STUDIA SELECTA 6

Edited by
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Fratelli Tutti

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The Proceedings of the Webinar on

Fratelli Tutti

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Saint Thomas Aquinas sought to describe the love made possible by God's grace as a movement outwards towards another, whereby we consider "the beloved as somehow united to ourselves". Our affection for others makes us freely desire to seek their good. All this originates in a sense of esteem, an appreciation of the value of the other. This is ultimately the idea behind the word "charity": those who are loved are "dear" to me; "they are considered of great value". And "the love whereby someone becomes pleasing (grata) to another is the reason why the latter bestows something on him freely (gratis)".

The Holy Father Francis on Fraternity and Social Friendship, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, 3 October 2020.

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Concept Note

Fraternal love is a feeling potentially shared by all human beings. Yet it needs to be highlighted and developed in all its dimensions, including human relationships in the public sphere. Christianity is all about fraternal love. In the Social Doctrine of the Church "social friendship" is considered as the necessary inner impetus for economic, social and cultural institutions to achieve their goal, which is to foster and implement the requirements of human dignity and the common good.

Fraternal feelings can be experienced as the highest level of personal and social morality, a full accomplishment of what is best in our common humanity.

All through history huge progress has been achieved by recognizing the dignity, equality and value of all human persons in international declarations. Globalization as such is a step towards the mutual interaction of persons and nations searching for a set of common values and institutions on which to build their exchanges. The Covid-19 pandemic has revealed our common vulnerability and the need for a common effort to overcome it.

On a personal scale fraternity is challenged by individualism and selfishness. Fraternity is experienced by each person. It grows from our natural desire to help others in their basic needs. Many deep-rooted ideologies have to be ruled out. Current liberalism is based on the assumption that human beings are moved by their individual interests and that the market can regulate their selfishness and greed. The social construct is thought to be based on distrust of other people, who are seen as competitors. After half a century of increasing awareness of the universality of human rights, we are witnessing everywhere groups and nations stepping back behind real or virtual walls. The very notion of human universality is being challenged. The division of the world during

the Cold War has now given way to a division for the dominion of the world.

Fraternity implies the sense of sharing a common destiny with others. It is a call to build a universal society on shared principles and values. Fraternity can only be understood as flowing from a common filiation. Where there is a common father and mother there are children entitled to share the same heritage. The basic principle of the common destiny of the goods of the earth is coherent with the call to human fraternity.

The scope of our work should be to single out the steps to be undertaken in order to implement the requirements of human fraternity in the public space.

1. The cultural sphere is paramount for fraternity. In each culture and religion there are references to be explored and enhanced, showing that fraternity is a universal value often hidden behind individualism, nationalism and hostility to strangers. The main lever to improve the feeling of fraternity among human beings is the inner spiritual world of each person. Christianity stands for the supreme value of love, understood as self-commitment to the well-being of others, starting with one's family, neighbourhood, nation, and community of nations. This attention to the inner potentialities of each person would also prevent us from giving too much attention to the "uniformity of thought" of media propaganda encouraged by a materialistic ideology and by multinationals based on economic profit, and would give space to one's spiritual freedom.

2. The economy. Is the economic system able to integrate the principles of the priority of each person, the common good and sustainable integral development? The economy cannot be left to run blindly, without the guidance of ethics of human happiness and sustainable development. Efforts have been made in some places. The so-called eco-social market economy meets

more closely the vision of the Social Doctrine of the Church, which even calls for a "universal power" able to regulate the overwhelming role of the financial economy in investments, labour transfer and technology. Technology should not only benefit the more developed groups and nations but be made available to the neediest. There will be fraternity when our technological and economic capacity endeavours to fill the huge gap between super-developed and poorly developed countries. The use of technology and artificial intelligence in manufacturing and distribution of goods should not abolish but create jobs for all, as well as providing more leisure time for the cultivation of spiritual and human values, thus fostering autonomy and dignity for all human persons. The challenge is huge.

3. Is humanity able to develop more rationality and social friendship in political life? The political sphere is the mediation between values such as fraternity and the economic system. Many nations are threatened by populism fuelled by the media and fake news. In some contexts, the basic human rights to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, expression and association are not respected. Corruption devastates social institutions. Democracy should stand for alternating those in power and create a culture of service instead of domination. A great deal can be achieved by applying the principle of subsidiarity: more local autonomy, local production and consumption, more respect for local cultural specificities. To meet the universal challenge of fraternity, local fraternity is needed.

The workshop could be divided into three parts: the economic, political and cultural challenges of fraternity in a world of increasing fear of what is different.

Fraternity as a Principle of Social Ethics

H.E. Archbishop Roland Minnerath

The Social Doctrine of the Church (SDC) is built on principles such as the dignity of the human person, the common good, justice, solidarity, the universal destination of the goods of the earth, as well as participation and subsidiarity. Up until recent times it did not include the word "fraternity". Yet fraternity may appear as a new version of solidarity. It is more than solidarity. Solidarity may be organized and institutionalized, fraternity is not. Fraternity is a feeling, potentially shared by all human beings following their need for closeness and empathy for others, starting with the family and the local community.

My question is: can "fraternity" be considered as belonging to the very structure of human society? Or is it mainly a moral request of Christianity? In the Encyclical, the concept of fraternity goes hand in hand with "social friendship". Both need to be clarified, in social philosophy, as soon as Aristotle's "social friendship" appears as a dynamic inherent to the building up of a community. He called it *philia*, which means friendship, stating that a society needs to be strengthened by the feeling of togetherness of its members. Alone, the juridical framework of a society is not able to create the necessary bond of common commitment to the common good which is the wellbeing of the whole.

I. Charity and fraternity

It is amazing to discover that fraternal love, under the words charity and love, has been a key principle in the social encyclicals since Leo XIII. It came to light in the debate between justice and charity. The social teaching of the Church used to

balance the concept of justice with the concept of charity (*Rerum Novarum* 1891, n. 19) which is a properly Christian virtue, as going beyond the mere requirement of justice. Charity demands social justice. It is not a matter of good will. Charity enhances the sense of justice. Leo XIII highlights "brotherly love" in a Christian sense, as demanding a stronger commitment than "mere friendship" (*Rerum Novarum* 25). Leo concluded his encyclical by calling for Christian charity (*Rerum Novarum* 63).

The reason is that there is no justice without charity. Justice alone does not meet the needs of human beings. Only a personal commitment to the well-being of the other helps overcome situations of injustice. The Social Doctrine of the Church started with distinguishing justice and charity. It was clear that society must be governed by justice. Yet to implement the requirements of justice, more than commutative justice is needed. What is needed is charity. Charity was traditionally conceived as a movement of a single person giving generously from her wealth to the poor, with no legal obligation to do so. This understanding of Christian charity is not correct. Charity is the inner conviction that justice must be improved. Helping a poor person to overcome her situation is a duty of justice. So charity moved towards a broader sense of justice. Pius XI said "the poor are not committed to charity alone" (*Quadragesimo Anno* 1931, 4). Not "the economic dictatorship", but "loftier and nobler principles – social justice and social charity – must, therefore, be sought" "Instead a juridical and social order (should be established) which will ... give form and shape to all economic life. Social charity, moreover, ought to be as the soul of this order" (*Quadragesimo Anno* 88). "For justice alone can, if faithfully observed, remove the causes of social conflict but can never bring about union of minds and hearts" (*Quadragesimo Anno* 137).

It is clear that society must always progress in matters of justice. But individuals may progress in charity. The SDC aims at sharing its views with people of other creeds and world views

on the basis of what is common to all humanity. It does not call for faith. But Christian faith always gives new impulses to our vision of human nature and human destiny. Our call is on reason, but our use of reason is enlarged by faith.

Human capacity to love develops on several levels. It may be distinguished as *eros* – sensual attraction; *philia*, reciprocal friendship and *agape*, the Christian name for giving one's life for the sake of others. This word was unknown to the Greek philosophers. *Agape* is something more than friendship. It is unconditional and looks at loving one's neighbour for his own sake. It takes care of individuals and of the common good as well. *Agape* has its perfect realisation in the person of Jesus Christ, who gave his life for the sake of all humanity. *Agape* does not search for compensation; it is gratuitous. While solidarity can be enforced by law, charity cannot. Law cannot compel anybody to love another person or give one's life freely for others.

There is obviously no precise separation between these three feelings. The highest you reach the more spiritual and universal it is. In Christian moral theology *agape* is a gift of the Holy Spirit which enables a person to overcome all kinds of selfishness and to put himself at the service of others who need his help. The point is that the Holy Spirit does not limit its gifts to those who explicitly believe in Christ. Those who effectively live in an attitude of self-donation are moved by *agape* and transcend the natural tendency of human beings to concentrate on their own immediate interests.

In Christian moral theology *agape* is a specific gift of grace. In a word, human persons naturally seek community and justice. But our structural weakness does not allow us to overcome the narrowness of our interests and greed. Grace is an inner power that liberates us from our selfish tendencies and gives priority to pulling us out of ourselves and meeting the needs of the community whose life we share.

In the tradition of the SDC the specific sense of *agape* has been understood under various wordings. After Leo, Pius XI

calls it "social charity": "Social charity, ought to be as the soul of [a new economic order], an order which public authority ought to be ever ready effectively to protect and defend" (*Quadragesimo Anno* 88). We need, he said, people able to manifest their care for the working classes "who know them well and their minds and wishes, and can reach their hearts with a tender brotherly love" (*Quadragesimo Anno* 141).

Paul VI popularizes the expression "civilisation of love" as the expression of bonds of fraternity (25 Dec. 1975).

Relying on his own experience as a worker, John Paul II in his encyclical on human labour did not hesitate to speak of "social love". John Paul II observed that "man's situation in the modern world was far removed from the objective demands of the moral order, from the exigencies of justice, and still more from social love" (*Redemptor hominis* 1979, 16). To be morally acceptable the social construct demands more than a set of laws. It needs social love, streaming from the inner conviction of each member of society.

The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004) rightly says (n. 207): "No legislation, no system of rules or negotiation will ever succeed in persuading men and peoples to live in unity, brotherhood and peace; no line of reasoning will ever be able to surpass the appeal of love. Only love ... can animate and shape social interaction, moving it towards peace in the context of a world that is ever more complex". Social love is a "force capable of inspiring new ways of approaching the problems of today's world, of profoundly renewing structures, social organizations and legal systems from within".

Charity, therefore, is by no means limited to interpersonal exchanges, but is at the heart of community making. "Social and political charity is not exhausted in relationships between individuals but spreads into the network formed by these relationships, which is precisely the social and political community; it intervenes in this context seeking the greatest good for the community in its entirety" (n. 208).

With *Caritas in veritate* (2009) n. 2, Benedict XVI added an important point. Charity goes together with truth and so clarifies its location in the SDC: "Charity is at the heart of the Church's social doctrine. Every responsibility and every commitment spelt out by that doctrine is derived from charity which, according to the teaching of Jesus, is the synthesis of the entire Law (cf. *Matthew* 22:36-40). It gives real substance to the personal relationship with God and with neighbour; it is the principle not only of micro-relationships (with friends, with family members or within small groups) but also of macro-relationships (social, economic and political ones)".

Laudato si' (2015) 228 uses the expression "civic and political love". "Care for nature is part of a lifestyle which includes the capacity for living together and communion. Jesus reminded us that we have God as our common Father and that this makes us brothers and sisters. Fraternal love can only be gratuitous; it can never be a means of repaying others for what they have done or will do for us. That is why it is possible to love our enemies. This same gratuitousness inspires us to love and accept the wind, the sun and the clouds, even though we cannot control them. In this sense, we can speak of a "universal fraternity".

Fratelli Tutti (2020) 183 restates these concepts: quoting *Redemptor hominis, Populorum progressio* and the *Compendium*: "Social love" makes it possible to advance towards a civilization of love, to which all of us can feel called. Charity, with its impulse to universality, is capable of building a new world. No mere sentiment, it is the best means of discovering effective paths of development for everyone. Social love is a "force capable of inspiring new ways of approaching the problems of today's world, of profoundly renewing structures, social organizations and legal systems from within".

"For whereas individuals can help others in need, when they join together in initiating social processes of fraternity and justice for all, they enter the "field of charity at its most vast, namely political charity".

II. How SDC inspires social thinking

Taking fraternity as a principle of social make-up highlights the very nature of the SDC. The social thinking of the Church is not confessional. It aims at convincing beyond the borders of Christianity. It proposes a vision of the human person inserted in social, political and ecological bonds, in a word, in a created order. This order is accessible to reasoning. Yet reason works on pre-established material. Reason is illuminated and fuelled by the horizon of reality opened by faith. It is obvious that the Gospel of Jesus teaches fraternal love as flowing from our common filiation from God creator and origin of mankind. The many who do not believe in God belong to the same humanity. The Christian discourse about the human person living in society must be coherent with the experience and deep feelings embedded in the human heart. So the call for fraternity meets something universally acknowledged as true, even if not immediately recognizable in history.

Therefore, the first question about fraternity is not: is it feasible, but does it fit with the human condition at large? By calling to fraternity the Church opens a way for all, without distinction of culture or creeds. Moreover, it has to be said that if fraternity comes from the Christian creed, then God takes us seriously. Fraternity does not restrain our freedom: it enhances it and gives it huge perspectives of overcoming mistrust, misunderstanding and exclusions of all kinds.

No religious tradition, no philosophical system would feel aggressed by a call for love, by the assumption that what most deeply realizes the human condition is the human capacity to love.

So the SDC does not hesitate to draw from *agape* – Christ's love which brings salvation, reconciliation and life – the inspiration which gives consistency to the universal feeling of desired brotherhood.

The huge distance to be observed between this call to love and the daily practice of our fellow human beings does not in-

validate this call to fraternity. It will always be a good to be striven for but never totally reached, and so will always be a horizon towards which we would converge.

Social charity is not a privilege reserved to believers. In social life the faithful do not necessarily show a more friendly behaviour towards others. In Catholic doctrine Christ's grace, which finds its highest expression in love, can be bestowed on non-baptized persons.

III. Fraternity by law?

The fact that fraternity should not be considered as a goal out of our reach may be asserted by some legal references. The motto of the French Republic mentions Fraternity after Liberty and Equality. Fraternity was adopted after hesitations and contradictory explanations. Whereas Liberty and Equality are likely to receive a legal definition and application, Fraternity appears more as a moral obligation which cannot be sewed into justice. But in recent constitutional jurisprudence, Fraternité has been evoked in the making of social and care policy. Because of its Christian connotation it is avoided rather than enhanced in the French public debate.

Fraternity appears in the Indian constitution as a bond between Indian citizens "The Preamble declares that fraternity has to assure two things – the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the nation. The word 'integrity' has been added to the Preamble by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment (1976)".

The most convincing reference to fraternity is to be found in the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1946: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood".

This statement is coherent with the universality of the principle of fraternity. We note the tension between what humans *are* and how humans *should* act. While dignity and equality, rea-

son and conscience belong to the essence of a person, are innate and prior to any convention, brotherhood belongs to the sphere of moral behaviour and action. It cannot but be produced freely, in conscience and reason. Fraternity is a matter of education and conviction.

In both International Covenants of 1966, the word is absent, as is the word "solidarity". At least the word "friendship" appears once in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Art. 13 wishes "tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups".

In a way art. 1 is a call for further progress in the human community, thus overlapping with the mission of the Church, which is to convince that fraternity is the strongest link allowing people of different worldviews to join in a shared access to the goods of the earth.

Conclusion

The world is playing under our eyes a tragedy of national competition, political populism, economic war, exclusion of migrants, human trafficking, denial of justice for the poor, discrimination of minorities, all the contrary of fraternal mutual acceptance. In spite of this regression in local and international affairs, there is no reason to dismiss the call to fraternity as unrealistic or utopic. We must not resign ourselves to be wolves to one another (Hobbes). History bears witness to unexpected reconciliations. I mention France and Germany after three wars in 70 years, and the epochal change in the relationship between Jews and Christians.

More recently we must mention the promising development of the dialogue between the Holy See and the Al-Azhar Mosque with the "Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together" (2019) signed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam. It starts by saying: "Faith leads a believer to see in the other a brother or sister to be supported and loved. Through faith in God, who has created the universe, creatures and all human

beings (equal on account of his mercy), believers are called to express this human fraternity by safeguarding creation and the entire universe and supporting all persons, especially the poorest and those most in need". This document is an achievement and should serve as a model for other reconciliation processes.

Between Christians and Muslims fraternity can easily be seen as a common principle as both religions believe in God as Creator. Where there is no faith in a Creator of the human kind fraternity should be deduced from our common nature: conscience, freedom, dignity, reason.

Fratelli Tutti is a call for reshaping economic, social and cultural life in accordance with the principle of fraternity. What we need is a new impulse, a change in our mind which implies: stop devastating the planet, stop economic exploitation of the poorest populations. We must return to human integral ecology which is the first step in generating a new feeling of fraternity.

Philosophical Reflections on *Fratelli Tutti*

Vittorio Hösle

Pope Francis' third encyclical, "given in Assisi, at the tomb of Saint Francis, on 3 October, Vigil of the Feast of the Saint, in the year 2020",[1] is clearly conceived as a complement to his second encyclical, *Laudato si'*, which, too, referred to Saint Francis already in its title. While the earlier text had its focus on the relation of humans to nature (and of course also its repercussions on human society), the central concern of the later one is from the beginning the relation between humans. Thus, it is connected to a much longer history of theology as well as of the ecclesiastic *magisterium*; for the ecological problem began to be understood as a crucial scientific, political, philosophical, and theological problem only in the course of the 20th century. This does not entail that the second encyclical addresses less urgent themes or is less original in its conceptual work. As a philosopher, I want to focus on three issues that I found particularly striking. First, I will analyze how the sources used by the Holy Father *express* the basic content of the encyclical (I). Second, I want to reflect on the theory of moral knowledge, which is partly explicitly exposed, partly alluded to by the encyclical (II). Third, I want to discuss the duality of personal and institutional fraternity recognized by Pope Francis and the complex relation and even tension between these two forms (III).

[1] I quote the encyclical according to the online version of the Vatican: http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html#_ftnref257

I.

Let me begin with a delineation of the very clear structure of the encyclical. In the first chapter, "Dark clouds over a closed world", Pope Francis engages in a critical descriptive account of the world's contemporary state. Despite all its opportunities, globalization can lead to a general superficiality and indifference, which can easily be strengthened by the modern media. This explains the need to go back to the core of the Christian message, exposed in the second chapter, "A stranger on the road". This message can help us in "Envisaging and engendering an open world", opposed to the closed world mentioned at the beginning, and in shaping "A heart open to the whole world" – these are the titles of the third and fourth chapter. This conversion of the heart must not be limited to the individual, however; it must manifest itself in "A better kind of politics" as well as in "Dialogue and friendship in society" and "Paths of renewed encounter", to quote the titles of the next three chapters. The eighth and final chapter, "Religions at the service of fraternity in our world", exposes a theology of the various religions and their common concern to spread God's love to human society in form of fraternity.

One of the most striking formal features of the encyclical is certainly the frequent quotation (most extensively in the antepenultimate paragraph, § 285) from the document signed by both Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Ahmad Al-Tayyeb. For the Sunnite Imam inspired his thought in a way similar to the impact that the Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew had on the composition of the earlier encyclical, as he tells us at the beginning (§ 5). Not being a theologian myself, I can only hazard the guess that this is the first time in the history of papal encyclicals that a text co-authored by a Muslim plays such an important role beside the traditional quotations from the Bible, the Church Fathers, for example Irenaeus, Lactantius, and Augustine, the Scholastics, particularly Aquinas, and eccle-

siastical documents by episcopal synods, earlier pontiffs, and by the author himself. But not only a Muslim authority is quoted with approval. Concerning the command *Lev* 19:18 "Love your neighbour as yourself", we read that it "was usually understood as referring to one's fellow citizens, yet the boundaries gradually expanded, especially in the Judaism that developed outside of the land of Israel. We encounter the command not to do to others what you would not want them to do to you (cf. *Tob* 4:15). In the first century before Christ, Rabbi Hillel stated: 'This is the entire Torah. Everything else is commentary'" (§ 59, whose footnote points to the Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat, 31a). The passage is fascinating for two reasons.

First, it recognizes a gradual evolution in the moral doctrines of the Bible. That such an evolution occurred is evident to everyone who can think historically and is trained hermeneutically; but whoever remembers that the oath against modernism was required of all clergy and professors in philosophical-theological seminaries until 1967, that is, nine years after Jorge Mario Bergoglio joined the Jesuits (and two years before his ordination), cannot help being surprised by the speed with which reasonable doctrines once condemned are now acknowledged in the most authoritative Church documents. Second, the passage suggests that already before Christ Judaism had begun to develop more universalistic ethical ideas than "in the oldest texts of the Bible" (§ 61). But Jesus goes beyond Rabbi Hillel because he turns the Golden Rule from its negative form into its positive one. "In the New Testament, Hillel's precept was expressed in positive terms: 'In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets' (*Mt* 7:12). This command is universal in scope, embracing everyone on the basis of our shared humanity, since the heavenly Father 'makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good' (*Mt* 5:45)" (§ 60). Even if it has a Christian origin, its validity and its range are not limited to Christians. Based on this command, Pope Francis reiterates the

recent condemnation of the death penalty by the magisterium (§§ 263 ff.) and, while not denying the right to defend oneself and to fight against injustice (§ 241), warns against "an overly broad interpretation of this potential right" in the recourse to war (§ 258).

These reflections are found in the context of a splendid interpretation of the Parable of the Good Samaritan, the main focus of the second chapter of the encyclical. Why is this interpretation so profound? On the one hand, it is fed by knowledge of the historical context; on the other hand, it is not simply an erudite reflection on a text of the past but applies it to our own situation and shows that we all share traits of the various characters of the story – the robbers, the people who pass by without helping ("the secret allies" of the robbers, as Pope Francis calls them, § 75), the victim, and ideally the Samaritan too, *if* we make the right choices. It is exactly this combination of historical contextualization and application to the present that leads to the central point of the interpretation. For we must know that the Jews looked down on the Samaritans and considered them impure (§ 82). By depicting a member of this despised religious community as true "neighbor", unlike the priest and the Levite, Jesus shows us that the mere belonging to a religious community is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for fulfilling God's central command. And clearly Pope Francis teaches that this applies also to membership in the Catholic Church. Living love is more important than preaching it, as Saint Francis showed in his visit to Sultan Malik-el-Kamil. "Francis did not wage a war of words aimed at imposing doctrines; he simply spread the love of God" (§ 4). Despite all their dogmatic differences, the world religions can and should agree on condemning violence, opting for a meaningful interreligious dialogue, and recognizing the values, rights, and duties flowing from human dignity. Pope Francis, who, in the great tradition of Christian humanism, did not hesitate to quote pagan authors like Virgil

(§ 34) and Cicero (§ 35) in his text, at the end declares his intellectual debt to non-Catholic Christians such as Martin Luther King and Desmond Tutu, but also to the Hindu Mahatma Gandhi (§ 286). Yet he ends, before the two final prayers (the first of which can be shared by all believers in God, the second by all Christians), with quotes from Blessed Charles de Foucauld. His commitment to the Christian identity, and to the doctrine of the Trinity as the metaphysical foundation of the imperative of love (§ 85), is not diminished by the respect for other religious traditions (§ 277). And this respect he does not only *teach* or *demand*; he *expresses* and *lives* it in the way in which he uses sources from other traditions and integrates them into the rich magisterium of the Catholic Church.

II.

Pope Francis' tireless engagement in interreligious dialogue must not be constructed as suggesting that theological truths are a function of what happens in such dialogues. On the contrary, he insists most forcefully on the necessity of an ontological basis for consensus and thus rejects the consensus theory of truth. Something is not true because a consensus may be found with regard to it; a consensus should receive a doctrine because it is true. While Pope Francis recognizes pluralism as an undeniable fact of the contemporary condition, he rightly warns against relativism with the excellent argument that ultimately it corrodes the belief in any objective value order – and thus also in the duty to love. If there is no ideal value order, values are merely a matter of social forces, and therefore they will be at the mercy of raw or, which is perhaps even worse, hidden and manipulative power. "The solution is not relativism. Under the guise of tolerance, relativism ultimately leaves the interpretation of moral values to those in power, to be defined as they see fit" (§ 206). It is crucial that we understand that the moral law is not made but only discovered by society. "Murder is not wrong simply because it

is socially unacceptable and punished by law, but because of a deeper conviction. This is a non-negotiable truth attained by the use of reason and accepted in conscience. A society is noble and decent not least for its support of the pursuit of truth and its adherence to the most basic of truths" (§ 207). Pope Francis rightly underlines that this "metaphysics of morals" (if I may use this term not to be found in the encyclical) must be accompanied by a corresponding epistemology. It is not sufficient that there are moral values, our mind must be conceived as being able to relate to them and grasp them as the truth *par excellence*, and this means: It must be able to go beyond the sensual inclinations that characterize our animal nature. "This calls for acknowledging that the human mind is capable of transcending immediate concerns and grasping certain truths that are unchanging, as true now as in the past. As it peers into human nature, reason discovers universal values derived from that same nature" (§ 208). If we do no longer uphold a sound metaphysics and epistemology of moral values, there is the real risk that those in power may deny fundamental human rights and still manage to forge a consensus in "an apathetic or intimidated population" and even beyond their own country in a large group of nations (§ 209). "As a result of the displacement of moral reasoning, the law is no longer seen as reflecting a fundamental notion of justice but as mirroring notions currently in vogue. Breakdown ensues: everything is 'leveled down' by a superficial bartered consensus. In the end, the law of the strongest prevails" (§ 210).

Pope Francis's central aim is to find a balance between a justification of the current practice of dialogue (to which in a pluralistic society there is no alternative except violence or manipulation) and the traditional metaphysics of values. Such balance is only possible if the practice of the dialogue is itself inspired by the recognition of certain metaphysical principles. For merely spending time together and chatting, while better than going to war against each other, is not yet a true dialogue. A dialogue that

really searches for truth must fulfill certain criteria: The concepts used must be clear and distinct, the arguments must be valid and, ideally, they must be even sound – that is, they must start from true premises. Since the premises are often controversial, it is important that various positions are seriously debated and investigated with respect to their consequences; and since the specialization in the various disciplines is based on a deliberate abstraction from other aspects of reality that continue to exist, the various disciplines must be united in a common search. "Such dialogue needs to be enriched and illumined by clear thinking, rational arguments, a variety of perspectives and the contribution of different fields of knowledge and points of view. Nor can it exclude the conviction that it is possible to arrive at certain fundamental truths always to be upheld. Acknowledging the existence of certain enduring values, however demanding it may be to discern them, makes for a robust and solid social ethics. Once those fundamental values are acknowledged and adopted through dialogue and consensus, we realize that they rise above consensus; they transcend our concrete situations and remain non-negotiable. Our understanding of their meaning and scope can increase – and in that respect, consensus is a dynamic reality – but in themselves, they are held to be enduring by virtue of their inherent meaning" (§ 211). The lighting upon ultimate truths is not something to be regretted because of its supposed limitation of further discussion; rather, it is the starting point of all subsequent dialogues that try to apply the general principles to various practical rules (§ 214). And in this process, it is crucial that the people concerned by certain actions and policies get a chance to speak and are not simply objects of paternalistic care from above. At the same time, the empirical knowledge of the scientists is required in order to find the means that are really able to achieve the intended ends. Pope Francis seems to imply that many norms are the result of a syllogism containing both evaluative (or normative) and descriptive premises.

