



Social Participation and the New Forms of Slavery

+ Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo

The notion of participation – derived from the Latin word *participation* – entails the action and effect of participating, i.e., taking or receiving a share of something. If we apply it to the social order, we might assert that participation is the degree of experiencing happiness as we may experience it here, on Earth, as those who believe in Christ are summoned to partake in perfect happiness in Heaven as they embrace definitive life.

Thus we come back to the eternal question that Aristotle used as an opening for his *Ethics* and his *Politics*, that is, how to achieve that happiness that 'all human beings naturally desire'[1] in today's world, marked by the globalisation of indifference with the problem of environmental decay or climate change, the new forms of human trafficking, the rapid urbanisation, increasing mass communication, global capitalism.

The moral social participation issue is not only what I should do, that is, deontology in the Kantian sense, but how would I like to lead my life in order to achieve happiness before God, for myself, other people and my environment.

Aristotle demonstrates that social values such as justice and equity belong to this question when he points out, at the beginning of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, that the goal of happiness is not perfection in solitude but in the context of the city, the *Polis*. And this also applies, *servatis servandis*, to nations, which cannot flourish in their own way if they do not take into consideration the welfare of other nations in the globalised world, especially as regards matters that relate to the good of all nations (for example, water, energy, the climate...). Social values and policies that aim for the common good make up the structure of ethics. What we need to know is how to reorganise our social and economic life with and between nations in the 'global city' in order to spread those values of contemplation, prayer, community, equity, fraternity, trust and environmental sustainability that create happiness.

Contrary to what we are being led to believe, human beings are not motivated by market goods alone but also by non-market ones such as dignity, truth, freedom, good and beauty. Attraction to the good and to happiness is a priority compared to all other moral attitudes and represents the absolute beginning of human action in the ethical sphere.

Indeed it is important to situate this inquiry within any consideration of culture, because human beings continue to seek understanding and meaning in respect of human action. This inquiry has been directed to human behaviour, centred after Socrates (470-399 BC) in the West and Buddha (600 BC) in Asia, on the idea of the good and the virtues. Normative ideas about the good and the virtues embrace both private and public customs that we call 'habits' (*ethe*), which is the origin of the word 'ethics', of which good, justice and virtue are ramifications. In its original meaning, ethics is at the same time a part of the policy concerning the common content of private and public morals amidst human social plurality. For this reason ethics is distinct from both science and metaphysics (*epistémé*) and from technology. As Aristotle states at the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics*: 'To say however that the Supreme Good is happiness will probably appear a truism; we still require a more explicit account of what constitutes happiness. Perhaps then we may arrive at this by ascertaining what is man's work or deed. For the goodness or efficiency of a flute-player or sculptor or craftsman of any sort, and in general of anybody who has some work or business to perform, is thought to reside in that work; and similarly it may be held that the good of man resides in the work of man, if he carries out a special activity which will permit to discern a fulfilled human life'.[2]

Taking his inspiration from Aristotle, Hegel attempts to build a somehow normative theory of individual and social participation in happiness.[3] This theory may solve the problem posed by Hobbes, insofar as the struggle to attain happiness may originate in moral reasons that are susceptible of replacing the rivalry, distrust and glory triad as described in the so-called state of Nature, where Leviathan, i.e., the fight of all against all, holds sway. The intent here is to find, in the development of conflict-based interactions, the source of the extension of the individual abilities and rights of man in his conquest of his own self, his humanity and his happiness. Inspired by these reflections, we may assert that there are three subjective models of social participation that lie in the spheres of love, law, or ultimately, of Christ's Kingdom or grace and charity. Along the same lines as these three models of social participation – which are partly speculative, and partly empirical – there are three notions of exclusion or denial of participation which are capable of endowing social struggle with moral

motivation, the goal being the restoration of human and Christian dignity, liberty, virtue, peace, and happiness. The goal entails restoring the moral motivation of struggle through individual or group interests, so as to explain the practice of social struggle more comprehensively, in the light of participation.

