



Intergenerational Solidarity, Welfare and Human Ecology



Plenary Session 29 April-3 May 2004 – This week we mark our tenth anniversary with our first Plenary Session on intergenerational solidarity. Partly in response to concern about the looming crisis of the welfare state in many places, we asked the speakers and commentators to focus primarily on the challenges posed by the fact that changing relations between generations have placed increasing strain on every society's capacity to provide for the needs of the very young, the frail elderly, and the severely ill or disabled. In so doing, we heeded the Holy Father's reminder when he first addressed us ten years ago that the very *raison d'être* of social programs 'should be protection of the weakest'.

Our aim this week is to move well beyond standard debates over the 'welfare crisis'. For underlying the welfare crisis is a deeper crisis of meanings and values. Changes in family behavior are fueling, and being fueled by, changes in ideas about dependency, the human person, and family life that have far-reaching implications for the human prospect – for the world's experiments in self-government, for the health of economies, for human rights, and for the future of our social and natural environments. By lifting up the concept of 'solidarity' we seek to challenge solutions based on conflict models that are grounded in flawed concepts of man and society. With our reference to 'ecology' we signal that we will be searching for ways to shift probabilities in favor of keeping the human person at the center of concern. Our hope for this conference is that we will emerge not only with a better understanding of the questions, but with a set of conclusions that will serve as springboards for continued exploration of this subject in future meetings and study groups.

Mary Ann Glendon

Participants

Prof. Margaret S. Archer

Prof. Kenneth Arrow

Prof. Belisario Betancur

Prof. Rocco Buttiglione

Prof. Partha S. Dasgupta

Prof. Pierpaolo Donati

Prof. Ombretta Fumagalli Carulli

President Prof. Mary Ann Glendon

Prof. Paul Kirchhof

Prof. Juan José Llach

Mr. Justice Nicholas J. McNally

Prof. Edmond Malinvaud
Prof. Pedro Morandé
Prof. Vittorio Possenti
Prof. José T. Raga
Prof. Mina Magpantay Ramirez
Prof. Kevin Ryan
Prof. Louis Sabourin
H.E. Msgr Prof. Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo
Prof. Herbert Schambeck
Rev. Msgr Prof. Michel Schooyans
Prof. Krzysztof Skubiszewski
Professor Joseph Stiglitz

H.E. Amb. Hanna Suchocka
Prof. Dr. Dr. Hans Tietmeyer
Prof. Wilfrido V. Villacorta
Prof. Bedrich Vymetalík
Prof. Hans F. Zacher
Prof. Jerzy B. Zubrzycki
Prof. Paulus Zulu
Dr. Dr. Herbert Batliner
Mr. Cornelius G. Fetsch
Dr. Martin Strimitzer
H.E. Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re
H.E. Cardinal Bernard Francis Law
Prof. Francis Fukuyama
Fr. Richard John Neuhaus
H.E. Cardinal Antonio María Rouco Varela
Prof. Jacques Vallin
H.E. Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino
Prof. Giovanni Conso
Prof. Sue Richardson
Prof. Roland Ris
Dr. Carlos Martínez Sotomayor