III.

Modern ethics in both its major modern variants, the Kantian and the utilitarian form, is universalistic in nature. It recognizes that if someone is forbidden, permitted, or obliged to do something, this holds, *ceteris paribus*, for everybody else. The expansion of the reach of moral duties to all human beings is often connected with the axial age, but one has to recognize that Plato and Aristotle still had a particularistic vision of ethics: Most of their moral norms are limited to the members of one's own polis. Only with Stoicism a process sets in that will lead to the great Christian tradition of natural law, sketched already in the first book of Augustine's *De libero arbitrio*, worked out by Aquinas in the *Summa theologiae*, and completed by the Late Spanish Scholastics, who finally recognized that subjective individual rights have to be considered as a crucial part of the objective legal system. The extension of the moral horizon was certainly fostered by the increase of interconnectedness – first in the empire created by Alexander the Great, then in the Roman Empire and its medieval successor, finally in the Spanish Empire extending to the New World. The increase of power had to be matched by more comprehensive moral norms, and there is little doubt that no age of human history has achieved the degree of reciprocal dependence that we witness today. We certainly need a truly universal ethics.

Fraternity is an ethical concept that goes beyond the duty to omit certain acts – it asks for positive help. And here one has to recognize that there are unsurmountable limits and there is a danger of overburdening the addressee of the norm. Since fraternity entails at least a perception of the individuality of the person that I consider my sibling (and of course, on this basis, also much more), there is simply no way one can practice real fraternity with regard to several billion people – our life span is too short to seriously get to know more than several thousand people. The only way that a truly fraternal society can be

erected is by harnessing one of the greatest social inventions, the division of labor. Only by ascribing concrete responsibilities to specific individuals can we achieve the desired social successes. I would even go so far as to say that in some cases we not only have the right but even the duty to ignore the stranger on the road – if, and only if, taking care of him conflicts with more pressing duties (such as that of a teacher or a doctor to arrive in time at school or the hospital) and if we can trust that there are institutions to help, like an ambulance that we can call. But we are allowed to neglect such duties only if we support the appropriate institutions that already exist, nowadays still mainly at the national level, for example by faithfully paying our taxes, and if we contribute to form more comprehensive institutions from the local to the international level. Despite many errors, probably inevitable given the complexity of the matter, I do think that institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization have diminished human suffering considerably, as is visible, among other things, in the increase of life expectancy over the last decades. Furthermore, one cannot deny that our duties to positive help, unlike the easily implementable duty not to harm anybody, must be graduated according to moral proximity.

All this is not denied by Pope Francis, who clearly connects the moral ideal of charity to social and political institutions, writing that even the Good Samaritan needed an inn (§ 163 f.) and recognizing that building bridges is as important as helping an elderly person cross a river (§ 186). But I think that he is right that our trust in these institutions can become a cheap way to evade responsibilities. First, such institutions have to be measured by their success, and their success is not guaranteed. Circumstances may change and demand new ideas – Pope Francis criticizes, for example, the traditional model of development that tried to impose a uniform world culture without sensibility for local varieties, which, however, should not be sacri-

ficed (§§ 142 ff.). Second, human nature is such that it may even hijack such institutions and deliberately use them for ends that are different from those for which they were created (§ 166). And third, Pope Francis insists on the fact that the personal encounter with the individual in need cannot be replaced by even the smartest economic policies, as necessary as they are to help people find employment (§ 162). We need individual virtues, particularly the capacity of sacrificing oneself. "Only a gaze transformed by charity can enable the dignity of others to be recognized and, as a consequence, the poor to be acknowledged and valued in their dignity, respected in their identity and culture, and thus truly integrated into society. That gaze is at the heart of the authentic spirit of politics. It sees paths open up that are different from those of a soulless pragmatism" (§ 187). We have to recover kindness (§ 224), knowing that the "architecture" of institutions, often in the hand of experts, needs to be supplemented by the "art" of individual care, which is accessible to everybody (§ 231). From the point of view of ethical theory, it seems to me that Pope Francis wants to "tame" utilitarianism and discourse ethics, the two dominant forms of public ethical reflection, partly by appealing to certain absolute prohibitions, as they are upheld in the Kantian tradition, partly by insisting on ideal values, as they were defended by Max Scheler, and partly by continuing the rich tradition of virtue ethics from Aristotle to Aquinas. The ultimate aim of *Fratelli Tutti* is to remind us all that the spring from which all the great institutional achievements of modernity originate is the command to love our neighbor and that even a culture which would solve all social problems but was no longer consciously connecting all its activities back to this source, would only be "a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal".

Fratelli Tutti and the Criticism of Capitalism

Rocco Buttiglione

Is Pope Francis a communist?

Many people accuse Pope Francis of being a communist. Is he really? Of course not. He is not a politician and not even a philosopher of politics. He repeats the age-old Christian social doctrine in the new context of today's economy and society. Nevertheless, this doctrine resounds in today's context with a different timbre and this is what causes so much apprehension over some of the Pope's statements in one sector of our public opinion. This different timbre is what we want to investigate in the present paper. We will also register similarities and differences with some aspects of Marx's thought that perhaps deserve to be recovered after the death of Marxism.

We still need a movement for the liberation of the human person

After the collapse of Marxism many concluded that capitalism had definitively triumphed. Many thought that the market alone was sufficient to mediate all human relations and interactions and to create a just society. A further consequence was that with communism the great experience of the Workers' Movement had also arrived to an end. A large part of the left shared this opinion too, and substituted the modernization of sexual mores for the quest for social justice.

I remember discussing this issue with Alberto Methol Ferré at the beginning of the '90s. Methol Ferré was a great friend of mine and of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, and perhaps the greatest Latin-American thinker of the last part of the 20th century. Alberto thought that with the end of Marxism the struggle for so-

cial justice and for the liberation of the oppressed was not going to cease. Marxism was wrong but the oppression of the poor was real. Marx had led the Workers' Movement into a blind alley but the fall of communism would not bring with itself the end of the Workers' Movement, but only the beginning of a new stage in its history. In this stage the Catholic Church could and should try to take the leadership of this movement.

It seems to me that this is the purpose of the Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*.

An ethical and religious criticism of capitalism

Francis' critique of capitalism is ethical. The existing system is measured with the ethical measure of the Gospel and is found unjust. One part of mankind is starving while another part wastes an enormous amount of resources.

The system is aimed at the maximization of exchange values and not of use values, goods useful to make life better for people. Men live to make money, instead of making money in order to live. Those who are not useful for the purpose of making money are easily discarded as superfluous. They are just waste. Those who can make money participate in the circle of production and consumption, but are they happy? They are not, because they are alienated. The concept of alienation that helps us understand Francis is not that of Marx (economic alienation) but that of Wojtyła: man is really by himself (not alienated) when he is a member of a living community animated by love and reciprocal care. Man is ordered through his essence to be an "I" but also a "we". The person fulfills her ultimate destiny through an act of belonging to other persons in love. The real wealth of personal life consists in the relations of reciprocal belonging in love that have been established in the course of one's life. If we understand this then we realize the reason why the preferential option for the poor does not contradict the commandment of universal love. The system of structural sin that condemns the

poor to a life of hardship or death by starvation at the same time condemns the rich to a life of alienation and inauthenticity. Here Francis walks in the footsteps of Bartolomé de Las Casas: the great Dominican friar pitied the material plight of the Indios but was even more worried about the salvation of the souls of the Spaniards.

Francis' criticism is an immanent criticism. He is not an economist and does not propose a different model. He encourages us, however, to rethink the anthropological presuppositions of the current economy while he points out its apparent shortcomings.

The admonitions of the Pope encounter here some reflections that are growing in the world of professional economists. These reflections are not ethically motivated; rather, they arise out of the fact that the real empirical functioning of the economy does not correspond to the models proposed in the handbooks.

Let us consider one point. Francis has expressed more than once his distrust of the idea that the welfare will "trickle down" through market mechanisms and even reach the poor in the end. We have sound logical models that make us sure that the market tends to a position of equilibrium with the full employment of all factors (labor included). This a priori knowledge is however contradicted by the empirical existence of huge numbers of unemployed in many world economies. John Maynard Keynes had already observed that the model of marginalist economy works only in the long run, but in the long run we will all be dead, and workers wish to find a job in the limited time of their lives.

The model, moreover, presupposes a perfect market in which capital and labor can move freely to exploit the best opportunities without barriers of any kind and with free access to the productive factor with equal conditions. This is however not the case in the real world. Real markets are full of barriers that create monopoly or oligopoly conditions and only a sound economic policy can keep the markets open. The poor have very limited and unequal access to the market, when they have any

and are not completely discarded. They do not possess the required skills and qualifications, they have no access to credit, very often they cannot even register their small enterprises for activity in the market.

What is the reason for this difference between the theoretical and the practical functioning of the market? The maximization of value production is one of the driving forces of real markets but not the only one. The interest of the élite to preserve their power position is an equally powerful force that shapes the real markets. The game is rigged in favor of the powerful. It is fully legitimate to demand that this disturbance be balanced by sound policies empowering the poor.

Is Pope Francis against capitalism?

If we identify capitalism with the market he is not. Pope Francis fully recognizes the positivity of market mechanisms. If we pretend market mechanism is sufficient to mediate all human interactions, the Pope will tell us that this proposition is false and may serve as an ideological cover for the manipulation of the market against the poor. Rather, he will advocate a political orientation of the market to put it at the service of the poor and of mankind at large.

Fraternity and Social Friendship as a "Spiritual Heritage" of Pope Francis

Comment on the Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*

Pedro Morandé

The encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* is a kind of "spiritual heritage" of Pope Francis, as Rafael Navarro-Vals of the Spanish Academy of Social Sciences wrote, since according to the Pope himself, it refers to "issues related to fraternity and social friendship that have always been a concern of mine. In recent years I have spoken of them repeatedly and in different settings. In this encyclical I have sought to bring together many of those statements and to situate them in a broader context of reflection" (n. 5).

Which is this broader context of reflection? Not only should we mention the irruption of the Covid-19 pandemic that has left many dead or locked down in hospitals and at home, affecting employment, commerce education and many other important social activities. To this new context also belong his frequent interreligious encounters with Orthodox Christians, Jews and Muslims, his addresses to many governments and to the United Nations, his pastoral visits to different churches and his daily sermons in Santa Marta, which are nowadays an important milestone to understand Pontifical teachings. Above all, it is important to mention his special devotion to Saint Francis of Assisi, who inspired his famous encyclical *Laudato si'* and whom the Pope venerates not only as a brother in the faith but as a father. *Fratelli Tutti* stands out: "Francis did not wage a war aimed at imposing doctrines; he simply spread the love of God... In this way he became a father to all and inspired the vision of a fraternal society. Indeed, 'only the man who approaches others, not

to draw them into his own life, but to help them become ever more fully themselves, can truly be called a father'" (n. 4).

It seems very significant to highlight this paternal allusion of the encyclical, because it reflects the vital attitude with which the Pontifical teachings have considered social reality in many times. Often, with good or bad will, the Social Teachings of the Church have been criticized for abandoning their religious approach to concentrate exclusively on the profane. But, like his predecessors, the Pope teaches that creation cannot be addressed without considering God's action and without taking into account His deep mark left behind on His work, specially the creation of the human being, made in the image and likeness of God and called to a loving and fruitful dialogue with his Creator.

Furthermore, as the Pope points out in the above-mentioned quote, the paternal character of God does not manifest itself once and for all times but, according to the vital dynamism of His own creature, it manifests itself step by step with the maturity of its conscience and of its free response to God's invitation to dialogue. The filial condition of the human being develops in each historical circumstance. Human dynamism therefore is not separable from the paternal dynamism of God Himself.

This approach allows us to better understand anthropology but also the evolutionary character of society or, as sociologists prefer to call it, the "processual" dimension of social facts. Just as God manifests Himself paternally and creatively in human life in a progressive way, so does society structure the human phenomenon with a temporal dynamism in constant movement and adaptation to changing historical circumstances. When someone speaks of "globalization", for example, it is not referring to a phenomenon structured in a fixed and invariant way, but rather to a process that has taken several centuries to mature and remain open to the future. Therefore, the main conceptual error on understanding social reality is to be carried away by "the shadows of a closed world", as the Pope mentions

in the first chapter of his encyclical. That approach manifests an ideological, normative, pedagogical, communicational and existential confinement, that is, a closure of time which hides the living mystery of God, reducing Him to one of the many idols in the forum.

What are – according to the Pope – the main shadows of this confinement? Under the generic mantle of globalization, he identifies two dynamisms, both antagonistic and convergent: the dynamics of the market and the dynamics of populism. Although from different spheres, both have managed to converge in a single great dynamic that moves the contemporary world. On the one hand, the dynamics of the market have become autonomous through the stability of financial mechanisms, which increasingly regulate social expectations, regardless of the particular and collective rights recognized to economic actors. On the other hand, the dynamism created by the demands of the population for public and private benefits regarding their living standards, the social security of unemployment, the situation of retirement, the population aging, the extension of education, of secure housing and many other demands have become more acute. Some of them have generated populist tendencies, very violent at times, which, far from protecting personal rights, have been used for conjunctural purposes not accordingly with people's well-being.

Both dynamisms tend to contradict, even though at times they also converge and mutually support each other in the use of violence, as it has occurred in the realm of migratory population, in the pressure over prices and in the control of the pandemic virus last year. Anyway, according to the Pope, the contradiction between both dynamisms represents one of the greatest social tensions in the present, far beyond the ideological and geostrategic debate of the world powers.

Although the encyclical has focused on the two above-mentioned mechanisms considered most relevant to human wellbe-

ing today, it could be said that other analogous mechanisms go through the governance of the social order as a whole, such as planned reproduction of human beings, science, public health and education policies, massive public and private media net connections and many other social issues that have been formed throughout the centuries with the evolution of society. Sociologists usually refer to all of them as the emergence of a functional differentiated society, in which people count according to the function they fulfill in a certain subsystem without regarding the functions they significantly fulfill in others. The resulting disaggregation is valid for society as a whole, particularly for its governance, for the lack of trust among people, for the warranty of social order. This cultural tendency is indeed more important nowadays for the integrity of each and every person having difficulties to rebuild the unity and the truth of the self. In family and among friends, which are both not functional systems, the self still seems possible, but equally subjected to the tensions of the functional order.

Following the terminology at hand, the Pope calls this functional disaggregation "deconstructionism" (n. 13), pointing out that it generates a throwaway culture, since it abandons or discards ordinary people when weak, sick, disabled, unemployed or stateless. They have to live in a world being sometimes victims of political and institutional violence or unable to defend themselves against it. For the Pope, an emblematic example of these "shadows of confinement" has been present for years in the migratory phenomenon, both in Europe and in other parts of the world, making evident how economic, political and cultural tensions are imposed on helpless people, both in their countries of origin and in destination countries.

But in a certain way, and as a result of the tensions described above, all human beings have become migrants in their respective countries. That is why the Pope emphasizes that it is not enough to generically demand justice and equality. Fraternity,

social friendship and interhuman valuation which is possible in the local sphere, in face-to-face relationships, as often happens in the relationship between men and women, in families, in schools and in all cultural institutions, are urgently required. The expressions "fraternity" and "social friendship" not only define a small area of human scale interaction outside social complexity, but above all a dynamism, a development which drives and stimulates human potentialities, and the desire for a shared future. Friendship combats the indifference observed among those who consider themselves mainly as instruments for economic or political projects and are deprived of being protagonists of their own lives. In return, it offers participation in a shared life.

Universal brotherhood is undoubtedly a proposal for peace and justice, as has been the constant inspiration of the magisterium of all Popes after Vatican II and certainly of the present Pope. It can be said that this renewed vision also represents a great advance in the formulation of the Social Doctrine of the Church, insofar as the traditional ideological discussion of reference between liberalism and Marxism is subsumed in a broader reflection on the objective social mechanisms that condition the development of human existence in the context of a more globalized and interdependent world. This requires a deeper understanding of God's Plan at these moments in history. It requires, above all, a vision and experience of God in whom fraternity is founded as a sign of His fatherhood. That is also the reason why the Pope concludes his encyclical with a deep prayer to God as the common Father of mankind.

Fraternity Takes Concrete Form in Generating Relational Goods

Pierpaolo Donati

Abstract

Fraternity, understood as an interpersonal relationship between two or more subjects, is expressed and made concrete in a specific type of goods: relational goods. Relational goods are born on a micro level in the lifeworlds (primary relational goods), but then they can originate forms of civil associations and organizations at a meso level (secondary relational goods), thus contributing to giving a specific configuration to an entire community or society. This contribution aims to explain this important way of considering and making operational the meaning of fraternity which is at the heart of Pope Francis' encyclical *Fratres Omnes*. To understand the role of relational goods in creating a fraternal society, we must start from the observation that modern society, typically Western, was built on the basis of the principles of (individual) freedom and equality (between individuals), putting aside the principle of *fraternité*. But a society like this has limits that lead it to self-defeat. Freedom and equality require the *'third'*, i.e. fraternity, otherwise they fall into *lib/lab* systems which generate inequalities and threaten fundamental human rights.

Premise

Fraternity, understood as an interpersonal relationship between two or more subjects, is expressed and made concrete in a specific type of social goods: relational goods. Relational goods are born on a micro level in the lifeworlds (primary relational goods), but then they can originate forms of civil associations

and organizations at a meso level (secondary relational goods), thus contributing to giving a specific configuration to an entire community or society. This contribution aims to explain this important way of considering and making operational the meaning of fraternity which is at the heart of Pope Francis' encyclical *Fratres Omnes*.

We are brothers in that we have one Father. It is an ontological reality. On the sociological level, however, there is the problem of *recognizing* this reality. Someone argues that the sense of fraternity is innate in human beings, but I must observe that we cannot derive fraternal action from simple ontology. It is enough to remember the story of Abel and Cain, or Jacob and Esau, to realize it. If, as I believe, there is the problem of how human persons come to recognize their brotherhood, we must account for it on the cognitive level and on social practices. Certainly the sense of fraternity develops in the family among its children, and therefore it is in the socialization processes that the answer to the problems of recognition must be sought. However, the empirical fact of being brothers and sisters in a family is not enough, it is necessary to become aware that living fraternity well is not only a duty towards those who share blood ties or other primary ties, but it is a necessary way to humanize ourselves and social relations with others in general. The recognition of this reality, that is, of the universal sense of fraternity, occurs in the generation and enjoyment of what I call relational goods (Donati 2019a, 2019c), which are understood and practiced beyond the family and social circles with relatives and friends, that is, also with the strangers we meet in social life. Therefore, if it is true that we are ontologically brothers, the task of recognizing this reality depends on the socialization processes that lead people to recognize and practice relational goods.

To understand the role of relational goods in creating a fraternal society, we must start from the observation that modern society, typically Western, was built on the basis of the princi-

ples of (individual) freedom and equality (between individuals), putting aside the principle of *fraternité*. But a society like this has limits that lead it to self-defeat. Freedom and equality require the *'third'*, fraternity, otherwise they fall into *lib/lab* systems (Donati 2021), full of inequalities and violations of fundamental human rights.

It is important to underline that fraternity is not an outcome emerging from the interactions between freedom (*lib*) and equality (*lab*), but is an autonomous and *sui generis* Third, which has its own origins that are not found either in the market or in the state, but in the life-worlds of civil society.

At stake is the conception of what a good life is all about. In this contribution I start by asking myself the following question: in which ways and why do hypermodernized societies change the concept and practices of the 'good life'? What are the prospects for the near future? Human happiness is being redefined as the possibility of enjoying opportunities that present themselves in contingent situations. From a sociological viewpoint, it becomes a matter of analyzing who offers these opportunities, how they are used, and what effects they produce.

I argue that there are three main sources offering opportunities: the *lib/lab* systems, a global communication matrix of an impersonal nature, and new collective subjects of civil society organized in social networks. The opportunities afforded by these three sources are selected on the basis of a multiplicity of logics (individualistic, systemic, or relational). I claim that these different moralities of the good life are generated according to different ways of addressing the relation between 'the social' and 'the human', and, more generally according to the diverse ways of considering social relations as the decisive reality fostering human fullfilment. In the end, I argue that, in a society conceived as a field of opportunities, the discriminating factor of 'living well' becomes the relational or non-relational nature of the good that is sought and realized by the acting subjects. This

guiding idea is what supports a relational economy and relational social work in dealing with welfare and well-being issues. The good life becomes a matter of the modalities with which agents and social networks produce their relational goods or, vice versa, engender relational evils. The social economy, understood as a humanistic economy based on the political regulation of the market by the political-administrative system (as it has been understood so far: Lutz ed. 1990, 1999), has not worked due to the misunderstanding of the relational nature of social goods. The common good has often been conceived as a 'total', holistic entity, basically an aggregate good, rather than as a relational good in the proper sense (Donati 2012).

As Benedict XVI wrote in the encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, we need a new way of thinking that "requires a *deeper critical evaluation of the category of relation*" (≠ 53). Love is not just a beautiful feeling of affection, but *a real social relationship*: "love is not merely a sentiment. Sentiments come and go. A sentiment can be a marvellous first spark, but it is not the fullness of love. Earlier we spoke of the process of purification and maturation by which *eros* comes fully into its own, becomes love in the full meaning of the word. It is characteristic of mature love that it calls into play all man's potentialities; it engages the whole man, so to speak" (≠ 17).

Love is ignited by good feelings, but it needs to grow in a relationship and as a relationship to others: this is the relational good. In the words of Benedict XVI in the encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*:

> "It [charity] gives real substance to the personal relationship with God and with neighbour; it is the principle not only of micro-relationships (with friends, with family members or within small groups) but also of macro-relationships (social, economic and political ones)" (≠ 2) (...) "Truth frees charity from the constraints of an emotionalism that deprives it of relational and social content, and of

a fideism that deprives it of human and universal breathing-space." (≠ 3) (...) "Without truth, charity is confined to a narrow field devoid of relations" (≠ 4) (...) "The *earthly city* is promoted not merely by relationships of rights and duties, but to an even greater and more fundamental extent by relationships of gratuitousness, mercy and communion. Charity always manifests God's love in human relationships as well" (≠ 6) (...) "The sharing of goods and resources, from which authentic development proceeds, is not guaranteed by merely technical progress and relationships of utility, but by the potential of love that overcomes evil with good (cf. Rom 12:21), opening up the path towards reciprocity of consciences and liberties" (≠ 9) (...) "In this way it will be possible to experience and to *steer the globalization of humanity in relational terms, in terms of communion and the sharing of goods*" (≠ 42) (...) "Thinking of this kind requires a *deeper critical evaluation of the category of relation*. This is a task that cannot be undertaken by the social sciences alone, insofar as the contribution of disciplines such as metaphysics and theology is needed if man's transcendent dignity is to be properly understood. As a spiritual being, the human creature is defined through interpersonal relations. The more authentically he or she lives these relations, the more his or her own personal identity matures. It is not by isolation that man establishes his worth, but by placing himself in relation with others and with God. Hence these relations take on fundamental importance. The same holds true for peoples as well. A metaphysical understanding of the relations between persons is therefore of great benefit for their development" (≠ 53) (...) "The theme of development can be identified with the inclusion-in-relation of all individuals and peoples within the one community of the human family, built in solidarity on the basis of the fundamental values

> of justice and peace" (≠ 54) (...) "The Christian revelation of the unity of the human race presupposes a *metaphysical interpretation of the "humanum" in which relationality is an essential element*" (≠ 55) (...)

It is in continuity with this perspective that we need to read the great message of Pope Francis' *Fratres Omnes*:

> No one can experience the true beauty of life without relating to others, without having real faces to love. This is part of the mystery of authentic human existence. "Life exists where there is bonding, communion, fraternity; and life is stronger than death when it is built on true relationships and bonds of fidelity. On the contrary, there is no life when we claim to be self-sufficient and live as islands: in these attitudes, death prevails (≠ 87) (...)
>
> Nor can I reduce my life to relationships with a small group, even my own family; I cannot know myself apart from a broader network of relationships, including those that have preceded me and shaped my entire life. My relationship with those whom I respect has to take account of the fact that they do not live only for me, nor do I live only for them. Our relationships, if healthy and authentic, open us to others who expand and enrich us (≠ 89) (...) charity finds expression not only in close and intimate relationships but also in macro-relationships: social, economic and political (≠ 181) (...) wellspring of human dignity and fraternity is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. From it, there arises, for Christian thought and for the action of the Church, *the primacy given to relationship, to the encounter with the sacred mystery of the other*, to universal communion with the entire human family, as a vocation of all (≠ 277)

The thesis that I would like to argue here from the point of view of the social sciences, in the light of a sound relational theory, is that relational goods such as mutual trust, cooperation, solidarity, peace, and social friendship are created through social

relations inspired by the principle of reciprocity. With a warning: reciprocity is not a relationship of utility (it is not a *do ut des*), but it is the social rule that supports a symbolic mutual exchange of goods, having a subsidiary and supportive character not only for dyadic relationships, but also for wider communities. Reciprocity makes the virtue of charity social, that is relational. The Good Samaritan does a good personal deed, but that deed must be read and interpreted as part of a circuit of gifts extended by the I-You dyad to the collective relationship involving a We, from small communities, such as a family, to international relations. *On a practical level, fraternity is a relationship that leads to the extension of personal/individual charity to a wider social network as a relational good, by practicing reciprocity as mutual support between people.*

What is a 'good life'?

My argument is that in a society conceived as a field of opportunities, the discriminating factor of 'living well' becomes the relational or non-relational nature of the good that is sought and realized by the acting subjects. It is a matter of clarifying the modalities with which the good is generated and which effects follow from it. The proof of this argument consists in giving evidences that there exists a specific logic of opportunities that is capable of realizing a 'society *of* the human', i.e. social forms in which, whatever the means used to realize social relations, the latter can be generated only by subjects who are actively oriented to each other according to a supra-functional sense (Donati and Archer 2015). This is a society in which, from the standpoint of relational realism, the good life coincides with the creation and enjoyment of relational goods.

I am interested in shedding light on practices that are inspired by a realist utopia that uses opportunities in order to realize a *modus vivendi* that allows people to enjoy relational goods in different social spheres. In short, I would like to highlight the social forms of the good life generated in social contexts

that are capable of including new life opportunities within the social relations that orient our conducts of life toward an 'agonistic sociability'. This oxymoron alludes to the fact that, instead of encouraging citizens to bracket their moral and cultural disagreements, we have to cultivate oppositional yet respectful, i.e. relational, civic and political practices. In the field of social services, this means developing relational social work. In short, I argue that a flourishing civil society, on which a civil democracy is grounded, can be fostered by those social networks that are able to generate competing relational goods.