All three participation models offer what we might call the speculative or conceptual structure, whereas the critical sentiments that prompt human beings to any struggle infuse this structure with its lifeblood. Now, a structural analysis of the figures of exclusion, marginalization or denial of participation cannot be possible if the normative requirements for the recognition of such participation do not allow frustration and exclusion as, somehow, the measures of such requirements. It is from the discussion centred on the very idea of struggle, as inspired by Hegel, that an attempt will emerge to complete a problematic of struggle based on the invocation of the experiences of happiness and peace through which participation may, if not attain its goal, at least suggest the point at which its denial can no longer stand.

The Struggle for Participation and Love

The first model of participation based on love covers the entire range of friendship, family and other relationships, all of which imply bonds of affection that are possible among a limited number of individuals. This is a degree of participation that precedes all kinds of judicial orders. Our experience as adults not only preserves traces and reminiscences of the early conflicts of our adolescence: these conflicts help us to grow in a healthy manner, and finally mature. These are the early years of life: love attains the maturity of adulthood when the individual manages to release himself from dependence, which generates a tight bond of affection. As the child is faced with the absence of his mother in his path towards his own capacity for independence, thus the infatuations of youth are put to the test by separation, where true victory lies in the emotionally trying ordeal of being able to be in no other company than one's own.

Along the same lines as Aristotle, Simone Weil elevates friendship to the status of good – a “unique good”, as she puts it – and she describes the phases of maturity in which the empirical figures of love resonate with Hegel's speculative structure.[4] We might speak of the dialectic of union and disunion that is typical of love, and which is endowed with characteristics that are both speculative and empirical. Disunion has to do with the suffering caused by absence and distance, and is the result of disillusionment, whereas union speaks of the force of the soul, which takes shape in the ability to be by oneself. But it is precisely the trust in the unwavering nature of mutual solicitude – also in the context of absence – that turns separation into a nurturing experience.

What is the expression of exclusion, contempt, and ultimately, subversiveness that pertains to this mode of participation of friendship and within friendship, particularly in the context of the new forms of slavery? Mere violence exercised against the integrity of the human body, and abuse in all its forms – i.e., torture, repetitive raping, organ harvesting, forced labour, and forced child labour – which destroy a person's primary trust in himself or herself, and in others, do not seem to be sufficient when it comes to illustrating this first type of exclusion, contempt, and ultimately, non-participation. What is at stake here are the forms of violence inflicted upon the soul, which are more complex and profound than those exercised on the body, as appalling as they may be. The normative idea of the model of participation based on love – which determines the measure of our own disappointment in the face of this type of humiliation – seems to be more naturally relatable to the idea of approval. Friends, or individuals that love each other, approve one another as existing beings. This approval of existence is what turns friendship into a “unique good”, which is equally precious in separation as in reunion. Humiliation, perceived as the removal or the refusal of the approval to exist, goes against this “existing and being with” the other, and it does so in every possible pre-judicial level. The humiliated individual feels as if gazed at from above, or better said, as viewed as next to nothing. Deprived of approval, the person becomes non-existent. From this standpoint, the humiliation perpetrated by forced labour, prostitution, involuntary organ harvesting and rape consists in the victim feeling that he or she is non-existent as a person: he or she is not an end in himself or herself, but another individual's property, or a means for the benefit of others.

In the case of prostitution, however, there is an additional component of non-approval of the victim as an existing human being: the betrayal of affection at its most intimate. When parents force their daughter into prostitution – as is usual in contexts of extreme poverty – they betray her in the affection that they must give to her, and that she must receive from them. Likewise, when a life partner or a boyfriend promises the moon and the stars to a young lady with the sole objective of leading her to a life of prostitution, he is betraying her in the most intimate way possible, as he is violating their tie of love, understood as mutual approval and as a bond of perfection. Unfortunately, this is the most common method that human traffickers use nowadays: young men who seduce girls through romantic promises. “You will be my wife: we will raise a family together”. This destroys the very core of the trust that one can lay in a person. Somehow, the betrayed victim feels worse than she whose existence has been denied altogether. It is for this reason that the protocol of victim rehabilitation is grounded on the reconstruction of self-trust, and of trust in one's fellow human beings, and is based on a

sort of public confession of the iniquity of having been betrayed and sold. Betrayal by the person on whom we have laid all of our trust is worse than death itself.

