



New Forms of Solidarity Towards fraternal Inclusion, Integration and Innovation (I+I+I)



Workshop 5 February 2020

Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink (Mt 25, 34-35)

Throughout his public life, Jesus not only preached about justice, but also lived it through solidarity and mercy with his neighbors, but especially with the disenfranchised of his time. When asked which was the most important commandment, he answered with “love the Lord, your God [...], and love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt 22: 37). Hence he set a paradigm by which we must measure our deeds and structures.

In fact, it is through solidarity and love that we will be judged at the end of all time: “I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me’ [...]. ‘I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me’. And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life” (Mt 25:40-46).

Solidarity is then one of the three pillars of the Church’s Social Doctrine, along with subsidiarity and common good (Cf. Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, § 160), and has been a fundamental pillar of last century’s Pontifical Magisterium. St Paul VI, St John Paul II, Benedict XVI and now Francis: all have particularly emphasized the notion of solidarity.

In times of increasing social and economic inequality, when democracy is under trial and societies are manipulated by interests favoring chaos and social disarticulation all over the world, it is more necessary than ever to recover solidarity among individuals, peoples, governments and international organizations.

When solidarity and the common good, “the ultimate and organizational foundations of life in society” (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, § 163), stop being taken as moral duties, discord takes over societies.

In the midst of the social, political and economic crisis of inequality which we are experiencing throughout Europe and America, and the climate crisis which affects our planet and leads to the displacement and rejection of those harmed by this process, we need love and solidarity for the environment and climate refugees to overcome and heal these wounds.

At the same time, the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution challenges the very concept of work, generating new social fears and challenges to social integration. In addition, conventional economic theories have not managed to keep up with the new digital platforms, the fast changing nature of competition, market structure, and matters of impartiality, transparency and accountability regarding the use of data and algorithms. All these

transformations are happening in the context of greater income and wealth inequality, which undermines social cohesion, shared prosperity, democracy and world peace.

St John Paul II warned that social and economic injustice put world peace at risk. Peace “is lost by the social and economic exploitation by special interest groups which operate internationally or function as elites within developing countries. It is lost by the social divisions that pit rich against poor between States or within States [...] It is lost when economic exploitation and internal strains on the social fabric leave the people defenceless and disillusioned” (XIX World Peace Day, January 1986).

Therefore, “The right path to a world community in which justice and peace will reign without frontiers among all peoples and on all continents is the path of solidarity, dialogue and universal brotherhood” (XIX World Peace Day, January 1986). This is the only possible way.

If political, economic, social and cultural relationships and systems are not imbued with the values of solidarity and dialogue, and amplified under the institutional dimensions of global community organisations, the common good will not be safeguarded.

Pope Francis tells us that “in the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters” (Laudato Si’, § 158).

He also reminds us that “When human beings recognize the fundamental solidarity that unites them with all of humanity, they realize that they cannot keep only for themselves the goods that they possess. When one habitually lives in solidarity, the goods that he or she possesses are used not only for one’s own needs, but they multiply themselves, also producing unexpected fruits for others” (Oeconomicae et Pecuniariae Quaestiones, §20).

Likewise, we face challenges of wealth distribution, and an unfair distribution of human and environmental exploitation in global value chains, as Pope Francis writes all along the *Laudato Si’*. He warns that without a convergence of wealth and development between the Global North and the Global South, and if solidarity among peoples, mediated by international organisations, were to diminish, we would risk jeopardizing the world peace order established in the postwar period.

We also recall St John Paul II’s message for the Jubilee Year 2000 (*Incarnationis Mysterium*, § 12) “Some nations, especially the poorer ones, are oppressed by a debt so huge that repayment is practically impossible. It is clear, therefore, that there can be no real progress without effective cooperation between the peoples of every language, race, nationality and religion. The abuses of power which result in some dominating others must stop: such abuses are sinful and unjust. Whoever is concerned to accumulate treasure only on earth (cf. Mt 6:19) ‘is not rich in the sight of God’ (Lk 12:21). There is also a need to create a new culture of international solidarity and cooperation, where all — particularly the wealthy nations and the private sector — accept responsibility for an economic model which serves everyone”.

Pope Francis urges us to “not only keep the poor of the future in mind, but also today’s poor, whose life on this earth is brief and who cannot keep on waiting. Hence, in addition to a fairer sense of intergenerational solidarity there is also an urgent moral need for a renewed sense of intragenerational solidarity” (*Laudato Si’*, § 162).

As St Paul VI said: “Government leaders, your task is to draw your communities into closer ties of solidarity with all men [...] Delegates to international organizations, it is largely your task to see to it that senseless arms races and dangerous power plays give way to mutual collaboration between nations, a collaboration that is friendly, peace oriented, and divested of self-interest, a collaboration that contributes greatly to the common development of mankind” (*Populorum Progressio*, § 84).

You cannot serve both God and money (Mt 6:24). And God must be served as He requested, by loving one’s neighbor and showing solidarity to those in need (Mt 25:35). The only solution for world peace is to extend fraternal solidarity worldwide.