Old and new visions of human happiness

There are two alternative views on what human happiness might be, which have prevailed over the centuries: a *hedonic* idea of happiness and a *eudemonic* one.

For the hedonic conception, happiness is the result of avoiding pain and seeking pleasure, the key concept of all utilitarian schools, in both its individual and aggregated forms. Social relations are considered as 'entities' that can bring pleasure or pain as other 'objects' do.

On the other hand, we find the eudemonic view, which, apart from being more theoretical and holistic, takes a different view of human relationality. It considers happiness as a more complex concept, not strictly limited to attaining pleasure. Happiness is something like flourishing human living, a kind of living that is active, inclusive of all that has intrinsic value. It is the ultimate goal of human life and an indirect result of the practice of virtue.

I will focus on the latter conception, starting from Aristotle, who claims that pleasure is an *enérgeia* of the human body and mind, whereas happiness is the *enérgeia* of a human 'being a human' (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book X, chapters 1-5). Aristotle understood human happiness on two levels.

On the individual level, as the satisfaction of the human being's natural needs (physical, psychological, and sociocultur-

al), with the purpose of enhancing the more elevated human qualities, however one defines them (rationality, contemplation, *otium*, spiritual virtues).

On the social level, life consists in enjoying interpersonal friendship and in conducting a correlated active and peaceful life in the public sphere of the *polis*, with the intention of pursuing the common good. Aristotle does not examine in detail the relational nature of good life, limiting himself to making individual happiness dependent on the happiness of the political community, the latter having primacy over the former. Throughout history many other conceptions have been formulated on this basis, which certainly need not be summarized here. On the one hand, human needs have been discussed at great length, and, on the other, the relationship between individual happiness and collective happiness has been variously described.

What I wish to recall is the fact that in classical thought and until the beginning of modernity, good life is related to two basic conditions: (i) it refers to a naturalness of human needs and thus *presupposes a human nature*, however this is defined, and (ii) it implies that the political community is capable of pursuing the common good by resolving social conflicts and giving citizens the security necessary to enable their human potentialities to flourish. These potentialities are generally understood as virtues.

Virtue (in Latin, *virtus*, and in Greek, ἀρετή-*aretè*) is understood as a disposition of the spirit toward the good; in other words, it is a person's capacity to excel in something, to accomplish a certain act in an excellent way, to be virtuous as the 'perfect way of being'.

In premodern thought virtue has a stable disposition called *habitus* as its prerequisite. *Habitus* is a fundamental means for achieving the good life in that it regenerates a social order conceived as an ideal that is stable and immutable in its principles. From this comes the idea that a happy society, and a good life for its citizens, is achieved by a strict correspondence between

personal virtues and social order, and that it is reproducible over time. The idea that individuals' happiness (as the realization of their virtues) projects itself onto the entire society prevails so that if individuals, as such, act for the good and are happy, the society will also be happy.

This vision lacks relationality. With modernity, this framework is progressively called into question. To the degree to which the individual is no longer incorporated (embedded) in a given community and becomes 'casual' (formally free and available in the capitalist labor market), the distance between the individual and society grows increasingly greater. With the advance of the national state and the spread of capitalism, the two assumptions of premodern thought fall: the notion of human nature and that of the common good are radically changed, altered, overturned, and, with them, the meaning of good life as well.

With the progressive erosion of the metaphysical-religious roots of the past, the problem of how to sensibly conduct one's life becomes an increasingly fraught problem. In a society in which the values that guide life are no longer 'founded' but simply chosen with subjective options, good life presents itself as an always problematic and somehow unreachable goal. The fact is that all of modern culture, from its beginnings to the present day, is marked by the drama of defining 'what is human' and consequently what is, or can be, human happiness.

With post-modernity, the process of change becomes ever faster and deeper. What is the conduct of life that leads to happiness and, even more to the point, what is the society that can foster it? These are questions that are increasingly debated along two main lines: on the one hand, there are those who hold that the good life consists in the emancipation and liberation of individuals' subjectivity from any system constraint (a new form of the hedonic ethos); on the other hand, there are those who believe that it consists in the possibility of building highly techno-functional impersonal social systems that can relieve individ-

uals from their material needs, which is a technocratic reformulation of the eudemonic ethos. In reality, Western modernization mixes both the aforementioned tendencies: individualism and systemic functionalism mix and intermingle with one another. They support and feed off each other.

Social structures, once the possibilities of basing moral values in an objective reality are lost, now function as if the problem of living in a good society can be reduced to a question of individual preferences and tastes that are allowed or not allowed by the system. The happiness of individuals is relegated to the private sphere, where it is subjectified and becomes narcissistic (Lasch 1984) while public happiness (the well-being of social systems) is entrusted to the chance of creating 'reflexive systems' (Beck, Bonss and Lau 2003) that are called reflexive only because they generate more problems than they can solve. To overcome the limits of modernity, new modes of exercising reflexivity are needed, in particular they require *relational reflexivity* (Donati 2011).

Here it seems clear that the problem of human happiness is being posed in radically new terms, for at least two major orders of reasons.

a) Social and cultural systems no longer presuppose the existence of a human nature. On the contrary, they tend to alter existing reality to enter into the realm of the 'post-human', the 'transhuman' (Gane 2005, 2006, 2104). They create the humanoid and the cyborg. All prior forms of humanism become obsolete. In short, human happiness no longer consists in the realization of potentialities that are proper to human nature and only to it, but exists 'elsewhere', an 'elsewhere' that cannot be defined because it does not have either an identity or stable boundaries. It is said that society becomes liquid, and people must live on the edge of chaos.

b) The processes of social differentiation erode the concept of the common good and, with it, the idea that good life can

be guaranteed by a political community. The common good is identified sometimes with public goods, sometimes with total goods, that is, with impersonal entities or entities created by a simple aggregation of individual goods. The idea that public happiness can avail itself of private vices, indeed, that it is the product, even if an unintentional one, of private vices becomes a social norm. The logic of the production of the goods in which happiness consists is left to the neo-liberalism of the market regulated by the state (*lib/lab* arrangement).

As a consequence of all of the above, happiness becomes a mysterious object, a dream, a passion, a conduct of life without a symbolic and normative 'center'. It is no longer a project. It is abandoned to the intrinsic ambivalence of a Western morality that puts everything in doubt and is thought of as being purely 'liquid', while, in fact, it is not, due to the existence of tough structures of social inequality, in particular in accessing social service and in organizing alternatives to the *lib/lab* arrangements.

In reality, this society does not see that the liquid life and the risks that hinder the possibility of achieving the good life depend on precise social and cultural structures. We can ask: where can such a society, which appears to limit itself to being aware of its own inability to solve the problems that it generates, find happiness? Where is the 'good society'? Certainly not in material well-being. Various scholars have evidenced the 'paradox of happiness', which states that in the dynamic of advanced societies, beyond a certain threshold of material well-being, increases in income and material goods do not, in fact, lead to increased happiness but generate its opposite, that is, unhappiness and a whole set of connected individual and social pathologies.

The economists and psychologists of the so-called 'economics of happiness' are still far from giving a convincing answer. In my opinion, the reason for this shortfall, as I will explain below, lies in the fact of not having really understood the role

that social relations play in fostering human flourishing. The human being is a *sui generis* potentiality that can be actualized only through the relationality with other human beings. The central point becomes that of understanding how the logic of opportunities, which is supported by the morphogenetic society (Archer ed. 2013), puts social relations into a state of fluctuation and what consequences this has on the good life.

Three moralities of the good life

In the modern conceptions of the good life, goods are of an either individual or collective nature. This is the same thing as saying that good life is the product of a combination between the freedoms of the economic market (the *lib* side) and the social equality assured by the state through the redistribution of resources (the *lab* side). The differences between the various moralities consist in the norms that regulate the ways of generating and using opportunities supplied by the economic market for the individuals under the umbrella of state redistribution for the whole collectivity. In a nutshell, we can say that there exist two moralities of the good life that drive social changes, and a third morality that is generally considered auxiliary, complementary, and, in any case, residual compared to the other two.

Said in short, the two driving moralities are those of the capitalist market and the state (or political system). The morality of the economic market extols the ideal virtues of honest and efficient competition in producing a never-ending supply of new goods that are supposed to improve the well-being of individuals and society. As a matter of fact, these virtues are not actually practiced. What is really at work is the idea that a good society should allow agents to engage in their free and private activities by means of which they are expected to enrich themselves and the social body (liberal morality). For this morality, opportunities are created by the capitalist market. Of course, there are other kinds of markets, with different moralities, based on different

norms of exchange. But it is well known that capitalism marginalizes these different civil economies (Zamagni, Bruni 2003).

Collective morality, instead, extols the civic virtues of agents' participation in and responsibility toward the public good, which is identified in the total good of the redistributive state that guarantees the rights of citizenship and equality of material starting conditions (socialist morality). For this morality, opportunities are created by the state or the political-administrative systems existing at the different territorial levels.

The third morality, the most marginal one, is that of the social spheres in which the virtues are neither those of the market nor of political citizenship, but make reference to relations of trust, cooperation, and reciprocity in lifeworlds. Opportunities are created in and by the primary and secondary social networks of civil society whose morality is based neither on profit exchange nor on redistributive norms, but on criteria of reciprocity (peer-to-peer production, coproduction, open coordination, partnership, etc.). The marginality of this third morality is attested to by the fact that its guiding-value (*fraternité* or solidarity) is not institutionalized in the cultural system (including the legal system) as, instead, the other two guiding-values are (*liberté* and égalité).

These three moralities refer to different logics of opportunity, which are opportunities in liberal, socialist, and 'associational' terms. All three have their own specific conception of what we call 'life opportunity'. The opportunities offered by the market, those offered by the state, and those offered by the networks of lifeworlds respond to different relational logics intrinsic to the three aforementioned moralities, respectively, of economic exchanges, political safeguards of citizenship, and associative relations. Each logic of opportunities reflects a different morality of social relations.

It then becomes a matter of analyzing who offers the opportunities, how the opportunities are selected and utilized, and what their effects on the good life are.

The good life in the process of globalization

We have to ask ourselves: which logic of opportunities dominates the globalized world? This logic is driven by an 'aesthetic energy' that makes individuals choose favorable opportunities on the basis of a type of utility that is instrumental to goals that are the 'interests of the moment', with no constraining finalities responding to a long-term project – and, thus, without norms that potentially make the choices stable so that individuals end up aggregating and disaggregating with a growing variability that no longer responds to any social order except that of expressing a diffuse spontaneity. Family structures and 'family moralities' offer numerous examples of the variety of ways in which individuals aggregate and disaggregate.

These new situational logics of opportunity seem to correspond to an underlying impulse that we could call '*collective addiction*', favored by the medium of an 'anonymous communication matrix' (Teubner 2006). It is a logic of the search for happiness through an unchecked availability of all possible innovations, which makes people addicted to continual change as if they were addicted to a drug. The process of societal morphogenesis takes the features of an '*addictive society*' (Teubner 2011).

Now the question becomes: to what extent is the good life pursued in a rational and reflexive manner, by whom and in which contexts? And where are new conceptions of the good life emerging in a non-normative way? What supports social integration? What produces social disintegration? In other words: is it possible that, passing through a phase of unbound and anormative morphogenesis, new conceptions or effective social practices of the good life can be generated in which agents/actors find a stable consensus among themselves and build something in common?

It seems to me that on this issue two main opposing arguments are advanced. One argument holds that the new prevalent moralities of the good life are the product of agents who are

basically unconscious, driven by weak or fractured or impeded forms of reflexivity, i.e. modalities of action that characterize a passive attitude or a more *laissez-faire* outlook of 'wait and see', without any ability to anticipate the outcomes of their actions and life course. The other argument claims that, nonetheless, the new conceptions and practices of the good life are the product of 'conscious' and 'free' agents who make 'rational decisions'.

From the standpoint of the relational theory of society (Donati 2021), which is neither relationalist nor formalist, we see acting subjects faced with the need to confer a normativity on social relations that is adequate to successfully achieving the promise of a good life. This need can only be met with a minimum of adequate reflexivity leading to an agonistic understanding of normativity (Maxwell 2012). In other words, so that interactions between social agents can produce social cohesion that respects the rights of human persons, it is necessary for acting subjects to acquire the characteristics of contesting 'relational subjects' (Donati and Archer 2015).

People create social cohesion to the extent that they act as subjects who reflect *on* social relations as emergents and, without necessarily sharing the same tastes and opinions, are nonetheless able to build a *we-relation*. This entails understanding the meaning and practical implications of how a relational subject is constituted, whether this is a single person or a set of people who act as a collective entity or as social network.

Going beyond the *lib/lab* logic of opportunities: towards a *relational* logic

The morality of the *lib/lab* configuration of society is based on an injunction: 'you must be free' to seek opportunities that fulfill you. This injunction is configured as a 'double bind' that consists in one's being at the mercy of a paradoxical message: if you obey this injunction, you show that you are not free because you do it out of obligation; if you do not obey this injunction,

then this means that you renounce being free. Apparently, there is no way to escape this paradox, which is notoriously at the origin of so many psychic and social pathologies and was elucidated as 'the trap of postmodernity' by Michel Foucault (1966).

The relational paradigm argues that a way out exists. In order to see it, it is necessary to escape the paradoxes of modernity with a process of cultural breakthrough. This process consists in semantisizing the injunction, turning its meaning upside down, that is, by resorting to a *counter*-paradox: 'you must be free' comes to mean that *you must choose whom to depend on* because freedom consists in having the possibility of choosing the relation to which to belong, the bond that, through your choice, is the foundation of your identity.

To solve the paradoxical message of late modernity, one needs to look at the enigma of the social relation and be able to manage it (Donati 2019b), because this enigma is inscribed in the social and cultural structures that impose on individuals the norm of having to realize themselves by making themselves independent of every social bond. From this systemic injunction derives a clear deception that consists in attributing to lone individuals the responsibility for everything that happens to them in life. Theirs is the fault, theirs the shame. From this comes the repressive sense of human and social relations in present-day society. This social norm is not saying, as some think, that the human person has the moral obligation to enhance his/her capacities: on the contrary, individuals are commanded to transcend themselves, to go beyond their capacities and potential to take on qualities and properties that the human does not have. This is the post-human, the hyper-human, the trans-human, the cyborg.

In the private sphere, interpersonal bonds are replaced by technologies: for example, procreative relations are replaced by reproductive technologies; primary relations are replaced by virtual communication on the internet; in the public sphere, collective bonds are replaced by systemic bureaucracies and

mechanisms; in large organizations, the bonds between people are replaced by technological tools; in public debate, dialogue between face-to-face participants is replaced by mass media and new *apps*. In all of these cases, social bonds become increasingly virtual. What was considered the 'natural' quality of the bond between human beings loses its meaning, is rendered artificial, and, as a result, the bond can be constructed and altered at pleasure.

The fact is that, when talking about good life, we have to reconsider what we mean by 'human nature' and, correspondingly, what the demands that social and cultural structures impose on people's action are, especially with respect to the social bond. We have to understand the complexity of the morphogenesis of the human in order to grasp the novelty of the human wherever it is regenerating rather than destroying itself.

My thesis is that *the regeneration of the human,* wherever it is not being lost but is instead flourishing, *emerges as the product of a qualified morphogenesis of the social bond*. I would like to explain this statement by analyzing the causes that make the transition from *lib/lab* morality to a *relational* morality necessary.

This transition starts when interacting actors take a distance from the system of opportunistic logics supported by the *lib/lab* arrangement. The sequence is the following: (a) first of all, variability increases within the *lib/lab* framework; (b) the opening of new, purely contingent opportunities creates a space-time in which the search for new rules for the selection of alternatives takes place; these rules refer to relations that must be generated; (c) if choices are enacted that, in a targeted way, guide the creation and use of opportunities according to new relational logics, stabilized social innovations emerge in which the goal of humanizing these same social relations prevails.

We can delineate the discontinuity between *lib/lab* ethics and relational ethics with respect to their creation and use of opportunities as follows.

In the *lib/lab* paradigm: a) the ethics of good life is a private choice and becomes public only as an external constraint on action; b) the social quality of objectives and products is independent of inter-human relations because it makes reference to the achievement of the maximum of individual opportunities. The 'advantageous' new forms of 'variety' are necessarily appropriated by those who, even if they start from supposedly equal positions, have the capacities and means for appropriating them.

In the relational paradigm: a) the ethics of good life pertains to the social relation in that it is a bond between humans, i.e., inter-human; b) the social quality is that which derives from the respect for and fostering of values and norms that give priority to caring for the relations between the acting subjects. In this case, the appropriation of 'advantageous' new forms of 'variety' by some to the detriment of others is hindered or very limited because here the moral norm of reciprocity, understood as symbolic exchange, is in force.

The aim of a symbolic exchange is to generate, maintain, or change a meaningful relationship with significant others. The easiest example of a symbolic exchange is 'doing someone a favor, giving a gift, or offering assistance'. It can be a move to start a relationship of reciprocity, wherein reciprocity does not mean an exchange of utility (*do ut des*), or an act that simply regenerates an existing relationship. When the act is based on an already established relation, the favor, gift, or assistance maintains a circuit of reciprocal favors, gifts, or assistance. The circle can be restricted to two persons or enlarged to include many people. In any case, the exchange is not calculated in monetary terms but is part of a series of acts that maintain and keep up a relationship. The difference from monetary exchanges is marked by the rejection of any form of monetary payment for such favors, gifts, or assistance. In a way, the 'payment' is intrinsic to the relation itself, i.e., the relational good enjoyed by those participating in the relation, and the 'money' (not the 'currency') is the sym-

bolic medium inherent in the action producing that good (i.e., the reference to the bond). It is in the spheres of society where reciprocity is the foundational norm that good life resides. The implications are significant for institutional economics and anthropology alike, particularly for researchers examining multiple overlapping practices such as market and gift exchange.

The original sin of the *lib/lab* arrangement lies in the fact that, by ignoring the value and intrinsic norms of social relations inspired by the symbolic exchange, it generates relational evils. The passage from a *lib/lab* arrangement to a societal arrangement in which morphogenesis is 'guided' (steered) requires positive norms (e.g. voluntary work on the part of the healthy, environmental concern) and negative norms (e.g. discouraging prostitution and exploitative uses of labor) that follow a logic of opportunities in which the common good is redefined as a relational good. The reason for this assertion is the fact that a common good without relationality between those who produce it and those who use it renders the ethics of the good life sterile and indifferent.

Some examples

The relational vision of society reveals that social problems arise from specific contexts that generate relational evils and that the morality for combating these must be inspired by relational work on these networks.

Let us take the case of social interventions that aim to make young people desist from committing crimes and to reintegrate them into a good society. Various studies demonstrate that friendship groups, intimate relationships, families of formation, employment, and religious communities play a central role in changing the life course of young delinquents. As Weaver and McNeill (2015, p. 95) suggest, we have to explore "the ethical implications of these findings, suggesting that work to support desistance should extend far beyond the typically individualized concerns

of correctional practice and into a deeper and inescapably moral engagement with the reconnection of the individual to social networks that are restorative and allow people to fulfill the reciprocal obligations on which networks and communities depend".

Let us take the case of poverty. As very many studies demonstrate, poverty is not only the product of individual characteristics, but above all of differences in access to opportunities. Social networks are the factor that conditions access to goods and services that can be obtained in markets (Marques 2012). Social inequalities have often been analyzed from the point of view of characteristics of individuals or the workings of large opportunity structures such as the job market or the offer of direct income transference policies. In reality, the best solutions to poverty are those inspired by the paradigm of relational work. It is necessary, however, to distinguish between how relational work has been adopted in the U.S. and how it arose and has been practiced in European countries.

In the U.S. relational work is taken to be assistance toward pursuing a life plan in which material help is given to poor or indigent people within a long-term relation that valorizes the individual capacities of the poor and unemployed. This way of intervening has some value, but it does not alter the structures that generate social inequality because the goal of escaping poverty is pursued through a personal life plan within the framework of unchanging social structures that correspond to the compromise between the capitalist market and the welfare state (*lib/lab*), even though welfare measures are performed by third sector agencies (Jindra and Jindra 2015). Relational work, theorized and practiced as the modification of social, cultural, and economic structures, is very different (Folgheraiter 2004, 2013; Folgheraiter and Raineri 2012). It aims at helping people who experience life difficulties and vulnerabilities to remodel their relational contexts in a meta-reflexive manner (not directive) so to support their willingness to get a good life through a

relational steering (Donati 2013). A recent example concerning relational social work in foster care has been provided by Calcaterra (2017).

As Lynch, Kalaitzake and Crean (2020) argue, much political egalitarian theory has contributed to a disregard for the care-relational dimensions of social injustice within the social sciences. The lack of in-depth engagement with affective relations of love, care and solidarity has contributed to an underestimation of their pivotal role in generating injustices in the production of people in their humanity. While humans are political, economic and cultural beings, they are also *homines curans*. Yet, care, in its multiple manifestations, is treated as a kind of 'cultural residual', an area of human life that the dominant culture neglects, represses and cannot even recognize for its political salience. If sociology takes the issue of relational justice as seriously as it takes issues of redistribution, recognition and political representation, this would provide an intellectual avenue for advancing scholarship that recognizes that much of life is lived, and injustices are generated, outside the market, formal politics and public culture. A new sociology of affective care relations could enhance a normatively-led sociology of inequality, that is distinguishable from, but intersecting with, a sociology of inequality based on class (redistribution), status (recognition) and power (representation). It would also help change public discourse about politics by making affective in/justices visible intellectually and politically, and in so doing, identifying ways in which they could be a site of resistance to capitalist values and processes.

The problem concerns the increasingly widespread hybrid economies that mix activities for profit and non-profit. Recent consumer research has examined contexts where market-based exchange, gift-giving, sharing, and other modes of exchange occur simultaneously and obey several intersecting logics, but consumer research has not conceptualized these so-called hybrid economic forms nor explained how these hybrids are shaped

and sustained. Using ethnographic and netnographic data from the collaborative network of geocaching, Scaraboto (2015) explains the emergence of hybrid economies is constantly under threat of destabilization by the struggle between competing performativities of market and nonmarket modes of exchange. Despite latent tension between competing performativities, the hybrid economy is sustained through consumer–producer engagements in collaborative consumption and production, the creation of zones of indeterminacy, and the enactment of tournaments of value that dissipate controversies around hybrid transactions.

My question is: can we assess the morality of social networks, that is, whether and how a network produces moral values such as justice, solidarity, subsidiarity, etc. or, vice versa, injustice, oppression, marginalization, exploitation, etc.?

The answer can be affirmative, but a relational framework is necessary to understanding this because it involves giving an assessment about relations and the networks of relations, and it is not enough to consider only individuals' intentions (or their 'altruism'),[1] or only the morality of the social structures that condition individuals.[2]

The morality of social relations

In my view, the morality of a social relation (or network of relations) consists in the fact that it can produce relational goods or relational evils for those who take part in it, independently of agents' intentions.

For instance: i) the freedom to dismiss an employee can be intentionally good in order to save a company or increase its

[1] This is the limitation of several sociological investigations such as those of Smith and Davidson (2014) and Smith (2015).

[2] This is the limitation of several sociological views of the classical welfare state (from R. Titmuss to T. Parsons).

competitiveness, but it can produce poverty or social inequities (not as a simple 'fact', but as a *relational* evil); ii) redistributive state policies can have good intentions aimed at assisting the poor, but they can generate a 'poverty trap' or other social traps (relational evils). When, how, and why can we say that a social relation is good or bad?

In order to produce relational goods, a dyadic social relation (or the relationality of a network of social relations) should meet the following requisites: (a) a necessary requisite, but not a sufficient one, is that *the social relation be good in itself*, i.e., in its own structure or 'molecule' and, therefore, in its own elements, which are its goal, means, guiding norm and value pattern, and not only in the feelings, aspirations, or intentions of the subjects/agents; (b) the social relation *should generate an emergent phenomenon that brings a good to each participant*; and (c) *the good enjoyed by each participant could not be obtained 'otherwise'*, i.e., in a way that is lacking the we-relation.

For instance, a 'mafia relation' does not meet the first requisite, since its structure is morally bad, although it can meet the other two requisites. On the contrary, a measure of redistribution pursued by public (state) policies can be morally good in itself, but generate relational evils because it does not meet the second and/or the third requisite.

The fact is that social networks are highly ambivalent. They offer opportunities and resources, but also constraints and obstacles to access to and use of opportunities. This can be seen in the research on structural holes and on the brokers that occupy positions of intermediation of information and exchanges between the nodes on networks. According to some authors, brokers play a positive role in offering opportunities (Burt 1992). It is argued that the wealth of a society's information depends on the informational potentialities of social circles (structural holes) that social entrepreneurs (bridges) are able to put into contact with one another. According to others, brokers play a decidedly

ambivalent role; for instance, Ahuja (2000) claims that structural holes have both positive and negative influences on subsequent innovation. According to still others, they have different functions; for example, the results of the research done by Fleming, Mingo, and Chen (2007) illustrate how collaborative brokerage can aid in the generation of an idea but then hamper its diffusion and use by others.

Certainly, social networks are 'assets' (Lazega 2007, 2009; Gulati 2007), but we must draw distinctions between the characteristics of each network because the fact of producing relational goods or evils is correlated with the morality of the good life that each network supports. It is important to reiterate that relational goods are goods that consist of relations: they are not material entities, they are not performances, they are not ideas – they are none of these things. They are relations. Let us take two examples, one negative and the other positive.

The negative example is when relational goods are lacking. A very common case, whether in families or in universities and work places, is the presence of *structural holes* in the networks of relations among people who are managed by brokers who hinder rather than foster communication among all the nodes in the network. The brokers are mediators who prevent people from being able to relate to one another and thus hinder the creation of a relational good. Recent investigations demonstrate how important the attributes of nodes are in configuring the characteristics of social networks (Wang, Robins, Pattison and Lazega 2015).

The positive example is friendship. Friendship is a social relation that goes beyond individual dispositions. Certainly, friendship flows from people, and only people can be friends and create friendship, which is a virtue for them as persons. But it cannot be an individual undertaking. Ego and Alter are not friends as individuals. Friendship is the acknowledgement of something that does not belong to either of the two, although

it is of both of them. This is the relational good. It is the good that exists in common between people; only they can create it, but it does not belong to either of the two people, even if it is of both of them (Donati 2019c). Likewise, friendship cannot be the product of a social structure; it cannot become an institution, a structure to which people must conform. To be friends, there have to be at least two people who must share and exchange something on an interpersonal level. As Lazega and Pattison (2001) have shown, friendship mitigates the competition in social networks and fosters the creation of social capital. It is the sharing, that is, the reciprocal action that generates the *we-relation*, the relation as the reciprocal action within a *We* which gives sense and form and content to friendship. Sharing cannot be an explainable fact in individual terms, even if it is not a collective reality: it is not imposed by anyone, it cannot be dictated by any authority, and no one can experience it as something constrictive or external. To understand this, it is necessary to move beyond both methodological individualism and methodological holism, which are the two great currents of thought that still dominate the social sciences today. They do not seem to have understood the new realities that are emerging in the worlds of the economy, as well as in those of the production and consumption of goods and services, including the worlds of welfare and the internet.