It is not possible to cross the threshold of the first model of participation in affection without considering the restrictions and rules that, despite not being formally judicial, must be upheld – in every sense of the word – as institutions, and which have actually encouraged countless developments in the judicial arena. Such is the case of parent-child and husband-wife relationships, and it is also true of family ties, as the family, as an educator, marks the beginning of cultural and value-based life. In contrast with the city and the state, the family is a way of living together that is represented by a home and a shared roof, which bring together a limited number of people.

The family intertwines the vertical lines of filiation and the horizontal lines of conjugality. Three invariable factors give shape to our being-in-the-world as members of a family: each of us has been born of the union between a man and a woman (this is true regardless of all considerations related with cloning, in vitro fertilization, surrogacy, etc.); most of us have siblings; and the order between siblings is determined existentially, and cannot be overridden, i.e., in no way can the elder brother become the younger.

Regardless of its judicial status, the bond of marriage is the connection between these vertical and horizontal relationships. This tie is subject to a restriction that applies in all the socially accepted versions of conjugality, namely, the prohibition of incest. The concept of incest places sexuality in the cultural dimension, and establishes a difference between social bonds and bonds of consanguinity. It would not be far-fetched to assert that the constraint originating from such a prohibition is the tacit assumption of Hegel's notion of the desire of the other, insofar as inclination – which differentiates desire from mere drive or instinct – may be viewed as the affective benefit of such a constraint.

Considering this pre-institutional family framework, I would now like to focus on the phenomenon of filiation, and group my ensuing comments under the title "Participating in lineage".

By establishing an order for conjugality, the genealogical principle organizes filiation. It is only in the aftermath of Oedipus's crime that conjugality – expressed in various forms, but invariably grounded in constancy and fidelity – can reveal its profound significance as the mediator between the genealogical principle and the incestuous drive, between order and phantasmagorical confusion. This will not prevent conjugality from deploring, in turn, its inner struggle, particularly at the apex where sensuous love and conjugal friendship intersect. Sensuous love can persist in cultures that are reluctant to embrace institutions and the discipline of desire commanded by marriage. However, it is conjugal affection that makes it possible for a couple to embrace parenthood, and to think of themselves not just as mere progenitors, but as parents of their offspring. Filial recognition, which confers full significance to the participation of love in parent-child relationships, responds precisely to this mutual approval between both parents.

Naturally, it is very difficult for people that have fallen prey to the new forms of slavery to raise a family and nurture a conjugal relationship. This appalling form of exclusion also rules out every opportunity for full-fledged filiation, and even denies victims of every chance of becoming fulfilled parents. It is for this reason that desire – whether desire for conjugality or desire for filiation – often works as the stimulus for fleeing slavery in its modern manifestations. More often than not, it has been the struggle to become a parent and/or raise a family that has prompted the victims to attempt to escape, against all odds, from subjugation. The confessions shared by the victims show that the spark that fuelled their liberation and their search for dignity as free individuals was, in fact, their desire for filiation and a family.

The Struggle for Participation from a Judicial Standpoint

As far as love is concerned, we have already discussed the intense affective loci and the trust in the permanence of mutual attachment that develop between people bound by the profound ties of affection (partners) ensured by marriage. A different logic is at stake in the judicial arena. On the one hand, the attribute of one's own freedom replaces the ability of being alone that pertains to relations of affection. Here the rationale of the term "freedom" lies in the assumption of equality among all individuals, as seen from a judicial point of view. On the other hand, respect replaces trust, as it is marked by a pretension of universality that exceeds the proximity of the bonds of affection that are typical of trust. In this sense, it might be said that this type of participation refers to two factors: the other, and the norm. As regards the norm, participation entails considering this norm valid, stating its validity. As regards the person, participation means identifying each human being as free and equal in dignity to his neighbour. Participation from a judicial viewpoint adds the recognition of oneself in terms of the new capacities originating at the intersection between the universal validity of the norm and the singularity of each person. This dual structure of judicial participation thus lies in the connection between the enlargement of the sphere of rights admitted to individuals, and the enhancement of the capacities whose recognition these

subjects demand. In this case, enlargement and enhancement are the result of the struggles that mark the point at which these two processes of solidarity have made their way into history.

