingdom here on Earth.

I thank you infinitely for taking the time to read this short piece of writing and it would be great if you would share the great treasure that DSI has to offer to the world. Blessings!