In these worlds we see the spread of productive practices that operate on the basis of a 'relational logic' so that the value of goods and services references the quality of the social relations, and not the quantity of the time of the work that was employed to produce them. Social capital is 'good' if personal relations are good. In this way, the validity of all the classical economic theories is overturned, theories which, from Ricardo to Marx, computed the value of a good or service in terms of the time necessary to produce it, as *lib/lab* logic still does to a great extent. This 'relational logic' is intrinsically a form of social morality because

it involves the fact that a criterion of value is introduced (the quality of the relation) in place of ethically neutral quantitative parameters.

"Ethical labour (the economy in which the social relation is a 'value') comes to define a new (ethical) economy" (...) "we look at things through the lens of relationships rather than just the lens of money. The reason we do that, is that behind every financial transaction there is a relationship. And it is the relationship that determines the long-term success and impact of what goes on in terms of finance and money. So if you really want a successful economy you've got to get behind the financial transactions, the sheer money, to the relationships that are underneath it" (Arvidsson 2010).

Which eudemonic morality emerges through these phenomena?

Certainly, the idea of happiness, the good life of individuals as well as of society, depends on the creation of common goods. But, as I have already said, in a complex and globalized society, common goods must be interpreted as relational goods within particular networks that have positive externalities for the surrounding community.

In this regard, it is necessary to consider how the new media (ICTs) are revolutionizing 'real' (interpersonal and structural) social relations through virtual relations. Clearly, we must distinguish between the different types of media, the different ways of using them, and their specific outcomes. There are media that allow for the production of relational goods and others that generate relational evils. This is what the morphogenetic approach proposes to explain concerning the morphogenesis of the human person, agency, as well as social and cultural structures, in relation to a possible 'good life'.

When people become aware of all of this, social change begins. New processes emerge that are aimed at reassessing relations with others. One discovers that working as a team, co-

operating with others rather than acting individually, is more effective and satisfying, on condition, obviously, that the task has not been imposed and that teamwork is not a tool used by those in charge to make higher profits. Family bonds are rediscovered as relations that, while being constraints, give a meaning to one's life that other relations cannot give. A growing number of people realize that they can achieve their goals only through new forms of association and new social movements. New demands for justice and social solidarity arise requiring a vision capable of putting the needs and rights of all of a community's members into relation with one another. Indeed, many discover that we are all deeply connected to one another. Each person's decisions, choices, and actions are not purely individual matters, but are enacted in relation to others. It is irrational to think of them as simple expressions of the autonomous Self. One comes to realize that, in reality, each person lives in dependence and interdependence on so many others, without whom one could not be the person one is, and could not become the person one desires to become.

It becomes apparent that each individual's history resides in relations with significant others. The human person is not a self-sufficient entity: he/she is an *individual-in-relation,* where the relation is *constitutive* of the person. We are all in the same boat, in the sense that we depend on one another. And so the question becomes: what kind of boat is this? I think that we can call it: 'We-relation'. But what kind of relation is this? In other words: how should the relationality between us be so that individuals fulfill their own humanity and do not become alienated from themselves to become another individual or something else?

Traditional collective movements – called mass movements – no longer offer adequate answers in that the identity they confer is of an aggregate type and is not relational. The identity acquired by the individual from the fact of belonging to a col-

lective movement based on identification with a symbol (for example, ecological, anti-global, civil rights (etc.) movements) can become significant only on two conditions: (a) if it is mediated by an adequate inner (personal) reflexivity and (b) if the personal reflexivity is capable of realizing a relational (social) reflexivity with others. Both of these conditions are hardly ever met by collective movements if they are purely aggregative. They can be present, instead, in collective movements in which people have real relations, and not only virtual ones, with one another, and these relations cause a social form (instituted form) to emerge that is capable of stability and its own action. The social networks on the web (run through information and communication technologies) can do this on the condition – which is by no means a given – that virtual relations are only a tool, and not a replacement, for inter-subjective relations.

In the society of the human, well-being is constituted by the good of the social relation as the path toward obtaining individual goods. The relational good consists in all those relations that can be generated and enjoyed together with others and on which individuals must rely in order to obtain everything that they could not have without such a relation. Examples are all of those immaterial, yet real, goods such as cooperation, friendship, recognition, cooperation, solidarity, mutual help, enjoying a positive climate in a firm, classroom, or social street, and so on, which meet most human needs (Donati 2019c).

The relationality of the moral good

In my opinion, we have to be clear about what we mean by the relational character of the (moral) good and the good society. Many authors speak of the relational character of the good, but, in reality, they are referring to individual agency. I offer two examples.

Christine Korsgaard (2013) observes that the (human) good is, above all, an affirmation that something is normative for me,

for my condition, as an act of sympathy with myself.[3] She claims the relational nature of the good, but she does it from an individualistic and, in the end, constructivist point of view.

In adhering to Kant's philosophy, she maintains that the good has a relational character in as much as a certain entity becomes held in common, that is, it is 'constructed' as being shared by rational subjects who are capable of having sympathy with themselves and living this sympathy through empathy with others. The good is relational in that it is constructed with ends that are 'shared among all of us' ("'*Good*', *then, is the schematic name for the solution to the problem of shared ends*. This, then, is my answer to the question of why we operate with the concept of the good: *because as rational creatures who are capable of seeing the world through the eyes of others*, we are faced with the task of constructing a state of affairs that is, as far as possible, good – for us all" *ivi*: 24-5, *italics mine*).

For Korsgaard, then, the good is relational, not because it consists of 'good' relations, but because it is shared by individuals who use their relations to make something good held in common. She does not see the relational constitution of these common goods, because the goods do not consist of relations properly. In short, relations have no substantive reality in themselves. The good life does not require a reality endowed with certain relational qualities and properties in itself, but is good in that it is constructed as being good for each of the participants.

Ana Marta González (2011), reflecting on these issues, identifies some paradoxes and internal contradictions in the thought

[3] "For to say that something is *good-for* me is to describe *something's relation to my condition as having normative implications*, and that in turn is to *endorse* the view of myself that, simply as a conscious being – as a being who is in her own keeping – I necessarily take of my own condition. One might see the endorsement of that view as *an act of sympathy with myself*" (Korsgaard 2013: 24, *italics mine*).

of Kant that can be traced to a lack of a relational vision. First, while Kant takes the educational process to be a radically moral enterprise all the way through – and hence, placed in a relational context – he also aspires to constitute education as a science, to be improved through experiments, thereby paving the way for a systemic approach to education; in spite of its moral inspiration, his systemic approach not only could enter into conflict with the moral demand of taking each individual subject as an end, but is also marked by an intrinsic paradox, already involved in the ambiguity of the term 'humanity', which might mean a) humanity as a moral disposition present in each individual human being, or b) humanity as a whole, as the 'human species' (ivi, p. 433). Secondly, González finds that the Kantian conception, "leaving aside the mechanism of education to focus on its relational dimension," leads to the affirmation that "the attainment of a moral culture depends on teaching children to act upon principles, and hence autonomously", with the paradoxical consequence that "in order to educate autonomous human agents, we have to engage in a process marked by heteronomy" (*ivi*, p. 442).

González's critique of Kant's philosophical conception regarding education, claiming a relational approach, is enlightening and correct. "While improving education may become the object of a systemic action, education is always the object of a moral relationship" (*ivi*, p. 437); "... moral education, as something directly linked to personality, is always beyond the reach of those techniques, and dependent on a relational approach to education" (*ivi*, p. 438). This relational approach, however, remains focused on the advancement of an individual human being.

González recognizes that educating means performing a relational activity, but education is not yet investigated as a *sui generis* social relation, as a dynamic structure in itself, situated in a relational context. Education seems to remain the object of individual agents' morality, not a moral entity in itself. Interpersonal

relations are considered as 'conductors' of individual morality, not yet as moral goods (or evils) in themselves. That is why the structure of education as a social relation is basically referred back to the moral quality of individual people: "autonomy is prepared in the context of personal relationships, interested not so much in the cold development of potentialities as in the real good of the person" (*ivi*, p. 452). To become truly relational the moral good requires the adoption of the second person perspective on the part of the agents, i.e. a dialogue (a dialogical self), and not only a first person perspective (but not a third person perspective). The latter, of course, is absolutely necessary but it is not sufficient in order to get 'good relations', which is however what González is looking for.

The point that I want to emphasize is that the relational paradigm redefines the concept of the human basing itself on the relational distinction with the non-human. In traditional societies the human is simply assumed as a natural given according to a principle of identity [A = A]. In modernity the human is defined by negation with respect to what appears to be non-human: the principle of the definition of the human is dialectical, consisting in a double negation, which is the logic of the creation of opportunities without finalism [A = not(not-A)].

In the present historical phase, which, to my mind, is leading us toward what I call the *after-modern* (or *trans-modern*) society, *the human is defined by what we include in it and by what we exclude from it through specific relations, which are activity-dependent and context dependent*.

I translate this concept into the formula: [A = R (A, non-A)]; the human is defined through a relation to what is outside the human realm. The human is no longer *a priori* a normative concept. We can include in the human an infinite number of things such as piety and empathy or utility and egotism. It becomes essential to understand the selection mechanism for what we include in (or exclude from) the human.

Modern semantics is based on binary oppositions (the slash in the formula of modernity [A = non(non-A)]) so that the good side of the human should emerge from the conflict that cancels out the negative side of the human. The human becomes a battleground. And today this is true particularly on the level of communication, images, and the signs conveyed by the mass media (Chouliaraki 2013). At the same time, however, it becomes increasingly evident that these mechanisms, that is, those of binary negation and mediatic constructivism, produce large existential vacuums, life failures, processes of alienation. People are forced to ask themselves: what is human in me? Which means: what is good for me? What is the good life in which *the-human-that-is-in-me* can flourish? In other works, how can I be happy?

To answer these questions, individuals have to reflect, take distance from themselves, and appeal to the social morality of certain relations instead of others. Their happiness or unhappiness lies in the choices they make.

To conclude: fraternity from the viewpoint of relational sociology

Ethical neutrality in social theorization is basically a myth. Certainly, sociology distinguishes itself from social theory because, in analyzing social matters, it does not have to take sides on this or that value. It is inevitable, however, that it, too, always presupposes value choices (Lidz 1981), which obviously cannot be those of direct ethical or political engagement; otherwise, sociology is transformed into an ethical or political doctrine. The moral burden of explicitly declaring the value choices in play is incumbent on the sociologist when entering the arena of social theory, where such choices can obviously be diverse and plural.

As for my relational sociology, it makes reference to a social theory that does not make *a priori* value choices, but points to the good or the bad in the effects produced by the societal dynamic. It juxtaposes the ways in which acting subjects generate different social consequences, which can contradict not only

their situational expectations, but also the values of the collective morality that they support.

Relational analysis leads one to conclude that postmodern morality erodes the common good because, consciously or, more often, unconsciously, it erodes social relations. There are obviously good reasons for assessing social relations negatively when they are used to exploit people (such as in human trafficking or prostitution), to organize social groups for the purposes of common criminality or corruption, or for other morally negative ends. On this basis, however, the postmodern morphogenetic society has elaborated a social morality according to which the good life consists in an indefinite increase in life opportunities, on the assumption that human identity can continuously change, endlessly altering its social relations. Today's moral norm dictates the celebration of 'relationalism' as the path toward the individualization of the individual. In the postmodern cultural system, it is assumed that happiness consists in this process.

Reality ends up debunking this morality. The idea that in order to achieve a good life the logic of opportunities must be untied from the value and norms of social relations leads to continual failures. The reason lies in a precise sociological reality. In fact, happiness is sought in the *creation of ever new social relations; it becomes possible to enjoy all possible opportunities only on condition of immunizing oneself from the relations themselves*, that is, on condition of not rendering any particular relation (any opportunity) necessary: thus, on condition of not binding oneself to anything or anyone, if not for the opportunities of the moment (this is the 'pure relation' theorized by A. Giddens).

The moral norm celebrated by the unbound morphogenesis emerging from the crisis of the *lib/lab* system makes the maximum contingentism and relationalism imperative. It celebrates relationality while negating it at the same time. But negating the identity of the relation means also negating the identity of the subject: hence, the impossibility for the individual of achieving

authenticity in his/her identity. Such is the paradoxical outcome of this conception of the good life. Living in relations without tying oneself to them. In this way, the individual can increase his/her life opportunities always on condition of not privileging any one social relation over others, which – according to this collective morality – would involve limitations and discriminations. It is a morality of non-distinction because the moral norm dictates that one not distinguish, as every distinction is discrimination. But in this way, a 'reverse discrimination' operates because one chooses to not choose (one decides not to distinguish). This is a moral norm that leads to cultural and moral regression because human civilization requires the continuously renewed and creative use of distinctions.

Considering every thing and every human action within the relation in which we find it and looking at it from this point of view is essential to giving meaning to things and actions. Human life in pursuit of happiness – in a couple, in a working relation, or in the search for a job that isn't there – does not mean alienating people within the limits of the relational situation in which they find themselves, but the complete opposite. It means fraternity. It means giving them a perspective for managing their human condition in a horizon of openness to meaning – openness to other relational worlds, that is. This is the sense of the interventions that we call networking and interventions of relational observation-assessment-guidance (Donati 1991, pp. 346-356) aimed at humanizing people.

The logic of opportunities necessarily requires a morality of action because when opportunities are not infinite, but limited, a competition arises. However, competition can be of various types. There is the 'excluding competition' that allows only some to obtain resources and facilitations, excluding others, and there is the 'including competition', that is, 'agonistic sociability' – another name for social friendship – which consists in competing with others to create new opportunities that, subsequently, will

be shared with others in a circuit of reciprocal thrusts. In other words, agonistic sociability is a mechanism that creates opportunities for everyone without generating unwarranted structural inequalities. Competing, not in order to appropriate a good for oneself, but to achieve better solutions to share with others who will do the same thing according to the reciprocity rule, a *win-win* solution, without winners and losers).

We must acknowledge that still today we lack a proper reflexivity on the relational nature of fraternity as the good life, if we understand this expression in the sense that the good is constituted by certain social relations instead of others. These are the relational goods that bring truly human happiness going well beyond material welfare because they stimulate fraternity and social friendship.

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Fratelli Tutti Encyclical on Social Atomization and Loneliness. Personal, Social and Economic Subjectivity

Krzysztof Wielecki

Abstract

Complex processes of civilization changes have been taking place for over two centuries. For about thirty years, they have definitely intensified, transformed, deepened and accelerated. This is the social, economic and cultural context in which Pope Francis urges us to universal brotherhood. This call seems to meet the most dramatic need of our time. In a cursory analysis of these civilization processes, I especially focus on their effect, which is human loneliness, in a world of enormous social stratification, the disintegration of traditional social structures and the increasingly massive occurrence of egocentric individualism as a defensive attitude. I am also dealing here with the question of the influence of narcissistic mass culture on this attitude. I am also trying to answer the question about the place of subjectivity and fraternity in economics. A review of the basic ideas of the main economic doctrines and economic models allows me to distinguish the preconditions for a subjective economy. I am also discussing the problem of economic and social effectiveness of various economic strategies in order to justify the belief that the pro-social strategy is effective.

Introduction

The encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* of Pope Francis[1] shows in a dramatic way the immensity of selfishness and resulting social atomization and loneliness of modern people. At the same time, however, it is a lesson of great hope. Its source is the evangelical love of one's neighbour, including distant ones, whether geographically, culturally, economically or socially. It is a universal love. Its key is the human person and the recognition of its dignity and preciousness as a child of God. This in turn should make us love every human being, because everyone, in God, is our sister or brother.

Human being: between egoism and subjectivity

An outstanding French sociologist, Émile Durkheim, at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, wrote about objective economic and social processes that resulted in the development of the social division of labour. This, in turn, indispensably leads to serious civilization changes. As the scholar explained:

> Civilization is itself the necessary consequence of the changes which are produced in the volume and in the density of societies. If science, art, and economic activity develop, it is in accordance with a necessity which is imposed upon men. It is because there is, for them, no other way of living in the new conditions in which they have been placed. From the time that the number of individuals among whom social relations are established begins to increase, they can maintain themselves only by greater specialization, harder work, and intensification of their faculties. From this general stimulation, there inevitably results a much higher degree of culture.[2]

[1] Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* of the Holy Father Francis. On Fraternity and Social Friendship, http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html

[2] É. Durkheim, *On Morality and Society, Selected Writings*, Bellah R.N. –

Let us leave without commenting on this specific evolutionism and determinism in Durkheim's views in order to concentrate on the idea that this social division of labour intensifies the social stratification, which leads to violation of the community (*Gemeinschaft*), as Ferdinand Tönnies called it, of a model of collective life, in favour of a society (*Gesellschaft*).[3] An important difference is the type of bond between individuals. In the community, the whole is made of an *organic will* that connects people in the entirety of their lives and personalities, primarily through spatial and emotional proximity. The basis of society is an *arbitrary will*, a bond of a formal and material nature that binds people through their social roles, based on the calculation of interests and legal agreements.[4] Durkheim spoke about *mechanical*[5] *vs. organic solidarity.*[6]

The French sociologist welcomed with joy and optimism the fruits of this evolution, which, after all, was a result of industrial civilization change and the development of capitalist social and economic relations. But he also saw some threats in this important process. These included social atomization and the resulting individual and collective anomy. This in turn leads to human suffering. I would like to add here that Durkheim's research on suicides shows that the human person, to have the will to live, must have in life something that "exceeds him", what is – as far as I understand – more important to him than his own selfishness, something that, thanks to love, becomes a transcendent value for him, why makes him ready to bear the hardships

ed., The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, London 1973, p. 121.

[3] F. Tönnies, *Community and Civil Society*, Jarris J., Hollis M. – translated, Harris J. – ed., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2001, p. 22 ff.

[4] Ibidem, p. 93 ff.

[5] É. Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, Simpson G. – translated, The Free Press of Glencoe, Illinois 1960, p. 70 ff.

[6] Ibidem, p. 111 ff.

and suffering inherent to one's everyday existence. The disintegration of the most important communities related to atomization deprives people of social reasons for life. As I understand it, the disintegration of communities throws us into loneliness and selfishness. This happens when self-love extinguishes any other love: for God and for neighbour. I believe that the essence of the disintegration of social communities fundamental for a human being mentioned by Durkheim lies in the fact that we gradually stop having someone in them for whom it is worth bearing the hardships of life. I think this is the essential sociological context of Pope Francis' call to brotherly love. The Holy Father wrote namely, that we need "a fraternal openness that allows us to acknowledge, appreciate and love each person, regardless of physical proximity, regardless of where he or she was born or lives".[7]

Alexis de Tocqueville, a great thinker who lived mostly in the first half of the 19th century, became interested in America's emerging democracy. He travelled there to learn about this new phenomenon on the spot. Although he generally took a positive attitude towards democracy, there were a few things that made him seriously concerned. This included especially the danger of egocentric individualism and its claim to a particular form of freedom.

De Tocqueville wrote:

> Egotism is a passionate and exaggerated love of self, which leads a man to connect everything with his own person, and to prefer himself to everything in the world. Individualism is a mature and calm feeling, which disposes each member of the community to sever himself from the mass of his fellow-creatures; and to draw apart with his family and his friends; so that, after he has thus formed a little circle of his own, he willingly leaves society at large to itself.

[7] Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, op. cit., 1.

> Egotism originates in blind instinct: individualism proceeds from erroneous judgment more than from depraved feelings; it originates as much in the deficiencies of the mind as in the perversity of the heart. Egotism blights the germ of all virtue; individualism, at first, only saps the virtues of public life; but, in the long run, it attacks and destroys all others, and is at length absorbed in downright egotism.[8]

Egoism, according to the scholar, is an eternal quality of man; individualism, as De Tocqueville understood it, would be the result of industrialism and democracy. But it seems to be people's permanent feature, also present today in the third decade of the 21st century. Completely today, the Holy Father wrote, that in times of global change: "The one thing it leaves in its wake is the drive to limitless consumption and expressions of empty individualism".[9]

Individualism, as we know, presupposes the supreme value of the *individuum*. If it applies to every individual, it introduces a certain equality in importance of certain individuals and allows only freedom limited by the freedom of others. Let's call it altruistic individualism. However, if we consider – in the spirit of self-love – only ourselves as a single person of the highest value, then nothing can limit our freedom, because what is lower cannot limit what is supreme. It would be an egocentric individualism. These two varieties imply completely different visions of man and society.

The mentioned civilization processes of industrialism strengthened, through social atomization, the importance of egocentric individualism. Undoubtedly, they widened the personal freedom of people, opening the field for exuberant individualism in its egocentric type. Nowadays, I argue, we are in

[8] A. de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Reeve H. – translated, Pennsylvania State University, *Electronic Classics Series* 2002, p. 574.

[9] Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, op. cit., 13.

the centre of the processes of the civilization crisis, understood as a breakthrough between industrialism and a civilization that will probably follow. These are times of extraordinary development of social atomization, anomy in both its varieties and the sometimes cancerous bloom of egocentric individualism. It becomes a dominant attitude in many people. It is supported by various psychological, philosophical, sociological and economic doctrines, theories and concepts. It is also highly favoured by mass culture, extremely narcissistic in its nature, and its incredible expansion.

As the Holy Father writes:

> "Opening up to the world" is an expression that has been co-opted by the economic and financial sector and is now used exclusively of openness to foreign interests or to the freedom of economic powers to invest without obstacles or complications in all countries. Local conflicts and disregard for the common good are exploited by the global economy in order to impose a single cultural model. This culture unifies the world, but divides persons and nations [...]. We are more alone than ever in an increasingly massified world that promotes individual interests and weakens the communitarian dimension of life. Indeed, there are markets where individuals become mere consumers or bystanders. As a rule, the advance of this kind of globalism strengthens the identity of the more powerful, who can protect themselves, but it tends to diminish the identity of the weaker and poorer regions, making them more vulnerable and dependent. In this way, political life becomes increasingly fragile in the face of transnational economic powers that operate with the principle of "divide and conquer".[10]

[10] Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, op. cit., 12.

Undoubtedly, secularization is an extremely important civilization process, which intensifies the total range of egocentric individualism. Let us add that these processes are also deepened by the privatization of God and religion, i.e. individual varieties of transcendence, free from institutionalization, especially within the Church, which is also the case on a mass scale, as part of mass culture.

One of the symptoms of the expansion of egocentric individualism, especially understood in terms of instrumental rationalism, another child of industrial civilization with its capitalist economic instrumentation, is the issue of subjectivity, understood as agency, which occupies a central place in the humanities. In my opinion, agency is only one of the dimensions of full subjectivity. It includes not only subjective action, but also subjective instrumental and directional dispositions, and, above all, the system of subjective values, which in a subjective human being become the main criteria regulating the conscious activity of the subject.

Subjectivity is a result of a specific level of development of humanity in man, or a growth of altruism in an individual which is narcissistic in its nature. I am also definitely on the side of such an understanding of subjectivity that takes into account the essence of humanity, subjectivity, as a purely human property that can be understood in the form of subjective personality. Subjective action is a feature of a person with a subjective personality. The subjective personality – as I believe – is shaped in the course of subjective action. I am not satisfied with the statement that everyone who follows his own will is subjective. The truth about human being and society must, I suppose, be sought in the intellectual space between individualism and collectivism. More precisely, between the ideology of egocentric individualism as one of the poles, and the communist apology of the collective as the other pole. This orthodoxy was expressed by the unfortunate, though outstanding poet Mayakovsky, when he praised the

community "into one crushing fist clenched". I am convinced that the foundation and way of expressing subjectivity is sisterly/brotherly love.

Speaking of subjectivity, I mean the personality traits, values and action of the subject oriented towards being – towards – life, hope and good and... subjectivity, and also – towards others and – as people of faith will claim – towards God. Subjectivity, as I interpret it, is being towards all this, which, however, man cannot know enough of to have a certain basis for being. Nevertheless, subjectivity is a certain feature and condition of life within the practice of life, understanding its meaning as life towards good, incomprehensible in its fullness. It is the state of a consciously practiced idea of good – especially good open to others. Because of this goodness and because it can never be fully understood, man takes up the challenge of a difficult, creative and searching existence. At the same time, such a life in itself becomes a value, causing another challenge to development, the constant expansion of one's subjectivity.

We can distinguish a three-dimensional and three-stage structure of subjectivity. Firstly, we are in a pre-subject state of self-centeredness. From it, a narcissistic structure of subjectivity can develop. Within its framework, we discover that the stronger value for us is our individuality. But subjectivity is relational in nature, which means that others (people, but also the world of nature and culture) are good as well, which we fully discover when the third, altruistic structure has already developed. Therefore, subjectivity is a certain pattern that includes all the already mentioned components in the order that regulates relations between individuals. This pattern states that the subjective value for me is myself, but I am self-limiting, due to the equivalent and complementary good for me – another. We can therefore also speak of phases of subjectivity. The first one, in which a narcissistic structure of subjectivity develops, could be called, following Emmanuel Lévinas, the state of intoxication with one's

own identity.[11] Secondly, higher, later in development, possible but not necessary, would be the phase of socialized or altruistic subjectivity. Here, man not only limits his freedom for the benefit of others, but also significantly broadens it and deepens it by opening up to their good.

In the Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* I find confirmation of Immanuel Lévinas's belief that meeting other people is what "interjects" man into ethics, that is, allows him to overcome subsequent barriers of his own egocentrism. This strength is given to human relations by transcendence, which – as Lévinas said – is the face of a completely Different, who calls from beyond the face of the other. And we can openly say that it is about God who, as we read in the Scriptures, is "where two or three are gathered together in my name".[12]

Mass culture and narcissism

Lack of love for one's neighbour, which is the result of egocentrism or even narcissism, brings extremely detrimental effects on the mental health and development possibilities of an individual. But you can also speak about cultural, social and economic selfishness or narcissism. It produces deplorable consequences everywhere. I would like to focus elsewhere on all these dimensions of the lack of subjectivity rooted in the lack of love for one's neighbour. Here I will only point out that narcissism is a neurosis resulting from an unsatisfied need for love and dignity.

Mass culture is nothing new, and the literature on it is already old and rich. It is, perhaps, a wanted but not very successful child of industrialism and capitalism. However, I would like

[11] E. Lévinas, Lingis A. – translated, *Totality and Infinity*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Boston-London 1991; *Humanism of the Other*, Poller N. – translated, University of Illinois Press 2006.