The manifestation of enlargement in the normative sphere of rights is twofold: on the one hand, it has to do with the enumeration of subjective rights as defined by their content; on the other, it can be defined based on the real attribution of these rights to the new categories of individuals or groups.

The most ancient struggle concerns civil rights: it dates back to the 18th Century, and is far from over. Civil rights are the so-called negative rights, which protect individuals, their freedom, their lives, and their property in the face of the illegitimate ambitions of the state or the private sector. The second category of rights designates positive rights, which ensure participation in the process of the creation of public will with a view to the common good. Finally, the third category concerns another set of rights, positive as well, that assure an egalitarian portion of elementary goods for each individual.

Importantly, as a judicial institution, slavery was banned thanks to the progressive penetration in history of Christ's message of brotherhood, and owing to the specific anti-slavery struggles that began towards the end of the 18th Century, and which ended with the abolition of this scourge – despite considerable reluctance, as was the case of the American Civil War – in most countries around the world. Modern international agreements (e.g., the 1926 Slavery Convention) reassert the prohibition of slavery, which is considered to be a crime against humanity. However, slavery is still culturally entrenched in some countries (e.g., India, Sudan, and Mauritania), and has reappeared in new forms, such as forced labour, prostitution, organ trafficking, and child slavery.

Naturally, the victims of the new forms of slavery are deprived of both negative and positive civil rights. Actually, they are the targets of the most ruthless discrimination.

With regard to the struggle for political rights, it took place in the most developed countries of the world during the 19th Century, and continued in the 20th Century in the context of the debates on the representational nature of democratic regimes, once the sovereignty of citizens and their right to express themselves through elections finally began to be recognized.

The biggest concern today is the exclusion and marginalization of the majority with regard to an egalitarian participation in the distribution of goods on a national and planetary scale. This is true of both market goods and non-market goods such as dignity, freedom, knowledge, integration, and peace. The biggest cause of human suffering, and ultimately, of rebellion, is the alarming and unfair contrast between the theoretical attribution of equal rights to all, and the unequal and unfair distribution of fundamental goods for most human beings. Despite living in a world of abundant wealth – a world where economic activity has exceeded 120 trillion dollars a year – countless people are still riddled with poverty and social exclusion, two scourges that facilitate the expansion of the new forms of slavery. This alarming inequality – together with dominance wars and climate change – is the cause of the biggest forced migration in human history, which is now affecting as many as 65 million people. We should not forget, either, the growing number of individuals – estimated at 50 million – who have been ravaged by the new forms of slavery and human trafficking, such as forced labour, prostitution, and organ trafficking. These are all veritable crimes against humanity that must be recognized and denounced as such. The fact that the human body should be bought and sold as if it were just another commodity on the market is appalling, and it is a symptom of a profound moral and social decay. Almost one hundred years ago, Pope Pius XI had foreseen the entrenchment of inequality and injustice as a consequence of global economic dictatorship, which he called “internationalism of finance or international imperialism” (*Quadragesimo anno*, May 15, 1931, § 109). For his part, it was Pope Paul VI that denounced, almost fifty years later, the “new and abusive form of economic domination on the social, cultural and even political level” (*Octogesima adveniens*, May 14, 1971, § 44).

Based on this distribution of subjective rights, the corresponding acquisition of competencies on the personal plane leads to the emergence of specific forms of absence, which are in turn related to the demands that a person may expect society to fulfil. In this context, humiliation resulting from the denial of civil rights is different from the frustration generated by the denial of participation expressed as public will and the common good. In addition, both types of denial differ from the feeling of exclusion that springs from the deprivation of the right to own elementary goods. When denial of participation is at stake, disrespect for the affected individual is expressed differently each time. Importantly, negative feelings are significant triggers in the struggle for social participation: indignation is, in this regard, the transition structure that leads from raging resentment before denial to the willingness to become an active subject in the battle for participation. The most sensitive aspect of indignation lies in the unbearable contrast – mentioned above – between the equal attribution of rights and the unequal distribution of goods in societies such as ours, where productivity-oriented progress across all the domains of life must apparently be offset with a dramatic growth of inequalities and the destruction of our common home.

Now, indignation can undo us, but it can also push us to action. It can paralyse us and force us to look the other way, but it can also be the fuel for social revolution. In this respect, the idea of responsibility acquires one of the meanings of the passage from humiliation to action: humiliation is, above all, experienced as an aggression against one's self-respect; then comes indignation as a moral response to the expectation of participation; and indignation finally gives way to the willingness to participate in the process of enlarging the sphere of subjective rights. In this context, responsibility can be the capacity – recognized by society and oneself – of rational and independent self-expression on moral issues. Responsibility understood as the capacity for autonomous response is inseparable from responsibility understood as the capacity for participation in the reasonable debates pertaining to the enlargement of the sphere of civil, political or social rights. Thus the term "responsibility" spans the affirmation of oneself as well as the recognition of the equal rights of one's neighbour, and the effect of all this is a positive contribution to the progress of rights and the law.

However, the enlargement of the sphere of subjective rights has a second aspect that does not only concern the enumeration and classification of these rights, but also their application, through participation, to a growing number of individuals.

Participation in the Kingdom of God

Talking about social participation, I cannot ignore the invitation that we can find in a statement, which is ancient and new at the same time, and loaded with immense theoretical and practical meaning. Today, the People of God, or better, all of us, every Christian, including us scholars, and each human being who is destined to the love of Christ, must internalize the words of St Leo the Great, who reminds us of the letter of St Peter: «Agnosce, o christiane, dignitatem tuam, acknowledge, O Christian, the dignity that is yours! Being made a 'participant in the divine nature – #####' (cf 2 Pt 1:4), do not by an unworthy manner of living fall back into your former abjectness of life. Be mindful of Whose Head, and of Whose Body, you are a member. Remember, that wrested from the powers of darkness, thou art now translated into the Light and the Kingdom of God (*Serm. I de Nat.*, P. G. 54, 192)». Insofar as the Lord will reign in us and among us, we will be able to participate in divine life and we shall be for each other "instruments of grace, so as to pour forth God's charity and to weave networks of charity" (*Caritas in Veritate*, § 5).

St Paul, in correspondence with what we have said about the participation of grace in the Kingdom of Christ, says 'with freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage' – ## ##### #μ## #####. ##### ## μ# ##### ##### (Gl, 5:1). So Christ performs grace and freedom for human beings, which neither the Greeks, nor the Romans, nor the Jews, nor anyone in America, Asia or Africa had. In those times, many knew that "one" man could be free, such as a tyrant or the chief of a tribe. Or they knew that "many" were free, such as the citizens by birth and philosophers in Ancient Greece or in Ancient Rome, but the idea that "all" men and women were free by their essence comes from the grace and the message of Christ. All human beings are destined to the utmost grace and freedom and the Holy Trinity lives inside each human being through the grace of Christ and the collaboration of everyone.

For this reason, the abolition of slavery and the achievement of freedom throughout the course of history were primarily the work of the Spirit of Christ or of the Holy Spirit, with the collaboration of the saints and good leaders, men and women, of all times and places after Jesus Christ. As St Paul said, "by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor 15:10).