[12] Matthew (18:20). "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them".

to raise the issue of its new, post-industrial incarnation and a completely new social meaning. Mass culture seems to me to be the lining of the uniform of economic globalization. We used to consider its aesthetic qualities, venting our aversion to what is kitsch, trash and easy entertainment. The question of taste, good or bad, can hardly be contained in scientific discourse. But that is not the aspect that I wish to deal with here. Let me repeat: the beginning of a global society that is forming around the global market causes a special career of the old, though not at all toothless, mass culture, in a new role: global quasi mass culture. But mass culture also has a real impact when it comes to social stratification. It is worth mentioning here, above all, social marginalization, which creates a new, significant and numerically powerful quasi-social class: the excluded ones. Cultural exclusion appears to be an important factor of all kinds, including economic exclusion, and plays a major role in the process of social reproduction. The accompanying declassification results in the lack of acceptance for many contemporary phenomena, especially the process of globalization and its manifestations. In order to regain a sense of sense, meaning, and above all a sense of security and self-acceptance, these people narrow down the social space with which they identify, most often referring to the values of the nation and the national state. There are certainly other causes of this phenomenon as well. Among them, the feeling of subjective loss and suffering related to the identity crisis are of great importance.

Similar orientations occur in the lower grades. This is often accompanied by a tendency to reject many values of the democratic-liberal order, and even sympathize with various contemporary forms of nationalism and racism. There is, however, a certain layer of lower-class workers who, like the elites, follow a nomadic lifestyle, wandering around the world in search of work. They seem to be everywhere and nowhere, without a deeper reference to any particular culture, with a suspend-

ed process of the crystallization of identity, deeper ties, or more expressive values. A separate category is created by the "marginalized" who most often escape the division into employers and employees, because they are permanently deprived of this job, as are many of their relatives, neighbours and friends. The famous shrinkage of time and space brought about by globalization and the associated multiculturalism mean that thousands of rationalizations, mythologies and delusions mix in the space of contemporary quasi culture. Religions are not doing well in this magma. Mental and social changes make people look for some mysticism, maybe even some "breathe" with transcendence. The market of various scientistic churches, united churches, soft Buddhism etc., responds to this order. They offer a variety of easy, nice and pleasant solutions.

This is how mass culture works. Secularization understood in this way becomes an important factor in the disintegration of individual and collective horizons of reference[13] and the framework for action and meaning,[14] as well as the loneliness and disorientation of modern man in the sphere of values and meanings, whose world is sometimes experienced as a world of total crisis. It weakens the tendency to altruism, and strengthens the egocentrism and narcissism of modern man, making it difficult to endure suffering, which is always a part of life, but today especially it deprives the sense of the meaning of the world and the meaning of one's own existence.

Multiculturalism can contribute to challenging core values. Through secularization in particular, it takes away the traditional ways of deeply rooting one's life and identity. The disintegration

[13] See: K. Wielecki, *Kryzys i socjologia* {Crisis and Sociology}, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2012.; K. Wielecki, Subjectivity and violence from the perspective of critical realism, *Journal of Critical Realism*, Jul 2018, pp. 1-13.

[14] Ibidem.

of horizons of reference and anomy gives people great opportunities to determine themselves, but on the other hand, they feel very strongly deprived of basic psychological needs, such as security, acceptance, identity, sense and meaning. Such a situation triggers in many people neurotic defence reactions of the psyche, including those that can be clearly described in terms of mental diseases.

On the other hand, today, when we live in a post-modern world of cultural multiplicity, in which the effects of indeterminacy, fluidity, ambiguity, lack of clear values, beliefs and customs are already clearly visible, we see that freedom and diversity are beautiful values, but not the most important ones. However, it is worth noting that all these values, become something really valuable only in a certain axiological formula, together with responsibility and subjectivity, and without it they can be even dangerous. Like abstract freedom in the system of political values, it becomes something worthless, and perhaps sometimes dramatically harmful, without some minimal scope for social justice and economic prosperity, limiting, if necessary, particular and egocentric freedoms.

The properties of mass culture mean that the human has almost exclusive contact with the virtual world of mutually exclusive rationalizations, advice, interpretations, the vibrating and changing reality of authorities and revelations that are subject to the laws of the media market, appearing and disappearing along with its pulsation, consistent with the law of supply and demand. The psyche growing under the influence of this culture, in the conditions of such a disintegration, distances itself poorly from this virtual message. This is reflected secondarily in the level of family life, parental abilities, chosen lifestyles, sense of responsibility, etc. The desire for love, the certainty of having support in someone and the ever-diminishing ability to do so, or even following the values and patterns that exclude it, is another contradiction of the contemporary world. For many people it also

creates a sense of alienation, rage, aggression and fundamentalist fixation. It is yet another response to the suffering of an offended and broken identity. In the light of what has been said about responsibility and subjectivity, we understand their crisis in the age of globalization.

One of the main problems of the civilizational revolution of post-industrialism and the related mass culture consists in the fact that man is not able to use the gift of extended freedom brought about by modern times to build his own identity, subjectivity and social subjectivity, because of the existential anxiety of ordinary people. Mass culture offers a certain kind of freedom, as it liberates from the limitations of norms, values and traditional rationalizations by gradually and consistently breaking homogenization, including that largely inherited from industrialism. Cultural diversity, along with the entire civilization crisis, gives people (especially in the Western world) countless civilizational inventions at their disposal, makes them citizens of the world, liberates their norms and values, traditional social structures, etc. It is often negative freedom, deprived of the perspective of "freedom to". At the same time, this multicultural mass culture often deprives many people of the opportunity to use this freedom, because it encloses them in their own hearts, separates them in front of TV screens and computer monitors, and atomizes them.

Economics, subjectivity and fraternity

Man, society and culture are not the only areas of the dramatic deficit of subjectivity. The economy is just as important. Since Marx, many believe that the being shapes consciousness, and the "superstructure" necessarily adapts to the "base". Adam Smith is even today the source of the widespread belief in the fetish of the market as a "being" which is governed by its own objective and natural laws and which requires us to obey these laws. This cannot be agreed with. Freedom of the market is al-

ways someone else's freedom in the market, often limiting the freedom of another person. The market is a space for a game of interests, not an object of the "new secular religion". There are people out there on the market. They are guided, as in all spheres of life, by their interests, ambitions, values and sensitivity. The economy and its subjects, theories and economic practices can also be more or less subjective. That is why it is worth, and even necessary to deal with the issue of selfishness in the economy.

Let me start by distinguishing five large groups of doctrines or paradigms in modern economics: neoliberal, social democratic, post-communist, new structural economics and theories based on the social teaching of the Church. In each of them, the attitude towards selfishness is manifested, more or less clearly, as an orientation – desired or not – in economic thought and practice. I also distinguish two main models of economic systems we can meet in reality, at least in European countries. These are the egocentric and altruistic or "common good" models. I will also briefly analyse the actual economic and social effectiveness of these models. In my opinion, this analysis strongly confirms the main ideas of the Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*.

Various concepts of neoliberal economy radically subordinate monetary balance and respect for the freedom of the market, which would have the ability to self-regulate. Private property is also valued here, as it is said to be the only one with the ability to be economically effective. They also proclaim the need to minimize costs, including state expenditure, and to substantially reduce the state, especially in the economic and social sphere. Following Smith's footsteps, neoliberals believe that man is by nature an egoist, but the negative consequences of this attitude are rectified by the "invisible hand of the market". It regulates, harmonizing the economy. It is enough not to interfere with it, and the free market will handle the war of all against all by itself. One should refer to such economists as Friedrich

A. Hayek,[15] Milton Friedman,[16] or politicians such as Ronald Regan and Margaret Thatcher. Daniel Stedman Jones presented the synthesis and differences in views of leading neoliberals.[17] Selfishness is understood here as a healthy force that energizes the economy. A synthetic criticism of this orientation can be found, for example, in the so-called "Manifesto of indignant economists".[18] Its authors question the very foundations of neoliberalism, especially that financial markets are efficient, support economic growth, correctly assess the solvency of the state, and the rapid increase in public debt results from excessive expenditure, and that reducing public debt requires limiting public expenditure and that it passes the cost of our over-spending onto our grandchildren, as the financial markets need to be calmed down so that public debt can be financed.[19]

At the opposite extreme of economic doctrines are those that refer to the economic theory and practice of John Maynard Keynes. This great economist was himself an advocate of stimulating demand and accepting a little inflation, so he recommended state intervention. It would consist, among other things, in potential clients being hired by the state which, due to lack of money, had to postpone meeting their basic needs. Investments in public works have been a frequently used instrument. The increase in demand resulted in an increase in supply, i.e.

[15] F.A. Hayek, *Individualism and Economic Order*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago-London 1980.

[16] F.A. Hayek, Law Legislation and Liberty, v. 3, *The Political Order of a Free People*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago-London 1979.; D.S. Jones, *Master of the Universe. Hayek, Friedman, and the Birth of Neoliberal Politics*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey 2012.

[17] D.S. Jones, *Master of the Universe*. ..., op. cit.

[18] Ph. Askenazy, Th. Coutrot, A. Orlean, H. Sterdyniak, Manifesto of the appalled economists, in: *Real-World Economics Review*, issue no. 54, p. 21. http://www.paecon.net/PAEReview/issue54/Manifesto54.pdf

[19] Ibidem.

economic growth.[20] Neoliberals spoke of the "naive Keynesian theory",[21] but it gained many supporters and is still widely used in many countries today, even though at present its supporters are aware of some of its limitations and the necessary adjustments. It is especially popular with politicians of social-democratic views because the measures recommended by Keynes reduce social inequalities and significantly reduce poverty. These politicians value such results for ideological reasons and also because it gives them voters among the lower and middle classes and usually allows them to solve serious economic problems. This social-democratic interpretation of Keynes is most successfully applied in the Scandinavian countries. It is certainly a socially sensitive economy, although it is mainly focused on solving problems of social inequality, which – in my opinion – does not exhaust the problem of egoism vs. brotherhood.

Many economists, in the face of a difficult situation, as in Sigmund Freud's textbook on psychoanalysis, return to their mother's womb, that is, to the thoughts of Karl Marx – if I may permit myself. An example of such an attitude can be the works of the economist Thomas Piketty or the philosophers and sociologists Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt.[22] It's just that they are trying to transfer Marx to the realities of the 21st century, to a time of completely new technologies and globalization, including economic and political power. The new "productive forces" impose new "relations of production", a new "base", a new "superstructure", which inevitably leads to a new revolution, this time a

[20] J.M. Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, Macmillan, London 1936.

[21] M. Friedman, *Commanding Heights*, PBS. October 1, 2000.

[22] T. Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Goldhammer A. – translated, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass., London 2014; A. Negri, M. Hardt, *Empire*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London 2001.

global one. This would happen under the rule of materialistic history and its iron, though perhaps less material, laws. This is because, apart from the already known forms of concentration of world wealth and poverty in time and space, they drive the globalization of violence and resistance. For reasons that I do not understand, they believe, forgetting the experience of the revolution of previous generations, that this time everything will end well for the good and poor social classes. Piketty is less committed to this kind of prophecy, but he is also eager to take on the role of Marx of our time, although rather in economic matters.

An interesting economic doctrine is the so-called new structural economics, identified primarily with Justin Yifu Lin.[23] It is an attempt to combine neoclassical and structural economics. Its creator explained the reasons, context, and goals for this new doctrine: "It also points out the fact that policies advocated under the Washington Consensus often failed to take into consideration the structural differences between developed and developing countries and ignored the second-best nature of reforming various types of distortions in developing countries. The proposed new structural economics attempts to develop a general framework for understanding the causality behind the observed stylized facts of sustained growth. Specifically, the new structural economics proposes to: (i) develop an analytical framework that takes into account factor and infrastructure endowments, the levels of development, and the corresponding industrial, social, and economic structures of developing countries; (ii) analyze the roles of the state and the market at each development level and the mechanics of the transition from one level

[23] J.Y. Lin, *New Structural Economics. A Framework for Rethinking Development and Policy*, Oxford University Press (on behalf of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank), Oxford 2011; J.Y. Lin, *The Quest for Prosperity. How Developing Economies Can Take Off*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey 2012.

to another; and (iii) focus on the causes of economic distortions and the government's strategies for exit from the distortions. It is not an attempt to substitute another ideologically-based policy framework for those that have dominated development thinking in past decades, yet showing little connection to the empirical realities of individual countries. Rather, it is an approach that brings attention to the endowment structure and level of development of each country and suggests a path toward country-based research that is rigorous, innovative, and relevant to development policy. This framework stresses the need to understand better the implications of structural differences at various levels of a country's development – especially in terms of the appropriate institutions and policies, and the constraints and incentives for the private sector in the process of structural change. The current state of development economics and the severe impact of the global crisis on the economies of developing countries have generated strong demand for a new framework for development thinking. The research agenda of the new structural economics should enrich research and enhance the understanding of the nature of economic development. This would help assist low- and middle-income countries in achieving dynamic, sustainable, and inclusive growth, and in eliminating poverty".[24]

The prerequisite of this doctrine is the conviction that poor economies will not achieve sustained economic growth by following the footsteps of the rich. On the way, they will fall into the so-called middle-income trap. Only the state is able to diagnose the situation in detail, determining the advantages and weaknesses of a given economy, as well as the economic situation and global opportunities. This is required for developing a plan that would take advantage of the strengths and would circumvent the obstacles of individual weaknesses and external difficulties.

[24] J.Y. Lin, *New Structural Economics* ..., op. cit., p. 38.

The state is also the only institution that can accumulate funds needed to fill the most acute infrastructural deficiencies, set the main directions of the desired and possible development, and give them impetus using financial resources and legal support. The idea of using "comparative advantages" is important here. An example of the successful implementation of such a strategy is of course China,[25] but also Finland[26] (I do not know how much consciously and how much not, but the principles of the new structural economy were implemented there) and in Poland after 2016 (I also do not know if this doctrine is used consciously).

Justin Yifu Lin also attaches great importance to reducing the wealth gap within society. Regardless of his ideological commitment, it is also about the economy's ability to develop. For, as he says, the poor live by their own labour, and the rich "earn money from their capital. Only when the poor have jobs can they share in the fruits of economic growth. Manufacturing and service industries have comparative advantages and can generate the maximum surplus. As labour doesn't grow as fast as capital, labourers' salary will increase, and capital returns will decrease. In the end, the income distribution gap between the rich and the poor will be narrowed".[27]

The difficulty of "catching up" with the rich economies lies, among other things, in the fact that wealth disparities are too high, but also in the lack of capital (which, in turn, is a comparative advantage of rich countries). Development plans require getting into debt. What is fatal, however, is the strategy inherent

[25] J.Y. Lin, *Demystifying the Chinese Economy*, Wang S. – translated, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2012; *China and Global Economy*, in China Economic Journal, February 2011.

[26] M. Castells, P. Himanen, *The Information Society and the Welfare State: The Finnish Model*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2002.

[27] http://en.people.cn/200703/26/eng20070326_361047.html

in the neoliberal doctrine of cutting expenses, saving, and not investing. It is especially necessary to develop research and production related to new technologies. And, as I mentioned, investments in infrastructure are necessary. Especially the one that are the basis for the development of strategic areas of the economy assumed in the development plan. It seems to me that the key is to restructure the economy in order to increase resources and facilities where the plan provides for the greatest development opportunities, and to save where it will not result in major losses. It is impossible to invest in everything. It is worthwhile to invest in what creates such opportunities.[28]

The last large group of internally differentiated orientations and assumptions, which, however, would qualify as one doctrine, is Christian Democratic economics, as I allow myself to call it. I am not even talking about the political phenomenon of Christian Democrats, which today sometimes differs from the social teaching of the Church, but about a certain attitude towards social phenomena and guidelines for action that are based on this teaching. I will refer to the most circulating understanding of the principles of Christian democracy, which explains that it is a "political movement that has a close association with Roman Catholicism and its philosophy of social and economic justice. It incorporates both traditional church and family values and progressive values such as social welfare. For this reason, Christian democracy does not fit squarely in the ideological categories of left and right. It rejects the individualist worldview that underlies both political liberalism and *laissez-faire* economics, and it recognizes the need for the state to intervene in the economy to support communities and defend human dignity. Yet Christian democracy, in opposition to socialism, defends private property and resists excessive intervention of the state in social life and education. While Christian democracy found its inspiration and

[28] Ibidem.

base of support in Christianity, its parties operated autonomously from ecclesiastical organizations and often welcomed the support of agnostics or atheists".[29]

The essence of this type of economy is the priority of the Church's social teaching over ideologies, economic indicators, or the legal status. Its foundations are based on the Holy Scriptures and the perennial teaching of the Church. In a separate act, it was first formulated in the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII.[30] It indicated the Catholic way of perceiving social processes, including economic ones, over the clashing ideologies and political parties, as well as over the conflicting interests of various social groups. Later, with the circumstances changing over the years, each pope issued Encyclicals and other documents to interpret the Church's message in new, concrete realities.

The basis of the Church's social teaching is always the same. It is a personalistic orientation which places man, as a child of God, their dignity, subjectivity, rights and needs above doctrines, ideologies or interests. It respects human freedom, including economic freedom, as well as private property, but if they contribute to the "common good".[31] It indicates a third way, between the ideologies of individualism and collectivism.[32]

[29] A. Munro, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Christian-democracy

[30] *Rerum Novarum*. Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII On Capital and Labor. http://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html

[31] See: H. Skorowski, *Moralność społeczna. Wybrane problemy z etyki społecznej, gospodarczej i politycznej*, [Social morality. Selected problems of social, economic and political ethics], Wydawnictwo Salezjańskie, Warszawa 1996.; M. Rembierz, The Play between Freedom and Power. On Human Quest for Self-Determination and Subjectivity in the Times of Ideological Fighting for Man's Appropriation, [in:] *Critical Realism and the Humanity in Social Sciences*, Archerian Studies, K. Śledzińska, K. Wielecki (ed.).

[32] See: K. Wielecki, *Podmiotowość w dobie kryzysu postindustrializmu. Między indywidualizmem a kolektywizmem*, Wydawnictwo Centrum Europejskiego Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2003. (Subjectivity in the

Certainly, this orientation of economists includes Stefano Zamagni,[33] Paul Dembiński,[34] or scientists involved in the so-called "Economy of Communion".[35] Let this thread of broad vision and to democracy, subjectivity and the "common good" be confirmed by the quotation from Zamagni: "A society in which democracy applies only to politics will never be fully democratic. A good society to live in will not force its members into uncomfortable dissociations: democratic as citizens and voters, undemocratic as workers and consumers".[36]

Common good, as understood by David Hollenbach, "In other words 'fulfils needs that individuals cannot fulfil on their own' and realizes 'values that can only be attained in our life together'".[37] It is therefore a kind of paper clip, bonding what is individual with what is collective. I would say that it is a state of collective subjectivity in which individual people and their communities realize themselves.

times of post-industrialism crisis. Between individualism and collectivism).

[33] S. Zamagni, *The Economics of Altruism*, Edward Elgar, Aldershot 1995; "Catholic social thought, civil economy and the spirit of capitalism", in Finn, D. (ed.), *The true wealth of nations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2010, pp. 63-94. And others.

[34] P.H. Dembiński, The Incompleteness of the Economy and Business: A Forceful Reminder, *Journal of Business Ethics*, Springer, Published 20 January 2012; https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-011-1185-2. And others.

[35] *The Economics of Altruism*, ed. S. Zamagni, E. Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham Glos 1995; L. Bruni, S. Zamagni, *Civil Economy. Efficiency, Equity, Public Happiness*, Peter Lang AG, Bern 2007; *The Economy of Communion. Toward a Multi-Dimensional Economic Culture*, ed. L. Bruni, New City Press, Rome 2001; J. Gallagher, J. Buckeye, *Structures of Grace: The Business Practices of the Economy of Communion*, New City Press, Rome 2014. And others.

[36] S. Zamagni, *Catholic Social Thought, Civil Economy and the Spirit of Capitalism*, http://www.christlichesoziallehre.de/pdf/Zamagni/CATHOLIC%20SOCIAL%20THOUGHT.pdf, p. 20.

[37] D. Hollenbach, S.J., *The Common Good and Christian Ethics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2002, p. 83.

In turn, Paul Dembiński, criticizing the excessive financialisation of the economy, also mentions the common good; he writes: "Yet financialization is merely one of many possible organizing principles, and it represents a choice which, if taken to its extreme, is a threat to both humanity and society. As this analysis shows, there are other, currently less prominent principles which could take its place – among them the notion of the common good".[38]

Similarly, we can confirm the profound sensitivity of the Christian Democratic economy to the human person as the main subject of economic relations. Zamagni even states that the qualitative development of economics is impossible without sensitivity to the anthropological point of reference.

"Today, however, we have come to the point where even the most 'abstract' of economists cannot but admit that if we want to attack the almost totally new problems of our society – such as the endemic aggravation of inequality, the scandal of human hunger, the emergence of new social pathologies, the rise of clashes of identity in addition to the traditional clash of interests, the paradoxes of happiness, unsustainable development, and so on – research simply can no longer confine itself to a sort of anthropological limbo. One must take a position on the matter. If it is true that every theory is a view of reality, then one cannot produce economic theory, properly speaking, without selecting a standpoint from which to scrutinize reality. Otherwise, economics will continue to spread, to enrich its technical and analytical apparatus, but if it does not escape self-referentiality it

[38] P.H. Dembiński, 1989-2009: From one systemic crisis to another: Failed utopias and economic transitions, in: *Crisis and Change: The Geopolitics of Global Governance*, Beretta S. and Zoboli R. (eds), Vita & Pensiero, Milano, 2012, pp. 23-53.

will be less and less capable of actually grasping reality, and thus of serving some purpose".[39]

Dembiński thinks similarly when he writes: "by stressing the importance of ethics and moral philosophy for daily life [...] strongly reminds us that neither economy nor business are self-sufficient either in organisational and social, practical or moral terms".[40]

The thesis that Christian Democratic economists go beyond doctrinaire ideologies can also be confirmed:

> Recent decades were witness to the turbulent upheaval caused by the breakdown of the communist utopia and the political project for 'real socialism', whilst the liberal utopia and the social democratic political project have become ever less persuasive, failing to gain support and, therefore, to deliver on their promises in a more complex and globalised world as demonstrated by the yet unfinished 2007/09 economic and financial crisis. The utopian collapse is a given: already completed in one case, widely expected in the other. It is highly possible that the liberal utopia will go the same way as communism, and that celebrations of its triumph may well be without future.[41]

Identification with the assumptions of the aforementioned economic doctrines may be overt or not quite; rely on developed systems of assumptions and arguments, or only on a few general theses. In each case, however, it defines economic views relating to economic practice. They appear especially in specific eco-

[39] S. Zamagni, *Reciprocity, Civil Economy, Common Good*, p. 2. http://www.ordosocialis.de/pdf/Zamagni/RECIPROCITY,%20CIVIL%20ECONOMY.pdf

[40] P.H. Dembiński, The Incompleteness of the Economy and Business ... op. cit.

[41] P.H. Dembiński, 1989-2009: from one systemic crisis to another ..., op. cit. 23-53.

nomic situations. And above all in times of economic crisis. Such crisis usually triggers two attitudes, and therefore a tendency to two types of macrostrategy: stagnant or developmental. The manifestation of the former is the currently dominant strategy of egocentric, anti-social and anti-subject capitalism. Development macrostrategy manifests itself rather through strategies of pro-social capitalism. I am referring to a very general perspective within which tensions can be mitigated and risks avoided. I am convinced that the most important foundations for such a perspective must be found in Catholic social teaching, in the message of Pope Francis and his predecessors.

In the contemporary economy of today's civilizational crisis and the related crisis of the social order, two orientations clearly emerge. The first one is ruthless capitalism, oriented solely to the accumulation of capital, unscrupulously making use of the global network in order to omit any sort of obligations towards the person, culture, the natural environment etc. It is based mainly on anonymous shareholders and the impersonal flow of virtual money, whose owners most often know nothing about where and in what conditions their financial resources are invested and furthermore do not intend to identify themselves with anyone or anything, nor sympathise with anyone. This kind of capitalism unceremoniously destroys people, the natural environment and culture. Its adherents make use of the ideology of neoliberal freedom, monopolize the market, and destroy competition. The depersonalization of capital and its sales causes no one to feel responsible, committed or guilty. Impersonal, objective forces are guilty. This is some kind of new 21st century form of alienation or fatalism. This is, as a matter of fact, the *stagnant* strategy, in an economic sense, but also an *antisocial* one, when it comes to the social consequences.

The second orientation is capitalism of a more corporate attitude (it is probably most advanced in Sweden); it appears, among others, in the form of social movements or communities.

Profit, although very important, is not the only good; the decision-making process and the redistribution of profit often has social and ecological objectives. Economic processes are more personalized; they are often of a community-based character. It seems however, that the processes of globalization foster the first kind of capitalism. This second kind of strategy has a *developmental* character, in an economic sense, but at the same time a *prosocial* one when it comes to the effects that are noticeable for citizens.

These are the two models of economic systems that we can observe in reality, at least in European countries. These are the self-centered and altruistic models. One cannot doubt which of these systems or doctrines is more moral, more sympathetic to people, simply more humane. But defenders of these less humane models and doctrines argue that their economy is more efficient. Some say that they also have good will, but first you have to choose efficiency, i.e. the economy they prefer must earn money, and then you can divide the resources to achieve humanitarian goals. History rather does not know of such a case that under such a doctrine, in the framework of such a model, there had indeed been such a noble act committed.

It is a widely known thesis that this brutal capitalism is very effective when it comes to motivating entrepreneurship, work and innovation. However, by triggering the human will of ownership and attaining wealth, it hinders or even makes impossible a reasonable redistribution of the acquired wealth. For ages, it has been the seed of poverty, misery and exclusion. What I wish to especially point out is that it causes anger, fury, rage, social turbulence, wars and revolutions. The response to these dangerous claims has rarely been a common sense willingness to compromise, solidarity or compassionate development strategy. Often, instead of some idea and plan for the future, a stagnation strategy was employed, the instruments of which are repression, intimidation and violence. Revolution is always evil, for every-

one. Usually, it has noble, divine and humane values on its banners. And it ends in genocide, rape and robbery on a massive scale, and then in the restitution of the old order. But both sides of the economic conflict are responsible for revolutions: those who commit violence and those who put others in a dead end.

Does fraternity in the economy cost dearly?

First of all, it is worth noting that it costs dearly not to have an economic policy that would compensate for the excessive stratification of wealth. Richard K. Wilkinson and Kate Pickett have collected huge factual material to show that health status, level of violence, life expectancy, infant mortality, severity of mental diseases, drug addiction, alcoholism, obesity, educational problems of children, frequency of pregnancies in underage girls, homicides, and incarcerations are closely related to the level of egalitarianism of societies.[42] Moral costs, social losses, the price of a lowered standard of living, poverty, despair, lack of prospects, suicide, are incalculable, but overwhelming. Such arguments, however, will not reach people who are devoid of imagination and sensitivity. Those who do not have the nerve of compassion will not understand anyway. But there are also very strong, strictly economic arguments, for a more just social order that would mitigate extreme economic inequalities.