Now, from the theological and empirical point of view, the achievement of freedom and the subsequent abolition of ancient slavery in the course of history and the new forms of slavery today depend – according to St Paul himself – on the opposition of sin and grace, which includes and fosters the other antagonisms that fight tenaciously within the human being: error-truth, good-evil, vice-virtue, wholeness-corruption and so on, in the impenetrable puzzle of the enigma that is the human heart. It is a transcendental phenomenology of the conflict of the two laws revealed by St Paul – good and evil, concupiscence and virtue – which agitate our bodies and obscure our minds, debilitating our will. "I see and approve of the better, but I follow the worse" (*Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*), states Ovidius, and St Paul comments on it by saying: "For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do" (*Rm 7:18 f.*; cf, Ovidius, *Metamorphosis*, lib. 7, vv. 20).

This is the deepest invitation and the most profound revolution which can free us from the social situations of the new forms of slavery, just as in the past it has freed us from the juridical institution of slavery. We know from practical experience, and we see it recognised by certain protocols to rehabilitate the victims, that the starting or turning point for the victims is a moment of religious conversion or an instant of Grace.

It is difficult to explain the discrimination that women have suffered in these two thousand Christian years without this law "that agitates my members" and that "is at war with the law of my mind, taking me captive to

the law of sin – ##### ## ##### ##µ## ## ##### µ##### µ## #####µ#### ## ##µ# ## ## ## µ##
##µ##### µ# [##] ## ##µ# ## #µ##### ## ##### ## ##### µ##### µ## (Rm 7: 23).

From indignation to dignity, freedom and peace

After Pope Francis's request to the Academy to deal with modern slavery and human trafficking, we have tried, first of all, to establish the facts and then to find models and best practices to restore dignity, freedom, peace and happiness to the victims.

The first point is important because it shows us the extent of the problem. If you can't count it, you cannot fight it. According to the most serious estimates, there are about 50 million victims of modern slavery and 10 million victims of organ trafficking. Many of these come from the sixty million refugees we currently have around the world.

With regard to the second point, our research has identified models and good practices to combat modern slavery as created by states and individuals.

Forced labour is, in a way, easier to fight. We must trust that, once they become aware of the severity of the issue, public opinion, states and multinationals will find a way to deal with it, by checking their supply chains and perhaps by using an icon mark that indicates that their products are free from forced labour.

Regarding prostitution, we follow the line of Pope Benedict who told the new German Ambassador to the Holy See, Mr Schweppe: "I would like to tackle another disturbing aspect which, it seems, is spreading through material and hedonistic tendencies, especially in the countries of the so-called "Western world", and that is, the sexual discrimination of women. Every person, whether man or woman, is destined to exist for others. A relationship that fails to respect the fact that men and women have the same dignity constitutes a grave crime against humanity. It is time to vigorously put a stop to prostitution, as well as to the widespread dissemination of material with an erotic or a pornographic content, also on the internet" (November 7, 2011). States that legalise prostitution offer the means to disguise all forms of forced or juvenile prostitution too.

In view of eradicating the new slaveries and give social participation, dignity, freedom, happiness to each person, there is a need to work together and across boundaries in creating "waves" that can affect society as a whole, from top to bottom and vice versa, moving from the periphery to the centre and back again, from leaders to communities, and from small towns and public opinion to the most influential segments of society.

Action Plan for Social Participation

With a view to promoting action as opposed to purely 'theoretical' and academic considerations, which the reflective philosophical tradition often favours, I would like to present the action plan that we are implementing, which is, of course, a work in progress, to achieve social participation in terms of happiness and freedom.

As I mentioned above, the "globalization of indifference" has made the new forms of slavery such as human trafficking, forced labour, prostitution and organized crime pervasive. They are widespread all over the world. For Pope Benedict and Pope Francis they are crimes against humanity, and must be recognised as such and fought against.

In general, religions used to be the soul of culture from the historical, phenomenological and philosophical point of view. Some universal religions still have influence in today's globalised world. They are Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and a few others.

Today we can celebrate a new synergy between the spirit of the United Nations and other international organisations, and the spirit of Religions. This is also testified by the requests we get from the UN to hold meetings together.

On the basis of religious dialogue, which is possible today thanks to globalisation and the new communication tools, religions are better known to one other, better valued and better respected.