Professor Elżbieta Mączyńska, President of the Polish Economic Society wrote: "It is not about some socialist trends, it is about protecting the market and the economy".[43] She mentioned the so-called output gap. As she said: "It is worth quoting

[42] R. Wilkinson, K. Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, Bloomsbury Press, New York, Berlin, London, Sydney 2009, p. 19.

[43] E. Mączyńska, https://www.rp.pl/Finanse/170129925-Maczynska-nierownosci-na-swiecie-narastaja-a-Davos-nie-potrafi-znalezc-na-to-recepty.html

the words of the head of the International Monetary Fund – how many rich can buy yachts, real estate, diamonds. There is a phenomenon of diminishing marginal utility of income. Someone who has several billion on their account may not notice the next billion on this account. The richest satisfy all needs in an extreme way and face a barrier to further distributing their wealth. They often resort to the speculative sphere. This is one of the reasons for the expansion of the speculative financial sector, which contributed to the world crisis in 2008".[44]

Mączyńska emphasizes that if people do not receive adequate income, production that increases due to technological progress cannot find buyers. "It means that our incomes are not properly correlated with growing production. Of course, it is not about doing some kind of giving away so that people only buy. [...] The point is that the mechanism that is inherent in contemporary capitalism should not act to increase inequality. Unfortunately, that's how things are now", she said.[45] Joseph Stiglitz: "Low growth in real wages in the US is having a disastrous effect on economic growth. Growing social inequalities sooner or later become a brake on the economy, not only in the US".[46] This opinion is confirmed by the scientific research of the economists of the International Monetary Fund, an institution which is hardly suspected of being averse to "markets". On the Forbes website we read: "In March this year, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) published the results of research by its economists Jonathan Sharp, Andrew Berg and Charalambos Tsangarides, which show that both in the medium and long term, social inequalities (measured by the Gini coefficient) have

[44] Ibidem.

[45] Ibidem.

[46] J. Stiglitz, https://www.forbes.pl/csr/nierownosci-spoleczne-hamuja-wzrost-gospodarczy/2xpkw7x, artykuły.

a destructive effect on the growth of the Gross Domestic Product".[47]

Conclusion

I attempted to show that the achievement of subjectivity by man is a condition for overcoming natural (in the sense of biological nature) egoism. But for that you need subjective social relations. They are especially important in the period of socialization. These in turn depend to a large extent on the subjectivity of society and culture, and also, to a large extent, on the subjective economy. We are dealing here with a complex, multi-factorial vicious circle.

Each dimension of subjectivity depends on all the others and affects all the others. I think the essential contradiction that causes the looping of modern people is related to the development of industrialism and capitalism as its financial basis. However, the evil is not in themselves, but in the wrong reaction to their side effects. As already mentioned, the development of the social division of labour causes social disintegration. Its effects are, among others, atomization, anomy and secularization.

I tried to show that excessive economic inequality is not only not necessary or conducive to the economy, but on the contrary. Not only does it cause evil to people who starve or suffer poverty or live a poor life full of unnecessary mental illnesses, divorces and other effects of inequality described by Wilkinson and Pickett. They make the world worse for all of us, even for those who are responsible for it, but do not feel guilty.

The unfavourable side effects of the industrial revolution overlap with the second civilizational revolution, the post-industrial one, with its globalization, even stronger egocentric individualism, financialization of the economy, a more degenerate

[47] http://csr.forbes.pl

version of mass culture and an increasingly massive turn-away from God and the Church (at least where this civilization is the most advanced). Man is left alone with his increasingly unlimited freedom, even more radical in relation to enlightenment, faith in the omnipotence of reason and obsession with freedom cresting the self-centered individualism.

However, I am convinced that the essence of this dissociative contradiction is not some fatal decree of fate or an inevitable, in the Marxist sense, rule of historical laws, but a genuinely human error, dependent on will. Fascinated by unprecedented technical and economic possibilities and, as a result of the ability of social control weakened by the social division of labour, stunned by the freedom of moral and cultural habits, man did not take the opportunity to preserve, apart from new, "progressive" forms of life organization, what Tönnies defined as a community, a civilization taking improper advantage of freedom and new opportunities. And many of us continue to do it wrong or even worse. After all, whatever we criticize in "our time" is the result of a wrong choice. We committed the sin of radicalism, the choice of extremes, of fundamentalism, which prompted us to reject what seemed to be a relic, part of the mistakes of the past. We act like teenagers who think that time has started with them and that everything has to be built from scratch. And as teenagers, we are unable to keep proportion.

It is not about being stuck in the superstitions of the old days, or throwing ourselves into modernity like a tower jumper who does not check whether there is water in the pool. There is nothing wrong with the opportunities that civilization gives us. On the contrary, they are wonderful and worth using. But this must not prevent us from building personal, social, cultural and economic relationships on the foundation of a brotherhood firmly rooted in God, religion and the Church. It is a matter of our choice – private and collective. A subjective culture as well as a society and economy are possible. But you have to choose

yourself: a child of God, and others as brothers in God's love. This is how I understand the message of the Holy Father Francis and his Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*. Perhaps this is one of the most needed offers that the Church can propose at the moment, one which may change the fate of the world to our favour and, at the same time, the situation and importance of the Church in this world.

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Fratelli Tutti and the Challenge of Neo-Populism

Rodrigo Guerra López*

1. Introduction

The appearance of Pope Francis' Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* on the stage in 2020 turned out to be a strong wake-up call for all. Very difficultly will someone who travels through its pages not feel questioned, provoked and motivated to rethink life in society. The document provides the essential elements to warn of the urgency of building a method that will help us heal our countless personal and community wounds and fractures. Since its subtitle, it is noted that "fraternity" and "social friendship" are the central issues that the Successor of Peter will deal with in the 287 paragraphs that make up the text. The first chapter, in a sense, justifies the accents, focus, and breadth of the rest of the Encyclical. Through a description of some of the most relevant features of the contemporary global scenario, the Pope wishes to show the need to overcome the reductionism typical of ideologies and affirm the importance of fraternity as a lifestyle, as a method of social action and as a school for new politics.

2. A shadowy scenario and the need for re-establishing forms of coexistence

Indeed, closed nationalisms, the globalization that circumvents fraternity, the loss of the meaning of history, cultural colo-

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nization, social polarization, the trivialization of environmental responsibility, the culture of discarding, the birth of new forms of poverty, insufficiently universal human rights, the lack of recognition of the dignity of women, new forms of slavery, promoting the logic of conflict and fear, the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the migration crisis, the civilization of the show, the new radicalism that is vehiculated through social networks, the manipulation of democratic processes, religious fanaticism and the lack of founded hope, are some of the phenomena that Francis explains in a tight synthesis and that serve as the backdrop to rethink how we should imagine a radical *refoundation* of our forms of coexistence and of our social projects.[1]

I deliberately use the word *refoundation* to imply that Pope Francis takes a particularly *radical* approach. Our societies do not require a secondary adjustment of a few issues that need to be fine-tuned for their proper functioning. Much less do they need a merely cosmetic, superficial improvement, in the face of the culture of "appearances". On the contrary, for some years now, Pope Francis has reminded us with great force that "When a society – whether local, national or global – is willing to leave a part of itself on the fringes, no political programmes or resources spent on law enforcement or surveillance systems can indefinitely guarantee tranquility. This is not the case simply because inequality provokes a violent reaction from those excluded from the system, but because the socioeconomic system is unjust at its root".[2]

An affirmation of this type does not pretend to be a disqualification of everything, nor does it seek to arouse an unfounded scaremongering: "The complaint that 'everything is broken' is answered by the claim that 'it can't be fixed', or 'what can I

[1] Francis, Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Ch. I: "Dark clouds over a closed world". (FT).

[2] Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, n. 59.

do?'"This feeds into disillusionment and despair, and hardly encourages a spirit of solidarity and generosity. Plunging people into despair closes a perfectly perverse circle: such is the agenda of the invisible dictatorship of hidden interests that have gained mastery over both resources and the possibility of thinking and expressing opinions".[3]

Pope Francis is well aware that there are different ways of reading the present reality and that some of them exaggerate or oversimplify this or that aspect. Furthermore, there are readings of the new complexity that characterizes our time that use evil as a hermeneutical criterion. Instead of helping to understand reality and its multiple dimensions, they seek first of all to identify the conspiracy, exacerbate tempers, introduce a logic of conflict and motivate a purely reactionary struggle. The conspiracy theories of yesterday and today are an eloquent example of this type of pathological interpretation of reality.

3. The question is at the root

Pope Francis proposes something different: it is necessary to go to the roots, to the human, cultural and religious dimension that explains the lack of fraternity. This does not mean to settle in the moment of the complaint, the protest or the pessimistic lament. It means delving into that very place, in the depths of the human heart, to identify the reasons that can also provide hope today. The corrupt root of a global society based on discarding is accompanied by a structural tension within the human condition, which can show once again that each person and each community are made to transcend, to seek with determination the fullness of life in truth, good, beauty and justice. A fullness that is not purely formal, but has a moment of existential verification in the relationship with the other, in belonging to a

[3] FT, n. 75.

people, in deep immersion within concrete reality. This is how, always starting from the bottom and from the periphery, with modesty and perseverance, we can show that "reparation and reconciliation will give us new life and set us all free from fear".[4]

4. Populism and neo-populism

Among the various issues that *Fratelli Tutti* addresses, there is one of particular political relevance: *neo-populism*. Chapter V of the Encyclical, dedicated to "a better kind of politics", just begins by tackling this question. The *neo-populism* of which we speak today is not a mere linear continuation of the classic populism of the thirties and sixties of the twentieth century.[5] The populism to which *Fratelli Tutti* refers is caused by the weakness of the democratic culture of some nations since 1990. We cannot here make a comparative analysis of the similarities and differences between both stages of populism. Much less can we distinguish in this brief space between Latin American and European neo-populism. In fact, the soundest thing, both yesterday and today, is to speak of "neo-populisms" that specify to a greater or lesser extent a pack of elementary characteristics.

More than 10 years ago, at the *Social Observatory* of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM) we tried to approach this reality.[6] Over time, it is not possible to provide a definition

[4] FT, n. 78.

[5] Cf. G. Eickhoff, *Das Charisma der Caudillos. Cárdenas, Franco, Perón,* Vervuert Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1999.

[6] Cf. C. Aguiar Retes – R. Guerra López – F. Porras Sánchez (Coords.), *Neopulismo y democracia. Experiencias en América Latina y el Caribe*, CELAM, Bogotá 2007; It's useful also to consult within the huge bibliography on this subject: C. de la Torre – E. Peruzzotti, *El retorno del pueblo. Populismo y nuevas democracias en América Latina*, FLACSO, Quito 2008; "What is Populism?", in *The Economist,* 19 diciembre 2016; A. Vargas Llosa (Coord.), *El estallido del populismo,* Planeta, México 2017; E. Krauze, *El pueblo soy yo,* DEBATE – Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial, México 2018.

of "neo-populism" that will please everyone, and yet we will try to give one, once more, below. At present, the concept of neo-populism is used to indicate a large number of realities of very diverse ideological lineage: Donald Trump, Evo Morales, Viktor Orbán, Jair Bolsonaro, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, Matteo Salvini, Nicolás Maduro, and a long etcetera. We wanted to put the names of various contemporary political leaders to underline that, in all cases, the role of the more or less messianic caudillo appears as a constant.

From our point of view, *the new populism is not so much an ideology, but a way of exercising power*. Following Enrique Krauze a bit, we can say that *the new populism is the demagogic use that a charismatic leader makes of democratic legitimacy to promise access to a possible utopia and, upon triumph, to consolidate power outside the law or transforming it to convenience.*[7] In our opinion, neo-populism tends to include, to varying degrees, some – or all – of the following ingredients:

- *An ideological reading of national history*, which serves as an argument to explain the arrival of a providential "caudillo".
- *The exaltation of the "providential leader"* who will solve the problems of the people and who, in one way or another, seeks to affirm himself as the incarnation of the latter. The "caudillo" is constituted as such by his messianic character and by his authoritarian way of exercising power.
- *The use and abuse of the word*: the populist considers himself the supreme interpreter of the general truth. With his speech, he occupies as much of the public space as he can and administers freedom of expression at his discretion.
- *The arbitrary use of public funds:* the treasury is used for megaprojects that do not go through a rigorous economic analysis that evaluates their viability and relevance.

[7] Cf. E. Krauze, op. cit. p. 115.

- *The money is distributed in a targeted and welfare manner*, without seeking to strengthen intermediate organizations, and trying to generate political loyalty in the beneficiaries.
- The definition of an *internal enemy* that generates social outrage: the businessmen, the rich, the oligarchies, who in many cases have really been corrupted and serve as a perfect example of what to fight against.
- The definition of an *external enemy* that can be blamed in case of need. Enemy who, on the other hand, can give more than one reason to be considered this way.
- Acceptance of some elements of the market economy, insofar as they strengthen the existence of a business community loyal to the ruler. It is what some call "*crony capitalism*".
- *Contempt for the legal and institutional framework*, which is sought to be transformed at convenience.
- *Manipulation of the secular nature of the State*, which on occasions will limit the scope of action of the churches to private life and, on others, will accept the discretionary use of cultural and religious elements for the public legitimation of power.[8]

Pope Francis, in *Fratelli Tutti*, clearly identifies that any positive meaning that the term "populism" might have had in the past has been nullified in the present scenario. Neo-populism has currently become "another source of polarization in an already divided society".[9] It is a cause and effect of social fracture. Its nature emerges when a leader captivates the population, seeking to "exploit politically a people's culture, under whatever ideo-

[8] Cf. R. Guerra López, "Descubrirnos pueblo: movimientos populares, populismo y la búsqueda de una renovación democrática en América Latina", in G. Carriquiry – G. La Bella, *La irrupción de los movimientos populares,* Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 2019, pp. 176-178; Cf. E. Krauze, op. cit., p.p. 119-123.

[9] FT, n. 156.

logical banner, for their own personal advantage or continuing grip on power. Or when, at other times, they seek popularity by appealing to the basest and most selfish inclinations of certain sectors of the population. This becomes all the more serious when, whether in cruder or more subtle forms, it leads to the usurpation of institutions and laws".[10]

Something that should be highlighted, from the quote we have just mentioned, is that Francis points out that current populism can occur "with any ideological sign". Indeed, the neo-populisms of the right and the left, apparently confronted, quickly tend to find sympathy and meeting points with each other. The recent case of the synergy, collaboration and closeness of Andrés Manuel López Obrador with Donald Trump is an extremely eloquent example.

5. People and "popular movements"

Neo-populism, although it wishes to establish itself as an authentic expression of the people, by undermining their freedom, by manipulating their cultural and historical *ethos*, "it disregards the legitimate meaning of the word 'people'".[11] The *word* "people" has evidently suffered a significant erosion in the last hundred years. However, it is necessary to understand that, if the *reality* of the "people" is weakened, deformed or manipulated, it affects the existence of democracies, since these, in any of their definitions, appeal precisely to the people as a constitutive and unavoidable dimension.

A people is a community of persons (*communio personarum*) united by historical, cultural and solidarity ties. By understanding it this way, one does not pretend to incur a certain romanticism that does not recognize the importance of the institutional

[10] FT, n. 159.
[11] FT, n. 157.

and organizational dimension required for social life.[12] However, the institutions acquire life, qualitative content and a particular *ethos*, thanks to the energies that come from the people, their spontaneous associative forms, their struggles and their causes. The technostructure often tends to become self-referential and suffocate – without realizing it – the life world (*Lebenswelt*) that characterizes the person and the people to which they belong. That is why Pope Francis greatly values the corrective and nurturing potential possessed by the "popular movements" that grow from below, from the subsoil, and, little by little, find and make synergies with each other. In order to understand the real role of popular movements, it must be said that doing politics *for the people* is not the same as doing politics *from the people*, that is, from a real, empirical affection and belonging to a community of people united by its culture and its history, and in motion:

[Popular movements] "may be troublesome, and certain 'theorists' may find it hard to classify them, yet we must find the courage to acknowledge that, without them, "democracy atrophies, turns into a mere word, a formality; it loses its representative character and becomes disembodied, since it leaves out the people in their daily struggle for dignity, in the building of their future".[13]

In other words, a purely formal democracy that is not reconnected with the real people and their various forms of self-organization, easily becomes an anonymous machine that can end up putting an undemocratic leader in power or keeping in power. This means that neo-populism is one of the most perverse forms of authoritarian regression by electoral means. Due to these types of risks to the life of the people, Pope Francis will say elsewhere: "in this state of paralysis and disorientation, the political participation of Popular Movements can defeat the politics

[12] FT, nn. 163-164.
[13] FT, n. 169.

of false prophets, who exploit fear and despair and who preach a selfish well-being and an illusory security".[14]

6. "Fratelli Tutti": avoiding the suicide of democracy

Democracy, like all political reality, is fragile, imperfect, and disappointing, especially when it works well. Democracy is a regime in which everything is watched, discovered, criticized, protested and challenged.[15] It is not an idyllic and smooth path, just the opposite. Democracy is a peculiar asceticism for the people and their dreams. However, in its name lives the ideal of a more egalitarian participation that limits despotism and its violence. For this reason, today more than ever, democracy needs the *people*, the real people, as healthy medicine. Democracy requires being able to manage imperfect human, individual and community life, respecting the limits that invite it not to commit suicide. *Fratelli Tutti* undoubtedly contributes in a fundamental way to this task.

[14] Francis, "Presentación", in G. Carriquiry – G. La Bella, *La irrupción de los movimientos populares,* p. 7.

[15] Cf. D. Innerarity, *La política en tiempos de indignación*, Galaxia de Gutemberg, Barcelona 2015, p. 155.

Living Fraternity: Can a 21st Century Society Draw Any Lessons from the Dominican Tradition?

Helen Alford OP

We know from the opening paragraphs of *Fratelli Tutti* (FT) that Pope Francis was inspired by the figure of St Francis while writing it. He therefore uses a medieval mendicant brother as the starting point for his reflections on fraternity for our day, our 21st century society. This paper tries to expand on Pope Francis' reference to St Francis by attempting to look a bit further at what we might learn from the experience of living fraternity that comes out of the form of life that Francis and, contemporaneously, Dominic founded. Since my experience is as a member of the Dominicans, I will refer mostly to this tradition. It is not the same as the Franciscan, but it grows out of the same historical milieu; the differences between these two traditions are minimal compared to the difference between both of them and life in the 21st century. Dominicans refer to St Francis with the same term that is used for St Dominic, that is, "our Holy Father".[1]

In the early paragraphs of FT, which is the section explicitly connected with St Francis, the Holy Father says that he is not

[1] In order to do this, we will use the Book of the Constitutions of the Order of Preachers (Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum, or LCO for short), which apply to the Dominican friars, as well as some recent Letters to the Order by the Masters (successors of St Dominic), with some reference to the basic structure and history of the Order. In order to produce a final version of this paper, the use of these sources would need to be rationalized, and maybe some reference made to the constitutions of the sisters, but I do not think the conclusions would change a lot compared to the ones we have here.

providing a "complete teaching on fraternal love", but rather a "consideration of its universal scope, its openness to every man and woman" (n. 6). Others in our meeting have made various summaries of the encyclical or some of its parts or themes. I would like to suggest that Pope Francis has three main points that he wants to make regarding the idea of fraternity, based on the parts of FT where he uses the term with the greatest density (paragraphs 103-110, 271-272 and 277-279):

1. Fraternity makes freedom and equality really possible, or fully possible (103);
2. Universal fraternity starts with the recognition of dignity (106) and will be complete (the "feast of universal fraternity") only when no-one is left behind (110);
3. "Openness to the Father of all" gives "solid and stable reasons" for fraternity (272). Christians find the "wellspring" of fraternity in the Gospel (277); they know that fraternity has a mother and her name is Mary (278) and they promote religious freedom for others, just as they ask for it for themselves where they are in the minority, as part of the "journey towards fraternity" (279).

If this summary is fair, we see here a line of reflection that moves from the "discovery" on a human level of fraternity for all, captured in the slogan from the French Revolution, through to a deepening and widening of this idea towards its genuinely universal dimensions, pointing out that, as a universal value, the key components of fraternity are the recognition of dignity and the inclusion of all, and finally arriving at the "solid and stable" grounding of fraternity which is in "openness to the Father of all". Presented like this, it seems that the Holy Father wants to make fraternity as open as possible to non-believers as he can, while arriving at the end of the document at the affirmation that, without the recognition of God as Father, we do not have a solid basis for a fraternal way of life. One of the implications of this might be that it is the believers in our society who help all

of society's members to give a solid basis to fraternity.

So what can we say about this presentation from the point of view of the Dominican tradition? I think a key contribution is to look at how the order understands living fraternity, or, perhaps better, understands the answer to the question: "How do we live fraternally?".

It is probably a good idea to deal immediately with some objections. These might be:

1. "God is at the foundation of a religious order, but we can't assume that for society as a whole";
2. "One chooses to join a religious order because one senses a call to do so, but one doesn't choose to join one's society";
3. "Members of a religious order are celibate, and that makes them too different from the rest of society to be able to make useful comparisons".

Firstly, we already looked briefly at the way Pope Francis deals with the issue of belief in God as grounding fraternity; beyond that, we can say that even non-believers may have some kind of implicit recognition of some kind of higher power or principle, even if their lack of an explicit recognition of God makes their grounding of fraternity less "solid and stable" than it is for believers that belong to a recognizable (especially "Abrahamic") tradition.

Secondly, we cannot choose our parents, but to some degree we can choose many other aspects of the social system to which we belong – our friendship network; the type of work we do and the relationships associated with that; the place where we live, and even our citizenship. In some ways, people in wider society have more choice over the people to whom they relate than members of a religious order do, although they probably do not often feel that they are "called" to those choices.

Probably the biggest difference is the option that members of a religious order make for celibacy; even here, however, religious still belong to families, networks of friends and wider political communities. Their option for celibacy is about dedicating

themselves to a different kind of fertility, as a "sign of the kingdom", rather than about denigrating marriage, sexual relations or childbearing.[2] At any rate, the ways in which religious orders are different from, and similar to, the rest of society may be more complex than it seems at first sight.

St Dominic founded his community of brothers for "preaching and the salvation of souls" (Fundamental Constitution, II). God is therefore at the starting point and foundation of the Order, not at the end, as in FT. However, since FT makes it clear that without belief in God we have no solid basis for fraternity, we might say that the Dominican approach is complementary to the one we find in FT (as we might also say of the approach of Benedict XVI to fraternity). Another of the key things to note about the Dominicans is the continual reference to all of the members as "brothers", emphasizing their equality. We see this especially in the authority structures, in which elections are the basic tool, as well as in the names that are used for superiors. They are "priors" of convents (individual houses) and "prior provincials" of the basic territorial structure that makes up the Order as a whole, the "province" – in other words, they are a kind of "first among equals".[3] Similarly, no one is elected to the role of superior for life, so superiors are always changing. Still, the role of superiors is also about creating fraternity. To have a superior as a figure of unity allows the brothers to express their

[2] At the same time, we know that over history some quite influential members of the Church have not been as clear about this as we might like today, and the continued strong distinction made in the Church's liturgy between female saints as "virgins" or "holy women" still might question the message the Church wants to give the world on this issue even in our own day.

[3] The only real exception to this is the reference to the "Master of the Order", who is seen as the successor of St Dominic. The Dominicans do also use the terms "novice master" and "student master", but here the term "master" is related to helping the newer members grow and develop into the way of life, in the sense of a "master-disciple" relationship.

differences, tensions and problems more openly, without the fear that this could blow their relationships apart, since the superior remains a kind of guarantee of their unity. There are also interesting examples from the history of the Order that relate to how important equality between the brothers was. In the Acts of the General Chapter of Florence in 1321, for instance, we find a text considering the situation of any Dominican brother who has some kind of academic title (perhaps he is a "Master" of Sacred Theology); such a friar should not expect to be called "Master" in his everyday dealings with his brothers; he should be known as "brother" like all of the others.[4] A recent Master of the Order puts the preaching mission of the Dominicans together with building fraternity and in relation to the role of superiors in the following way: "Dominic asked the first friars to promise him obedience for the common life. I think in this way, he was insisting upon the link between preaching and the work of fraternity, implicitly affirming that the service of preaching is intimately linked to the mystery of the grace by which Christ establishes his Church as Fraternity given to the world as the sign of the hope of salvation".[5] These brief indications help us to see that the sense of living a fraternal life was really central to the basic understanding that the Dominicans had, and still have, of themselves. With this in mind, we could perhaps focus on three key issues in Dominican life that set up a sense of fraternal communion among its members:

1. The role of faith in God in allowing us to develop a sense of a fraternal relation to others. In terms of living fraternity in the world to which FT is addressed, this might get us think-

[4] Reference needed.

[5] Fr Bruno Cadoré, *Mendicants and Being in Solidarity with Others*, 2014, p. 4, available at: https://www.op.org/documents/#810-864-wpfd-bro-bruno-cadore-o-p-2010-2019-5_letters-of-masters-of-the-order-home-doc-en-5fbf8ea66d4ae (last accessed 03.03.21).

ing: do we need to face the problem created by secularisation for building a sense of fraternity? Could we imagine an "interreligious platform" for fraternity, maybe building on the imagery of St Francis and the Sultan and the meeting between Pope Francis and the Imam?

2. The role of sensing a calling or vocation to a life of fraternity. In terms of living fraternity in the 21st century, this might get us thinking: if we use the language of being "called" to be a part of society, and recognise that calling in some symbolic way, could it help us build more fraternal relations between us?
3. The role of a rule and constitutions in creating a framework for fraternity: which might get us thinking: do we have legal structures in society today that permit the development of fraternal relations? We could go into the various possibilities that the constitutions create for fostering fraternity. We might mention two in particular:
   a) Having a voice (active and passive) in chapter and elections. From Table 1 below, we can see that the section of the LCO that covers government is nearly 50% longer than the section on the life of the brothers. Nevertheless, government only makes sense in the light of the life of the brothers, so this section, even if shorter, is more crucial and comes first. Law and government only work because the brothers are trying to live a life of fraternal communion, however imperfectly they manage to do it;
   b) The possibility for fraternal correction and patience and support in our weakness and frailty. We know that fraternal life is difficult; history teaches us that, and the friars and sisters are constantly struggling to live it (the Church might see the religious life as a "state of perfection", but it is certainly not heaven on earth). The early accounts of the lives of the friars about 50 years after the foundation of the Order in the *Vitae fratrum* show that the friars were well aware of their faults. The constitutions provide

mechanisms for dealing with these difficulties so that they do not undermine the whole project of trying to live fraternally.