However, we need to move from interreligious dialogue to common action.

Although religions cannot pray at the same altar, religions can and should act together to promote human dignity and defend the freedom of each person, and promote good relations with the Earth, i.e. promoting sustainable development. Sustainable development means developing nature according to its real possibilities, sort of copying the mechanisms of evolution.

As I said, today we are faced with two emergencies: the first is slavery in its modern forms, which are forced labour, prostitution and organ trafficking, and the second is climate change, which is connected to mass migration. Religions need to act to make all people aware of these two emergencies. We need to convince people from the bottom and from the top.

Along these lines, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences organised its first important meeting to eradicate human trafficking and modern slavery in 2014[5] with Pope Francis and the leaders of many different faiths, who all agreed to define “modern slavery, in terms of forced labour, prostitution, and organ trafficking” as crimes against humanity.

Another important initiative was the foundation of the Santa Marta Group at the Casina Pio IV in the presence of Pope Francis in 2014. The Santa Marta Group is led by Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Bishop Patrick Lynch and brings together bishops and police chiefs to identify the best practices to combat human trafficking and prostitution.

However, in chronological order, the first of such meetings was in November 2013,[6] with the participation of Pope Francis, which ended with a Statement[7] that was very important because we added forced labour and organ trafficking to the condemnation of prostitution as a crime against humanity, made by Pope Benedict.

In 2015 the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences organised two meetings on trafficking. The first, entitled Trafficking with a Special Focus on Children,[8] was organised with Queen Silvia of Sweden, whose Child Foundation helps children in need. Pope Francis also participated. This workshop was very important because the Swedish Chancellor of Justice explained the Swedish model against prostitution that she helped launch 20 years ago, and its positive outcomes, including a 50% reduction in prostitution.

The second meeting in 2015 organised by the PASS saw the participation of 70 Mayors from major cities around the world.[9] They also signed a document affirming the need to eradicate modern slavery and human trafficking, recognising them as crimes against humanity. The Mayors also agreed to take actions to mitigate climate change. Pope Francis came and gave a crucial speech.

But maybe the most important impact the Academy has had, has been to convince the United Nations to reopen the discussions on the Sustainable Development Goals in August 2015 to include very clear language on the eradication of human trafficking in all of its forms. We achieved this through feverish consultations with several UN Ambassadors from around the world, such as Argentina and the UK. The result was Goal 8.7, which we are very proud of. This reads: "Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms". It was approved unanimously, together with the rest of the 17 SDGs, on 25 September 2015 during the Pope's historical visit to the UN. We can very well say that such goals and targets are now a moral imperative for all member states of the UN. All countries around the world belonging to the UN must now consider how they are going to implement these goals and cannot turn a blind eye. The Academy must remind all leaders of this obligation.

In June 2016 Pope Francis asked the PASS to bring together another category of authorities, those who represent justice and who are closer to the victims and perpetrators of these crimes against humanity: the judges. We brought together over 70 from all over the world and Pope Francis addressed a crucial message to them.[10] They came to share their experiences in the fight against human trafficking and organised crime and they also agreed on a very articulate declaration along the same lines as the one that the mayors had signed the year before. You can read it in the commemorative booklet we published on the PAS website.[11]

Another meeting that Pope Francis asked the PAS to organise, which is in strict relation with trafficking and especially prostitution, was entitled “Narcotics: Problems and Solutions of this Global Problem” and took place in November 2016[12] with the personal participation of Pope Francis and Queen Silvia, who gave two very important speeches. The commemorative booklet has just been published.[13]

In December 2016, Pope Francis asked the PAS to convene the Mayors from the major European cities to discuss mass migration and the refugee crisis, which, as I said, are tightly related to human trafficking.[14]

The latest of this series of meetings has been a Summit on Organ Trafficking and Transplant Tourism, organised by PAS Academician Dr Francis Delmonico, with the participation of transplant surgeons and medical doctors from all over the world, including such critical locations as China and the Middle East. This ended with a very strong Statement which is having a huge impact around the world, as testified by our participants, with whom we are in contact daily.[15] Dr Delmonico is also planning a joint meeting with the PASS on this issue. A first estimate of the number of victims is 100,000 per year and the cost per organ is on average 100,000 dollars, of which the victims only get the smallest percentage. The turnover is thus around 1 million dollars per year.