Rule of St Augustine		
Book of the Constitutions and Ordinations of the Brothers of the Order of Preachers (LCO)		
Part One	Paragraphs	No. of paragraphs
Fundamental Constitution	I-IX	9
First Distinction: The Life of the Brothers	2-251	249
Section 1: The Following of Christ	2-153	151
Section 2: The Formation of Brothers	154-251	97
Second Distinction: The Government of the Order	252-619	367
Section 1: General Norms	252-297	45
Section 2: Government	297bis-438	141
Section 3: Elections	439-536	97
Section 4: Economic Administration	537-619	82
Part Two: Constitutions and Ordinations for which another text is in force	---	---
Appendices	---	---

Table 1. Structure of the LCO (2012 version in English).

A concluding comment: we said that the friars were founded for preaching, so they were founded for a particular mission. The way of carrying out this mission, however, involves putting effort into building fraternal communion; from the earliest times, the convents and houses of the brothers were called "the holy preaching", so that the community life itself was seen as part of their preaching mission. However, if we compare the Dominicans to the Jesuits, or some of the later religious communities such as the Salesians or Opus Dei, we can see some of the drawbacks of the Dominican approach to carrying out their

mission. Dominicans are not going to be so available (especially as individuals) for missions that take them away from the centres of community life. It is no surprise, therefore, that the Jesuits, and some of the later orders, who do not have the idea of "regular life", as well as a more interior, psychological and therefore individual spirituality than the Dominicans, have been able to be more effective as regards the mission in this sense. Building fraternal communion takes work and effort; it inevitably means that less effort can be put into an external mission. Still, the "cost" of the Dominican way of life, which requires "investment" in community life as well as in more classic missionary or preaching activity, may represent an interesting model for a society that has difficulty with "work-life balance" and where women are often penalised in the workplace because they devote more time than men to the "work of caring". As we try to move towards more sustainable economies, the work of caring will need to be treated in a more just and life-giving way, and perhaps the analogous work of Dominicans, both brothers and sisters, in building fraternal communion could be a contribution to that.

From Political Slavery to Social Friendship

Gustavo Beliz*

"Politics today often takes forms that hinder progress towards a different world… Recognizing that all people are our brothers and sisters, and seeking forms of social friendship that include everyone, is not merely utopian".

Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*

Abstract

This article analyzes different forms of policy enslavement that hinder its impact and effectiveness, and asks how to unleash its transformative potential. It focuses on five specific problems linked to extreme polarization, financial oppression, corruption, environmental damage and technocracy in technological innovation. In turn, it proposes ways to advance in a political practice that corrects these deviations and leads to social friendship through the implementation of institutions that promote dialogue, solidarity finance, transparency, following the principles of an integral ecology, and supporting innovation for social inclusion. On this path, multilateralism, understood as an instance for encouraging the globalization of solidarity, has a fundamental role in crucial aspects such as a debt relief for the poorest countries, the fight against tax havens or the democratic distribution of Covid vaccines against throughout the planet.

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1. The Five New Forms of Political Slavery

Market freedom, reduced to freedom to produce and consume as proposed by neoliberalism, does not guarantee human freedom or social peace. Markets, like robots, do not understand ethics. They are programmed to optimize monetary benefits. It is up to us to create the appropriate code, the institutional platform for them to function on solid, transparent and equitable bases.

This construction is always political. However, when we do not work for a common project, it is reduced to fleeting marketing recipes aimed at the destruction of a competitor, considered an enemy.[1]

Without real, generous, inclusive and transformative political action, new forms of slavery and dehumanization gain ground: poverty, exclusion, lack of access to education and job opportunities.[2]

Just as economic relations can move from voluntary exchange to oppression, political practice is flawed by new forms of slavery that are expressed mainly in five aspects.

1.1. The slavery of polarization

Modern democracies are at risk due to the lack of dialogue and the absence of institutional mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts and controversies. Without these places to meet in our differences, confrontation is exacerbated and society becomes polarized, taking one side or the other as if there were nothing but emptiness in the middle. We become prisoners of a destructive dialectic, where our own ontological existence becomes meaningful only in opposition.

[1] Pope Francis (2020) also points out that "politics is something more noble than posturing, marketing and media spin. These sow nothing but division".

[2] "Slavery is rooted in a notion of the human person which allows him or her to be treated as an object... They are treated as means to an end". Pope Francis (2015).

The media fame enhances polarization through the exaltation of frivolity or the pauperization of the debate. Information is manipulated to highlight discord with the sole purpose of gaining attention. Speeches cease to be a call for dialogue and become deafening noises of confrontation, full of irony, sarcasm and blame-sharing. Conversation becomes toxic, it is subsumed in cross shouting and the ears, the natural gateway for ideas, are closed.

Social networks can be a useful resource if they are used in moderation and contribute to bringing together what is distant. Their positive use, by multiplying connections, soothes the organic need for the other. However, they can be an enslaving and mediatic web woven with our own vanity. The weak links of extreme digitalization favor individualism and polarization, which tends to grow with poor ego management and "what ought to be a window on the world becomes a showcase for exhibiting personal narcissism".[3]

1.2. The slavery of oppressive financial networks

Financial mechanisms typical of a technocracy prevent the economy from being enlightened by other values. The financialization of the global economy offers a fictitious growth, an ephemeral profitability for the great majorities based on the indebtedness of developing countries, on speculation, on short-term exploitation. When it takes the reins of national economic systems, it produces debt crises, of countries, companies and families, dynamiting confidence and investment in productive activities that generate genuine and sustainable employment.

When politics is in thrall to these financial networks, it loses its liberating purpose and becomes just another tool to discipline the social discontent that inevitably follows deceit and

[3] Pope Francis (2019), where he also warns that "the community as a network of solidarity requires mutual listening and dialogue, based on the responsible use of language".

plunder. States are weakened in the balance of power with private groups whose stock market value is equivalent to the GDP of medium-sized countries or even exceeds it.

Extreme liberalism only spills poverty, while concentrating wealth in a smaller and smaller percentage of the population, inequality and violence grow, and the social, urban and productive fabric deteriorates. With the ecosystem of citizen protection in ruins, the law of the jungle reigns and the weakest always suffer.

1.3. The slavery of different forms of corruption

There are criminal practices that can be anchored in politics. In the public works sector alone, losses, including bribes, inefficiencies and overpricing, are estimated to reach 6% of the global GDP.[4]

No development is possible with corruption. There can be no equity when there is a submission of the public good to the interests of mafias and corporations that could break the mechanisms of competition and the normal functioning of the markets. Almost 13% of businessmen in Latin America consider that they are at a competitive disadvantage against similar firms that pay bribes to obtain government contracts.[5]

Organized crime, human trafficking, money laundering, the use of tax havens: all serious crimes are twice as serious when they coexist with politics, spreading the virus of hopelessness and resignation.

1.4. The slavery of regressive treatment of the environment

Humanity is facing the challenge of saving the planet from environmental degradation, from the throwaway culture that

[4] Matthews (2016) also points out the necessary role that civil society should play in monitoring efficiency in public works investment.

[5] World Bank (2019). Similar data comes from a corruption report for the region by the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF, 2019).

causes unjust and asymmetrical damage that falls most heavily on the poorest countries.

Latin America's GDP per capita could fall by up to 30% by the end of the century if the average temperature rises by 3 degrees Celsius. Being highly dependent on its agricultural production, the region is one of the most damaged by climate change in terms of productivity.[6] Latin America is also the most affected in terms of fatalities from natural disasters, accounting for 52.8% of total cases between 2009 and 2018.[7]

Hunger and death are the inevitable results of an environmental policy that is predatory of natural resources. For this reason, people's environmental awareness has grown, demanding sustainable policy designs from governments that reinforce pollution monitoring and control, in an economy based on the relationship with the environment and the neighbor.

1.5. The slavery of a technological model unaware of labor inclusion and social justice

Throughout history, the technological revolutions that drive globalization tend to outstrip the capacity of governments to manage their social and institutional consequences.[8] Technological unemployment is not new. What is new is the acceleration of change.

New technologies, such as artificial intelligence, can be a source of great improvements and well-being. But they can also be a source of social injustice if their use is not accompanied by

[6] IDB (2017). The book brings together a series of technical studies inspired by *Laudato Si'*.

[7] The region also concentrated 45% of the economic costs derived from natural disasters such as floods, fires, etc. (CRED, 2019).

[8] Sachs (2020) distinguishes seven distinct waves of technological and institutional change. In them, geographical changes in space and time, with a new role for the horse, the opening of maritime routes or industrial transport, provide us with a guide to address the international governance of new digital technologies.

a sense of ethics, of protecting human beings, always fragile, from the abusive powerful machines.

Passivity is not neutral. Inaction leaves us subordinated to a technological model of pure efficiency, an extreme pragmatism, where people are eclipsed by clouds of data, algorithms and economic results.

As if they were shackles, these five aspects enslave political practice and give us a monochromatic version of its true power for change reality.

In order not to fall into hopelessness or conformism, it is essential to rebel against banality. To find the keys, the ways out of each of these five enslaving aspects.

2. The Path to Social Friendship

The transformation we need cannot be a calligraphic revolution consisting of adding and filing documents. It cannot be a revolution of words empty of commitment. It cannot be a revolution of desktops, armchairs and tea adjusted to a comfortable status quo.

We need to go beyond the diagnostic phase and move on to treatment, to glimpse the horizon of friendship behind the chains and move forward with concrete liberating actions against these five political captors.

2.1. Friendship as social dialogue

The enslaving polarization requires States to create meeting places, to organize agreements and to accompany decisions. This is what we are doing in Argentina with the Economic and Social Council, made up of workers, scientists, businessmen and representatives of civil society which, entrusted by the President of the Nation, I have the honor to preside. Through respectful dialogue, we seek to arrive at better syntheses, to reach the possible shores without drowning in conflicts of interest. We have selected 25 essential topics of the public agenda, in the areas of health, institutional quality, productivity with social cohesion, integral

ecology, education and labor. The aim is not to obtain spurious validations, but to design State policies that have the strength of consensus and show an alternative path to polarization.

We need to reinforce self-esteem with popular knowledge, to be close to the humblest, to the social movements, to look for support in people and not in the great mass media or in anonymous followers of an impersonal cyberspace. The challenge is to become the voice of the voiceless, the discarded, the excluded. Viral hate cannot take primacy over edifying words. Instead of feeding it with "likes" in social networks, we must combat our narcissism with reconstructive and regenerative ideas.

2.2. Friendship expressed in solidarity finance

To escape financial oppression, we have a great opportunity in the G20 and in the new international governance bodies, where the consensus to act in solidarity in the face of external indebtedness, to create a new world financial architecture, is rising. During the Jubilee 2000, St. John Paul II highlighted the need for debt relief for the poorest countries to be complemented by investments in education and health.[9] Today there are also initiatives that we should support, such as the intention to link debt relief to greater commitments in the fight against climate change. Public debt and environmental deterioration compromise the degrees of freedom of future generations, to whom we owe special care and responsibility.

Thus, there is a need to work together to avoid financial practices aimed at emptying and evasion, to consider new instruments of inclusion, such as the universal citizen income, and to link it to the education of the population in the hard and soft

[9] "Debt relief is, of course, only one aspect of the vaster task of fighting poverty and of ensuring that the citizens of the poorest countries can have a fuller share at the banquet of life... The human person is the most precious resource of any nation or any economy". Saint John Paul II (1999).

skills required for the jobs of the future. Also rethink the teaching of young people in economics and finance so as not to repeat the mistakes of the past and train new generations of economists who prioritize ethical and social aspects in decision making.

2.3. Friendship as a sincere and transparent relationship

The remedy to the slavery expressed by corruption comes in large doses of transparency. New technologies, open platforms and big data can help illuminate ever-controversial aspects of political campaign finance, public procurement and state investment in infrastructure. Politics, like finance, should not be a parasitic intermediation but a path of service to the common good. Its mission is none other than to bring more and better public services, infrastructure, security, justice, health and new generation of human rights closer to the people.

Corruption is like the tango, it takes two to dance it, politicians and businessmen. The first step to banish it should always be the transparent election of judges. Without credible and reliable justice, politics gets lost in labyrinths of obscure courts.

2.4. Friendship in an integral ecology

Proper care for the environment will only be possible through major global agreements, such as the Paris Agreement. We must recompose the role of government in the economy and society, and recover a sense of public purpose, be innovative, think collectively and collaboratively, guiding our actions in missions that are public-private partnerships, where risks are taken together and rewards are shared.[10] To advance in a transition towards clean energies, and to promote the creation of green jobs linked to recycling, reforestation and the implementation of a blue development agenda for the seas.

[10] Mazzucato (2020) takes as a model of public-private cooperation the mission to the moon and makes a call to imitate and expand this communion of efforts in socioeconomic objectives.

Our priority mission should be an integral ecology for the care of the environment and people. Nature is the relational good par excellence, it needs all our efforts to regenerate and share.[11] We must take precautions so that post-pandemic growth is green growth that represents a new intergenerational pact of respect and solidarity.

2.5. Friendship reflected in innovation for inclusion

A digital Bretton Woods can establish a global framework for the use of 4.0 technologies and focus their use on the common good, to turn data into valuable information to build social policies to promote education, women's empowerment, and jobs of the future, to measure the impact and recalibrate in time if necessary, prioritizing digital literacy programs that provide knowledge for labor inclusion.

It is essential to pay special attention to antitrust, market competition and privacy protection mechanisms. We need governments that promote technological innovation with social impact from their procurement systems. Technology for the common good includes innovation for the fight against hunger, adding value to primary production and increasing the productivity of cooperatives and family farming.

3. Conclusion: Building the Common Project

A regenerative, circular economy, restoring employment and integral development, needs a regenerative policy of values, fraternity, friendship and solidarity.

We must be aware of the enrichment that the sum of visions provokes in us, just as we are aware of the impoverishment that the idea of a single thought means for our minds.

[11] On the importance of relational goods in modernity see Donati (2020).

Political slavery leads to poverty, inequity and exclusion. Political friendship, which is its opposite, leads to integral human development. It is not based on relations of power or submission, it is based on relations between equals, where respect and recognition prevail, where the only way to advance is together with others and not leaving them behind.

We have the obligation to promote the culture of encounter. No development strategy can be fruitful if there is no common project. Pluralism is the protective shield against ideological sectarianism. A complex and dynamic reality must be approached from cultural diversity, with an economy of civic and social values, with a redemptive political action.[12]

Multilateralism is key to start down the road to making real differences on three urgent levels. First, within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO), support the initiative promoted by India and South Africa to suspend intellectual property rights on any technology, drug or vaccine against Covid for the duration of the pandemic. This is a clear case where the right to property must be subordinated to the right to life.[13]

Second, to move quickly and decisively with the issuance of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) up to the maximum allowed by current legislation. This injection of liquidity will mean substantial relief for the countries hardest hit by the health crisis, in a necessary globalization of solidarity.[14]

[12] Where human values determine the functioning of markets, and not the other way around, in a civil economy with principles of reciprocity and responsibility (Bruni and Zamagni, 2017).

[13] Baker (2021) makes a strong and rational critique of patent monopolies for these extreme cases.

[14] Yellen (2021) recognizes the importance of an SDR issuance by the IMF to address the post-pandemic global recovery.

Thirdly, the G20 should recommence the offensive launched in the 2008 crisis against the tax havens that hold nearly a third of global private wealth and generate harmful fiscal effects on public resources.

Francis reminds us that "there is a need for paths of peace to heal open wounds. There is also a need for peacemakers, men and women prepared to work boldly and creatively to initiate processes of healing and renewed encounter".

Let us be bold in building bridges for dialogue. Let us be creative in imagining the potential of a politics free of its new ties to create a common project.

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The Digital World in *Fratelli Tutti*. A Change of Perspective

Msgr. Dario E. Viganò

The Church and the media. Under the sign of a double pedagogy

If we take into consideration all the interventions of the Magisterium of the Church on communication, we might notice that they have been characterized in history by what we can define as the policy of double pedagogy: an attitude of audacious encouragement, which was in parallel followed by a prudent and decisive reminder for pastoral purposes connected to a severe warning for the improper use of such instruments.

Let me offer you just a few examples. Despite not having left any magisterial documents on the media, Leo XIII inaugurated the perspective of a double pedagogy towards the mass media with powerfully symbolic actions and gestures. The first one, in 1883, with the inclusion of photography (whose invention dates back to 1839) among the figurative arts placed at the service of faith. Subsequently, in 1898, the Pope furthermore granted permission to be portrayed in a film by William K.L. Dickson, film innovator of the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company. Alongside this attitude of evident openness came a severe warning: almost immediately, the Holy See withdrew the rights to exploit the films from the Biograph Company because it did not agree with their method of disseminating the images of the Pope, carried out according to commercial logic and – often – in places considered immoral.

Then, in 1909 Pius X with a decree signed by the Cardinal Vicar of Rome Pietro Gasparri, ordered the prohibition for all Roman clergy, both regular and secular, to attend any projection that took place in the "cinemas of Rome, without any excep-

tion". On the other hand, alongside these provisions, there was no lack of opposite actions that signaled the clear desire to encourage the use of the cinema for educational, catechetical, and pastoral purposes.

Pius XI, with *Vigilanti cura* of 1936, the first (and so far, the only) Encyclical letter that a pope has dedicated entirely to the cinema, solemnly confirmed the double pedagogy of the Church. In fact, while he did not fail to underline the moral dangers of the cinema, at the same time, he recognized and supported its educational and cultural contribution. Thus, the cinema represents "a point of mediation and balance with respect to the two prevailing positions already existent within the Catholic world towards cinema: the one concerned with the morality of films, and the one more interested in a possible positive educational function".

Pius XII continued along this line, bringing in substantial innovations. It is no coincidence that almost at the end of his pontificate, he dedicated one of his last encyclicals, *Miranda prorsus* (September 8th, 1957), to "cinema, radio, and television", as a compendium of his vast previous teachings and praxis of courageous pastoral care of audiovisual techniques.

The advent of Pope Roncalli to the throne of Peter certainly marked a turning point in the complex dialectical confrontation of the Church with the mass media. However, it is to be noted that, on closer inspection, the overall scheme of the double approach to the media did not undergo profound subversions from a magisterial point of view.

With Pope Montini, the Church continued its journey of development and discernment towards the media, which in those years was becoming increasingly complex. We do not find in Paul VI substantial changes in the general approach, but certainly an expansion of the doctrinal basis and the theological reflection around the general theme of the mass media, still considered in their double value as tools with enormous potential, capable of generating so much the good as the bad.

With John Paul II, the first pontiff of the globalization era, the media assumed a centrality never achieved before in a pontificate. Overall, with Pope Wojtyla, the Church's double track strategy towards the media was called to redefine itself along the coordinates of scenarios shaken by continuous changes, due to the "rapid development" generated by the challenges of globalization.

Pope Ratzinger undoubtedly introduced some new elements in the Church's discourse towards the media: he was able to re-read the media's overall question by inserting it within the framework of the refined theological analysis of the contemporary cultural reality proposed throughout his magisterium.[1]

Francis. A new approach

Pope Francis' magisterium is part of this path briefly defined so far as "the double pedagogy". However, his magisterium determines a change of course. In fact, in the encyclical letter *Laudato si'* (May 24th, 2015) he recalls how "We have to accept that technological products are not neutral, for they create a framework which ends up conditioning lifestyles and shaping social possibilities along the lines dictated by the interests of certain powerful groups. Decisions which may seem purely instrumental are in reality decisions about the kind of society we want to build".[2]

The epistemological approach to the world of the media changes by the reflection of the Church. Indeed, if Pope Francis affirms that "the Net is a resource of our time. It is a source

[1] Cfr. D.E. Viganò, "Il cinema: ricezione, riflessione, rifiuto", in AA.VV., *Cristiani d'Italia. Chiese, società, stato, 1861-2011*, 2 Voll., A. Melloni (ed.), Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana Treccani, Roma 2011, pp. 1389-1409; D.E. Viganò, "The Roman Catholic Church, Cinema and the 'Culture of Dialogue'. Italian Catholics and the Movies after the Second World War", in D. Biltereyst, D. Treveri Gennari (eds.), *Moralizing Cinema. Film, Catholicism and Power*, Routledge, London 2015, pp. 35-48.

[2] Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato si'*, 24 May 2015, n. 107.

of knowledge and relationships that were once unthinkable", he is not silent on the fact that "in terms of the profound transformations technology has brought to bear on the process of production, distribution and use of content, many experts also highlight the risks that threaten the search for, and sharing of, authentic information on a global scale".[3] And more radically, the Pope is aware of the fact that "mere training in the correct use of new technologies will not prove sufficient. As instruments or tools, these are not "neutral", for [...] they shape the world and engage consciences on the level of values".[4]

Here is the new perspective: Pope Francis makes explicit an epistemological awareness, perhaps latent in previous decades. Namely, that the media are not neutral and the judgment on them does not depend exclusively on the use made of them. Rather, their very presence within the scene of social relations modifies and affects attitudes, behaviors and visions, reaching the possibility of directing choices in a heterodirect manner.

In particular, starting from the Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* (October 3rd, 2020), a strong awareness emerges of how the digital media system has profoundly changed not only the production processes – for example with the figure of prosumers – but has also imposed a new model market in which man, from creator and builder of goods and services to which he can have access for an ever-lower cost, has now become a commodity and no longer a customer. Now, the customers are the big corporations that buy our data under the pretense of improving and personalizing their services (customer service). In other words, custom-

[3] Francis, Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 53rd World Communications Day, "'We are members one of another' (Eph 4,25). From social network communities to the human community", 2019.

[4] Francis, Address to Participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life, 28 February 2020.

ers are today not only a commodity (*merce*), but are also at the mercy (*mercé*) of economic-political lobbies.

Digital communication in *Fratelli Tutti*

Pope Francis' latest encyclical letter, which is more prudent and decidedly more attentive to the risks of communication and digital culture, shows in the first chapter that we could define 'diagnostic', the intention to direct our attention to "certain trends in our world that hinder the development of universal fraternity".[5] In a diagnosis that wants to be exemplifying and not exhaustive, the Pontiff identifies three separate obstacles in the current cultural context. First of all, the crumbling of personal spaces of intimacy and respect; then, the pathological obsession with social media; and lastly, the link between financial powers and the Internet.

a) Too close and too far away

Concerning the crumbling of spaces of intimacy and respect, the reference is the paragraph entitled *The illusion of communication*: "Oddly enough, while closed and intolerant attitudes towards others are on the rise, distances are otherwise shrinking or disappearing to the point that the right to privacy scarcely exists. Everything has become a kind of spectacle to be examined and inspected, and people's lives are now under constant surveillance. Digital communication wants to bring everything out into the open; people's lives are combed over, laid bare and bandied about, often anonymously. Respect for others disintegrates, and even as we dismiss, ignore or keep others distant, we can shamelessly peer into every detail of their lives".[6]

The question of distances, which the Pontiff states in respect to the violation of the intimate one, calls into question a disci-

[5] Francis, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, 3 October 2020, n. 9.
[6] Francis, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, cit., n. 42.

pline: proxemics. The reference author is Edward T. Hall and his book *The hidden dimension*.[7] In the volume, the author studies the different ways of using spaces and the meanings that these ways reveal. "And the meaning – writes Umberto Eco in the preface to the book – changes with the change of distance; and distances acquire different values in different cultural models".

"Hall – Eco continues – not only wants us to know better the reality that surrounds us but expects that from this knowledge, various operational, interpersonal, community, and political decisions will be generated". Moreover, he continues: "Proxemics could thus be understood as a technique of reading spatiality as a communication channel [...] If – due to the way it is organized – space communicates contents and therefore presupposes ideologies, proxemics should appear not as a new ideology of space, but as the demystifying technique of the ideologies of space, and the grammar capable of allowing other articulations, other messages".

We live in a paradoxical situation: while the pervasive diffusion of digital communication cancels distances, the political and media narrative, in this pandemic context, has continued to speak of social distance. We can say that we live in the pathological situation of being at the same time too close and too far away. We must pay close attention to the meaning and adjective of distances because a *secure sociality* is not a social distance, but a physical distance.

Of course, "proxemics will not save the world", and on its own it will not be able to determine urban revolutions and social reclamation", explains Eco in his introduction to Hall's work, whose hope was to "increase the awareness of our personal identity, to make our experiences more intense, and to reduce

[7] E.T. Hall, *La dimensione nascosta. Vicino e lontano: il significato delle distanze tra le persone*, Bompiani, Milano 1968 (ed. or. 1966).

alienating phenomena: in short, to help mankind get to know itself a little better – and to restore it to itself".[8]

In addition to the contingent pandemic situation, indeed, the logic of social networks affects the perception of personal, social, and intimate distances that govern our behavior and thus is leading to the "confusion between who we really are and what we should reveal about life and personal opinions, in the same way in which the growing pressure to "be ourselves" appears more and more conflicting towards social conformity".[9]

It is necessary not to relinquish the responsibility and fatigue of personal relationships in presence because "the body in the situation speaks as much as the intellect: space is the place of this discourse and structure its grammar, while the distance impacts communication and mutual understanding. Proximity is the place of communication of tacit, intersubjective and non-coded knowledge and acquaintanceship. Being together and in close contact can produce clan effects and solidarity, also generate innovation".[10] For instance, think about corporate or university campuses that promote team building as a relational performance that facilitates creativity and learning.

We must not forget that "sociality is also a bodily exchange – smells, physical contacts, tastes – which cannot be compensated for by media communication or so-called 'at a distance' communications".[11] Let us think, for example, of one of the problems we are experiencing in Europe and certainly in Italy: the so-called "DaD", ('*Didattica a Distanza*', or distance learning). Teaching is not only a cognitive affair, but also matter of reciprocal contact and *contagion* – intellectual and emotional. Through

[8] E.T. Hall, *La dimensione nascosta,* cit., p. 3.

[9] G. Lovink, *Ossessioni collettive. Critica dei social media*, Università Bocconi, Milano 2016, p. 58 (ed. or. 2011).

[10] I. Pezzini, *Il Domani*, 6 ottobre 2020.

[11] *Ibidem*.

this dimension of mood exchange, from which also humor and cheerfulness derive, "social bodies" are generated: the class, the team, etc., as well as the movement, the party, the nation. This is why it is necessary to "find the right language… Contact is the true language of communication, the same affective language that transmitted healing to the leper. How many healings we can perform and transmit by learning this language of contact!"[12]

b) Obsessed with social media[13]

The reference to the pathological obsession with social media surfaces in the encyclical letter of Pope Francis in the following paragraph: "Digital campaigns of hatred and destruction, for their part, are not – as some would have us believe – a positive form of mutual support, but simply an association of individuals united against a perceived common enemy. "Digital media can also expose people to the risk of addiction, isolation and a gradual loss of contact with concrete reality, blocking the development of authentic interpersonal relationships". They lack the physical gestures, facial expressions, moments of silence, body language and even the smells, the trembling of hands, the blushes and perspiration that speak to us and are a part of human communication. Digital relationships, which do not demand the slow and gradual cultivation of friendships, stable interaction or the building of a consensus that matures over time, have the appearance of sociability. Yet they do not really build community; instead, they tend to disguise and expand the very individualism that finds expression in xenophobia and in contempt for the vulnerable. Digital connectivity is not enough to build bridges. It is not capable of uniting humanity".[14]

[12] Francesco, *Omelia*, 15 febbraio 2015.