We have also organised three meetings with young leaders from around the world who are working against human trafficking and modern slavery and we will have a fourth one at the end of this year. These can be found on our website www.endslavery.va

So you see, we are reaching out to different sectors in society to raise awareness about modern slavery and human trafficking. At the Academy we think that it is not only the case of stating that they are crimes against humanity, but we recognise the practical need to prosecute traffickers and pimps, as well as the customers who create a market for sexual exploitation, destroying themselves and their families. In particular, the Academy tries to identify models to eradicate these crimes and, along these lines, recommends following the so-called Swedish model, which was adopted by France last year. For the first time in history, the Swedish or Nordic model criminalizes the real cause, which are not the victims – i.e. the women in prostitution – but the customers.

As we affirmed at the beginning, men and women seek to participate in happiness and freedom. The core of happiness and freedom, and of participation in human rights, as history has proved, is the message of Christ, which is summarised in particular in the Gospel of the Beatitudes: “Blessed are the poor in spirit; Blessed are they who mourn; Blessed are the meek; Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, (for they will be satisfied); Blessed are the merciful (for they will be shown mercy); Blessed are the clean of heart (for they will see God); Blessed are the peacemakers (for they will be called children of God); Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness; Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you (falsely) because of me; Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you”.

These people can achieve happiness because “they will be comforted, they will inherit the land, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”.

We could also mention the Golden Rule, which is at the basis of all cultures and religious traditions: ‘Do not do to others what you would not like them to do to you’, or in its positive formulation: ‘Do to others as you would have them do to you – ##### #μ####’ (Lk 6:31). However this rule today is not enough: it deserves to be interpreted in the light of the Beatitudes of the Gospel according to St. Matthew chapter 5, and the protocol by which we shall be judged in Matthew chapter 25, which refers to the other, the poorest and the neediest in an existential and real situation of suffering. Choosing the Beatitudes and the poor transcends the Golden Rule, which is too abstract to respond to the suffering of the other and those most in need.

These Beatitudes are valid for every one and in every culture and religion. If we follow them closely we will heal the wounds of humanity, which are also the wounds of Christ in the contemporary world.

End Notes

- [1] ##### (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, I, 1, 1094 a 1).
- [2] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I, chap. 6, 1097 b 20 ff.
- [3] Cf. G.W.F. Hegel, *Systeme de la Vie ethique*, commentaire et traduction de J. Taminiaux, Paris, Payot 1976.
- [4] Simone Weil, *Amitié*, in *OEuvres*, Gallimard, coll. Quarto, 1999, p. 755.
- [5] Cfr. <http://www.pas.va/content/accademia/en/events/2014/jointdeclaration.html>
- [6] Cfr. <http://www.pas.va/content/accademia/en/events/2013/trafficking.html>
- [7] Cfr. <http://www.pas.va/content/accademia/en/events/2013/trafficking/traffickingstatement.html>
- [8] Cfr. <http://www.pass.va/content/scienze-sociali/en/events/2014-18/children.html>
- [9] Cfr. <http://www.pass.va/content/scienze-sociali/en/events/2014-18/mayors.html>
- [10] Cfr. <http://www.pass.va/content/scienze-sociali/en/events/2014-18/judgessummit.html>
- [11] Cfr. http://www.pass.va/content/scienze-sociali/en/publications/extraseries/judges_declaration.html
- [12] Cfr. <http://www.pas.va/content/accademia/en/events/2016/narcotics.html>
- [13] Cfr. <http://www.pas.va/content/accademia/en/publications/extraseries/narcotics.html>
- [14] Cfr. <http://www.pas.va/content/accademia/en/events/2016/refugees.html>
- [15] Cfr. http://www.pas.va/content/accademia/en/events/2017/organ_trafficking.html