[13] Cfr. D.E. Viganò, *Testimoni e influencer. Chiesa e autorità al tempo dei social*, Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, Bologna 2020.

[14] Francis, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, cit., n. 43.

We could say that today the social epidemic goes hand in hand with a socio-communicative epidemic. In fact, today's mantra is that "if we want to survive we must be competitive, and to do so, we need to be connected, continuously receive and process an immense and growing amount of data. This causes constant attention-derived stress and a reduction in the time available for affectivity".[15]

Instead, it is a question of recovering an attention that is active and engaged, not simply *parasitic*. For example, I refer to the rhetoric of links, according to which the number of links to one's essay confirms the importance of a paper or a publication, because many authors have deemed it worthy of mention. However, in recent years, something has been changing with the introduction of '*Likes*'. This allows a person to share with friends and users simply with a click. Thus "the transition from the link to the 'like' as the prevailing hard currency on the Web symbolizes the tear in the economy of attention, from browsing based on the research of self-referentiality or enclosed sphere in social media".[16]

Instead, the Pope recalls the effort of investing in relationships, that need time and patience to mature. A reminder that sounds like an assumption of responsibility, because "the tendency towards communication in real time, movements and real events that are immediately replicated in the representative sphere of the media, will cut us off from the material time necessary for action, for chronology and for history, including the objects of concrete experience, confining us to what the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk calls *spherical time*".[17]

[15] F. Berardi, *Precarious Rhapsody. Semiocapitalism and the Pathologies of the Post-Alpha Generation*, Minor Compositions, London 2009, p. 44.

[16] G. Lovink, *Ossessioni collettive,* cit., p. 23.

[17] *Ivi,* p. 45.

c) The shadow of financial powers

With regard to the connections between financial powers and the Internet, Pope Francis underlines: "Nor should we forget that "there are huge economic interests operating in the digital world, capable of exercising forms of control as subtle as they are invasive, creating mechanisms for the manipulation of consciences and of the democratic process. The way many platforms work often ends up favouring encounter between persons who think alike, shielding them from debate. These closed circuits facilitate the spread of fake news and false information, fomenting prejudice and hate".[18]

Social networks, platforms, and economic capital influence the political choices of one's own country, but affect other countries as well. In this consideration, the change in the economic paradigm emerges precisely due to the digitization of communication and services, and the fact that today – in a "post-media" era – we are the media.[19]

I refer to surveillance capitalism[20] which extracts not only personal data but also behavioral surplus, selling it to a predictive market. We have welcomed in the plots of our social and family lives the wonders of the digital world, which sounded like promises of goods and services without limits, fast and performing, which would come to the aid of an increasingly fragmented and tiring life. As a matter of fact, digital resources, which could improve our lives and better meet our needs, also reveal themselves as a threat because they plunder our behavioral data.

Shoshana Zuboff's work reads: "The era we are living in, characterized by an unprecedented development of technolo-

[18] Francis, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, cit., n. 45.

[19] Cfr. R. Eugeni, *La condizione postmediale. Media, linguaggi e narrazioni*, La Scuola – Morcelliana, Brescia 2015.

[20] S. Zuboff, *Il capitalismo della sorveglianza. Il futuro dell'umanità nell'era dei nuovi poteri*, Luiss University Press, Roma 2019 (ed. or. 2019).

gy, brings with it a serious threat to human nature: a global surveillance architecture, ubiquitous and always on the alert, that observes and directs our own behavior to serve the interests of very few – those who derive enormous wealth and boundless power from the buying and selling of our personal data and predictions about future behavior. It is "surveillance capitalism", the scenario behind the new economic order that exploits human experience in the form of data as raw material for secret commercial practices and the movement of power that imposes its dominion over society by challenging democracy and putting our own freedom at risk".[21]

Conclusions

The paradigm shift introduced by Pope Francis, which sheds new light on the reflection on the digital world by overcoming irenic or simply instrumental visions, places the question within an anthropological evaluation and a personalistic anthropology. Think for example of artificial intelligence: it is not a question of hindering its development, rather of rooting its programming within a human anthropological vision, not a technocratic one.

Intelligence cannot be measured simply on the functionalistic paradigm. In fact, a father who plays chess with his son will most likely be able to win, but in order to increase his son's self-esteem, he may also decide to lose. This is human intelligence.

Therefore, this reflection cannot be reduced solely to media literacy. An important aspect of literacy is, in fact, "the ability to move away from the screen. We will be able to master the tools not only when we have learned how to use them, but also once we understand when it is appropriate to put them aside".[22]

[21] *Ibidem*.
[22] G. Lovink, *Ossessioni collettive,* cit., p. 43.

Fratelli Tutti: The Grace of Christ as the Basis for Love and Social Friendship

H.E. Msgr. Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo

> For *the mystery of the Incarnation we are thereby taught how great is man's dignity, lest we should sully it with sin; hence Augustine says* (De Vera Relig. XVI): *"God has proved to us how high a place human nature holds amongst creatures, inasmuch as He appeared to men as a true man". And Pope Leo says in a* sermon on the Nativity (XXI): *"Learn, O Christian, thy worth; and being made a partner of the Divine nature, refuse to return by evil deeds to your former worthlessness" – Per Incarnationis mysterium instruimur quanta sit dignitas humanae naturae, ne eam inquinemus peccando. Unde dicit Augustinus, in libro* De vera religione, *"demonstravit nobis Deus quam excelsum locum inter creaturas habeat humana natura, in hoc quod hominibus in vero homine apparuit". Et Leo Papa dicit, in* sermone de Nativitate, *"agnosce, o Christiane, dignitatem tuam, et divinae consors factus naturae, noli in veterem vilitatem degeneri conversatione redire"*
>
> (*Summa Theologiae*, III, q. 1, a. 2 c.)

The theme that I intend to develop in this article is the anthropological and social meaning of grace as "participation of divine nature", based on two statements that pervade the Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, which are inspired by Saint Thomas Aquinas and thus deserve to be expanded. These considerations do not pretend to be more than an imperfect tentative sketch of the profound requirements that emerge from the main statements of this excellent and timely Encyclical to solve the issue of our time. I would be the first to recriminate myself if I had betrayed the intention of this great document.

Fraternity and social friendship are based on charity or love

The first significant statement is that fraternity and social friendship are based on charity or love. According to *Fratelli Tutti*: "The spiritual stature of a person's life is measured by love, which in the end remains 'the criterion for the definitive decision about a human life's worth or lack thereof'".[1] In order to explain what love is, *Fratelli Tutti* turns to Saint Thomas Aquinas, who "sought to describe the love made possible by God's grace as a movement outwards towards another, whereby we consider 'the beloved as somehow united to ourselves'.[2] Our affection for others causes us to want to seek their good for free. This stems from an appreciation of the value of the object of our affection, and is ultimately the idea behind the word 'charity': the ones I love are 'dear' to me; 'they are considered of great value'.[3] And 'the love whereby someone becomes pleasing (*grata*) to another is the reason why the latter bestows something on him freely (*gratis*)[4]'".[5]

Love or charity is founded on grace of Christ

The second fundamental affirmation is that charity is founded on grace of Christ: "As Christians, we also believe that God grants us his grace to enable us to act as brothers and sisters".[6] Here too the point of reference is Saint Thomas, even though he is not quoted.

Leaving aside the meaning of grace as an uncreated gift and referring to it as a created gift, the *Commentary on the Sentenc-*

[1] *Fratelli Tutti*, § 92. Quoting Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Deus Caritas Est*, 15: AAS 98 (2006), 230.

[2] "amans aestimat amatum quodammodo ut unum sibi" (Saint Thomas Aquinas, *S. Th.*, II-II, q. 27, a. 2 c.).

[3] "magni pretii aestimatur" (*Ibid.*, I-II, q. 26, a. 3 c.).

[4] "ex amore enim quo aliquis alium gratum habet, procedit quod aliquid ei gratis impendat" (*Ibid.*, I-II, q. 110, a. 1 c.).

[5] *Fratelli Tutti,* § 93.

[6] *Fratelli Tutti,* § 214, note 203.

es by P. Lombardo seems to be the text where Aquinas puts the most effort in demonstrating the existence and necessity of grace itself. This is surely due to the fact that when commenting on the *Sententiarum*, Aquinas had very much in mind the doctrine of its author, P. Lombardo, who maintained that grace (*gratia gratum faciens*) comprises a set of created infused virtues (faith, hope, moral virtues) that are informed by charity. However, for Lombardo, charity is not a created habitus: it is the Holy Spirit itself who, without mediation, works the act of charity in us. Without mediation does not mean without the cooperation of the creature, but without the mediation of the theological virtue of charity.[7]

St. Thomas responds first of all with an *argumentum ad hominem*: there is a freely given uncreated gift (*datum* for free), which is the Holy Spirit. This gift is possessed from a certain time onwards, indicating a mutation in the one who receives the gift, not in the Holy Spirit. The fact of receiving the Holy Spirit adds something to the creature that was not there before: indeed we say that it has the Holy Spirit. Consequently, grace in any of its meanings always expresses something created in the soul, freely given, although it can also indicate something uncreated such as the Holy Spirit. Aquinas says: "Therefore it is necessary that, by the very fact that the Holy Spirit is infused in someone, something is added to that person which was not there before, following the reception of which it can be said that the person has

7 "Alios actus atque motus virtutum operatur caritas, id est Spiritus sanctus, mediantibus virtutibus, quarum actus sunt, utpote actum fidei, id est credere fide media, et actum spei, id est sperare media spe; per fidem enim et spem praedictos operatur actus. Diligendi vero actum per se tantum sine alicuius virtutis medio operatur, id est diligere; aliter ergo hunc actum operatur quam alios virtutum actus. Ideoque differenter de hoc et de aliis loquitur Scriptura, quae istum specialiter caritati tribuit; est ergo caritas vere Spiritus sanctus" (P. Lombardo, *I Sent.*, d. 17, c. 6, PP. Collegii S. Bonaventurae, Ad Claras Aquas [Quaracchi], Fiorenza, 1971, t. I, p. 151 ff.).

received the Holy Spirit. So grace, in whatever way it is meant, shows that there is something created in the soul, which is given freely: although the word grace can also mean something uncreated; like divine acceptance itself; even the uncreated gift which is the Holy Spirit can be called grace".[8]

The principle of Pseudo-Dionysius

The main argument that Saint Thomas uses to indicate the created reality of grace originates from the Dionysian principle: *quod divinus amor non permisit eum sine germine esse*.[9] This principle is explicitly formulated already in the book of Sentences: "Divine love infuses goodness in things: for which Dionysius says (*De div. nom.* 4) that divine love did not allow him to remain without offspring; and so by saying that God loves someone we indicate that there is an effect of divine love in the beloved".[10]

Thus, having established the general principle valid for all the causality of God, that is, communication *ad extra* of God's life *ad intra*, the Angelic Master distinguishes the degrees of intensity of divine love, according to the various degrees of goodness that

[8] "Unde oportet quod ex hoc ipso quod Spiritus sanctus alicui datur, aliquid ipsi creaturae accrescat quod prius non habebat, secundum cujus adeptionem Spiritum sanctum habere dicitur. Unde gratia qualitercumque significetur, ostendit aliquid creatum in anima esse, quod gratis datur, quamvis etiam nomine gratiae aliquid increatum significari possit; ut vel ipsa divina acceptatio vel etiam datum increatum quod est Spiritus sanctus" (*In II Sent.*, d. 26, q. 1, a. 1 c., Mand. II, p. 669).

[9] Αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ ἀγαθοεργὸς τῶν ὄντων ἔρως, ἐν τάγαθῷ καθ' ὑπερβολὴν προῦπάρχων, οὐκ εἴασεν αὐτὸν ἄγονον ἐν ἑαυτῷ μένειν, ἐκίνησε δὲ αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πρακτικεύεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἀπάντων γενητικὴν ὑπερβολὴν (Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, *De Div. Nom.*, IV, § 10; M. G., III, 708 B).

[10] "Amor autem divinus bonitatem rebus profundit; unde Dionysius dicit, IV ch. *De Div Nom.*, Col. 694, t. I, quod divinus amor non permisit eum sine germine esse; unde per hoc [quod] Deus dicitur aliquem diligere, significatur effectus divinae dilectionis in dilecto esse" (*In II Sent.*, d. 26, q. 1, a. 1 c., Mand. II, p. 668 f.).

his causality reflects in the creatures. One is the love with which God loves all creatures because he gives them being (existence), perfection and natural action. Another is that simple and perfect love, similar to friendship, by which God not only loves his creatures in the same way as an architect loves his work, but also as the one who participates in their friendship as a friend does with a friend, inasmuch as he elevates them to share his fruition in society so that they may enjoy the glory and beatitude that makes God happy. The text says: "But that is *a simply perfect love, almost similar to friendship, the kind with which one not only loves the creature as the artist loves his work, but also with a certain friendly partnership, as a friend (loves) a friend, insofar as it draws them into the company of their own enjoyment of God, so that with this they may have the glory and beatitude with which God is blessed*: and this is the love with which one loves saints, which is called love par excellence; and so also the effect of this choice is called grace par excellence, although all natural goodness can also be called grace, since they are freely given by God".[11]

[11] "Sed illa est *simpliciter et perfecta dilectio, quasi amicitiae similis, qua non tantum diligit creaturam sicut artifex opus, sed etiam quadam amicabili societate, sicut amicus amicum, inquantum trahit eos in societatem suae fruitionis, ut in hoc eorum sit gloria et beatitudo quo Deus beatus est*: et haec est dilectio qua sanctos diligit, quae antonomastice dilectio dicitur; et ideo etiam effectus hujusmodi dilectionis antonomastice gratia vocatur: quamvis et omnes naturales bonitates gratiae dici possunt, quia gratis a Deo dantur" (*In II Sent.*, d. 26, q. 1, a. 1 ad 2, Mand. II, p. 669). When referring to this simple and perfect love he also says: "In quantum Deus vult ei aliquo bonum supernaturale" (*De Verit.*, q. 27, a. 1 c., ed. Leon., t. XXIII, 3, p. 791, l. 132); "Sed specialis ratio divinae dilectionis ad illos consideratur quibus auxilium praebet ad hoc quod consequantur bonum quod ordinem naturae eorum excedit, scilicet perfectam fruitionem non alicuius boni creati, sed sui ipsius" (*Cg.*, III, 150, ed. cit., t. III, p. 225 a, nº 3226); "Vnde eos maxime et simpliciter diligere dicitur, quibus tales bonitatis effectus largitur per quos ad ultimum finem preueniant, quod est ipse qui est fons bonitatis" (*Comp. Theol.*, I, c. 143, ed. Leon., t. XLII, p. 136, l. 62-65). As I will say, inspired by the Fathers, Hegel

In the *Summa Theologica* he describes this love as a *dilectio specialis* because it elevates (*trahit*) the rational creature above its nature by making it participate in the divine good that is God himself: "For one is common, whereby He loves all things that are (*Wis.* 11:25), and thereby gives things their natural being. But the second is a *special love*, whereby He *draws* the rational creature above the condition of its nature to a *participation of the Divine good*; and according to this love He is said to love anyone simply, since it is by this love that God simply wishes the eternal good, which is Himself, for the creature".[12]

Likewise Saint Thomas again quotes Pseudo-Dionysius to demonstrate the need for a new being of grace (*esse gratiae*) by whom we are recreated and regenerated in Christ, as the principle of spiritual operations including love or charity: "Therefore Dionysius says that as in nature it happens that that which does not have its species received by generation cannot have the faculties proper to that species, so the one who has not received the divine being through spiritual regeneration cannot participate in the divine operations".[13]

knows how to give a modern interpretation to this idea that has come into the world through Christianity, for which the person has infinite value because he is the object and purpose of God's love. By the in-habitation of the Spirit, the human being is destined for maximum freedom. Cfr. *Enzikl. d. philos. Wiss.*, § 482.

[12] "Alia autem est dilectio specialis, secundum quam *trahit* creaturam rationalem supra conditionem naturae, ad *participationem divini boni*. Et secundum hanc dilectionem dicitur aliquem diligere simpliciter: quia secundum hanc dilectionem vult Deus simpliciter creaturae bonum aeternum, quod est ipse" (*S. Th.*, I-II, q. 110, a. 1 c.).

[13] "Et ideo dicit Dionysius, in II ch. Caelest. Hier., Quia sicut in rebus naturalibus est quod illud quod non habet speciem per generationem adeptam non potest habere operationses speciei debitas, ita ille qui est adeptus divinum esse per spiritualem regenerationem non potest participare divinas operationses" (*In II Sent.*, d. 26, q. 1, a. 3, Mand. II, p. 674). The text that St. Thomas quoted is substantially: Ἢ οὐχὶ καὶ ἡμῖν, ἀνθρωπίνως

In a later text from *De Veritate*, the Angelic Master still affirms that no one can perform spiritual operations without first receiving a spiritual being (*esse spirituale*): "it is evident in Dionysius where he says that no one can have a spiritual operation unless he first receives a spiritual being (existence), just as he cannot have the operation of a particular nature unless he first has being (existence) in that nature".[14]

Aristotelian inspiration

Another argument that Aquinas often uses to express the *quid creatum* of grace is inspired by Aristotle. I am referring in particular to the set of high reflections that are proposed in the *Contra Gentiles* starting from the final cause. The object is to show that the final cause requires a formal cause proportionate to itself; that is, the need on the part of the human being to possess an immanent form proportionate to the goal to which it must aim and reach. These reflections are formulated differently: "*Everything is directed to a suitable end in proportion to its form* [...]. Therefore, man needs a *supernatural form and perfection added* over and above his nature, so as to be suitably directed to that *same end*".[15]

φαμὲν, ὑπάρξαι δεῖ πρῶτον, εἶτα ἐνεργῆσαι τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς, ὡς τοῦ μηδαμῶς ὄντος, οὐδὲ κίνησιν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ὕπαρξιν ἔχοντος · τοῦ δέ πως ὄντος, ἐκεῖνα μόνον ἐνεργοῦντος ἢ πάσχοντος ἐν οἷς εἶναι πέφυκεν; (Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, *De Ecclesiasticae Hierarchiae*, c. 2, synopsis cap.; M. G., III, 392 B; *Dionysiaca*, II, 1108).

[14] "Patet per Dionysium in II ch. Ecclesiasticae hierarchiae, ubi dicit quod non potest aliquis habere spiritualem operationem nisi prius esse spirituale accipiat, sicut nec operationem alicuius naturae nisi prius habeat esse in natura illa" (*De Veritate*, q. 27, a. 2 c., ed. Leon., t. XXII, 3, p. 794, l. 149-154.

[15] "Unumquodque ordinatur in finem sibi convenientem secundum rationem suae formae [...]. Ergo oportet quod homini superaddatur aliqua supernaturalis forma et perfectio, per quam convenienter ordinetur in finem praedictum" (Cg., III, 150, ed. P. Marc, Marietti, Taurini, 1961, t. III, p. 225, nº 3229).

The same theme is masterfully developed in the *Compendium*. It is presented as a requirement of the operative structure of the human being who is free and, consequently, is the master of his actions: the *divinum lumen gratiae* is imposed on man so that he is perfected in virtue from the interior and in the interior (*interius*), both in regard to knowledge (*quantum ad cognitionem*), to action and affection (*quantum ad actionem et affectionem*), and also to acting (*quantum ad agendum*). Indeed, the text says: "Divine providence governs individual beings in keeping with their nature. Consequently, since rational creatures – through free will – have dominion over their actions in a way impossible to other creatures [...]. But since the last end of rational creatures exceeds the capacity of their nature and since whatever conduces to the end must be proportionate to the end according to the right order of providence, rational creatures are given divine aids that are not merely proportionate to nature but that transcend the capacity of nature. God infuses into man, over and above the natural faculty of reason, the light of grace whereby he is internally perfected for the exercise of virtue, both as regards knowledge, inasmuch as man's mind is elevated by this light to the knowledge of truths surpassing reason, and as regards action and affection, inasmuch as man's affective power is raised by this light above all created things to the love of God, to hope in him, and to the performance of acts that such love imposes".[16]

[16] "Diuina prouidentia rebus singulis secundum earum modum prouidet, *creatura autem rationalis per liberum arbitrium est domina sui actus pre ceteris creaturis* [...]. Quia uero ultimus finis creature rationalis facultatem nature ipsius excedit, ea uero que sunt ad finem debent esse fini proportionata secundum rectum prouidentie ordinem, consequens est ut creature rationali etiam adiutoria diuinitus conferantur, non solum que sunt proportionata nature, sed etiam que facultatem nature excedunt.Vnde supra naturalem facultatem rationis imponitur *diuinitus homini lumen gratie*, per quod *interius perficitur ad uirtutes: et quantum ad cognitionem*, dum eleuatur mens hominis per lumen huiusmodi ad cognoscendum ea quae rationem excedunt, et *quantum ad ac-*

But perhaps the most illustrative text of this profound demand that the supernatural principle be intrinsic to the subject is that of the *Commentary on II Corinthians*: "For in natural things we notice that each natural thing tends towards its own perfection, for which it has a natural desire; hence, to each thing is given the natural power to enable it to attain to its perfection. But *God gives man grace, by which he may attain to his ultimate and perfect consummation, i.e., happiness, towards which he has a natural desire*".[17] This text shows man's natural desire to achieve his ultimate perfection, and consequently his need for something similar to himself, as well as similar to the higher end, which enables man to reach his final, supernatural perfection from within himself, and quench his natural desire. This does not mean for Saint Thomas that the *desiderium naturale beatitudinis* implies a necessary fulfillment to the point of eliminating the necessity and gratuitousness of grace, nor does it mean that grace belongs to nature as to a reality of the same ontological order. It means,

tionem et affectionem, dum per lumen huiusmodi *affectus hominis supra omnia creata eleuatur ad Deum diligendum et sperandum in ipso*, et *ad agendum ea que talis amor requirit*" (*Comp. Theol.*, I, c. 143, ed. Leon., t. XLII, p. 136, l. 1-4, 34-49). Saint Thomas attributes the principle of Providence to Dionysius: "sicut Dionysius dicit, divina sapientia ita omnia ordinat ut unicuique prouideat secundum modum suae conditionis" (*In Ioan. Ev.*, c. III, v. 5, lect. 1, 4, ed. cit., n° 443). Dionysius says: Ὅθεν ὡς Πρόνοια τῆς ἑκάστου φύσεως σωστικὴ, τῶν αὐτοκινὴτων ὡς αὐτοκινήτων προνοεῖ, καὶ τῶν ὅλων καὶ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστον οἰκείως ὅλῳ καὶ ἑκάστῶι, καθ' ὅσον ἡ τῶν προνοουμένων φύσις ἐπιδέχεται τὰς τῆς ὅλης καὶ παντοδαπῆς, προνοίας ἐκδιδομένας ἀναλόγως ἑκάστῳ προνοητικὰς ἀγαθὸτητας (*De Div. Nom.*, c. IV, § 33; M. G., III, 733 C). Cfr. also, *Epistola* IX, § 3; P. G. III, 1110.

[17] "In rebus enim naturalibus videmus quod quaelibet res naturalis naturaliter tendit ad suam perfectionem, ad quam habet naturale desiderium. Et ideo cuilibet rei datur virtus naturalis, ut ad suam perfectionem naturalem possit pervenire. *Gratia autem datur homini a Deo, per quam homo perveniat ad suam ultimam et perfectam consummationem, id est beatitudinem, ad quam habet naturale desiderium*" (*In Ep. II ad Cor.*, c. XIII, v. 9, lect. 2, ed. R. Cai, Marietti, Taurini-Romae, 1953, t. I, p. 559 a, n° 534).

however, that the rational creature, created in the image of God with intelligence and freedom, is *capax Dei*, and therefore tends naturally – although ineffectively by itself – to the supernatural order.[18] It also means that if grace, in turn, is above human nature because it participates in divine nature, it is in the same way in human nature as a con-nature, which is the human being's own and inner supernatural principle of being and acting.[19]

Saint Thomas, in his purpose of structuring the creative order with its own entity, establishes an analogy between the natural and the supernatural order. Just as God gives us being by creation through a formal cause, in the same way God gives us gratuitous spiritual being without the mediation of any agent, through a created form that is grace: "God causes natural being (existence) in us by creation without the intervention of any agent cause, but nevertheless with the intervention of a formal cause; for a natural form is the principle of natural being (existence). *Similarly God brings about gratuitous spiritual being (existence) in us without the intervention of any agent, yet with the intervention of a created form, grace*".[20]

[18] "Naturaliter anima est gratiae capax; 'eo enim ipso quod facta est ad imaginem Dei, capax est Dei per gratiam', ut dicit Augustinus" (*S. Th.*, I-II, q. 113, a. 10 c.); "Est enim creatura rationalis capax illius beatae cognitionis inquantum est ad imaginem Dei" (*Ibid.*, III, q. 9, a. 2 c.). Cfr. *In II Sent.*, d. 16, exp. textus, Mand. II, p. 406.

[19] "Sicut autem lumen a sole diffunditur in aerem, ita gratia a Deo infunditur anime; que quidem est *supra* naturam anime, et tamen *in* natura anime uel cuiuscumque creature rationalis est aptitudo quedam ad gratie susceptionem" (*De Malo*, q. 2, a. 11 c., ed. Leon., t. XXIII, p. 60, l. 173-176; *Ibidem*, ed. Pession, Marietti, Taurini-Romae, 1965, Q. D. II, p. 490 b).

[20] "Esse naturale per creationem Deus causat in nobis nulla causa agente mediante, sed tamen mediante aliqua causa formali; forma enim naturalis principium est esse naturalis. Et *similiter esse spirituale gratuitum Deus facit in nobis nullo agente mediante, sed tamen mediante aliqua forma creata, quae est gratia*" (*De Veritate*, q. 27, a. 1 ad 3, ed. Leon., t. XXII, 3, p. 791, l. 182-189).

Just as he was inspired by Dionysius to affirm the created reality of grace as a seed that God plants in the soul, the Angelic Doctor in the same way resorts to Aristotle to found the spiritual operations of love and knowledge in the new being of grace (*esse gratiae*). Thus he says grace is the life of the soul, because in living things, living is being: "For life in a living being is the same as to live expressed in the abstract; just as running is in reality the same as to run. Now in living things, to live is to be, as the Philosopher declares in 2 De Anima".[21]

By merging the Aristotelian principle of being given by form, with the Dionysian *ille qui non est adeptus divinum esse non potest participare divinas operationes,* the Angelic Doctor affirms that grace is a participated form of the divine nature immanent to the human person that gives a spiritual and divine being (*esse spirituale et divinum*) and founds the spiritual operations of love and knowledge.

Grace, as participation in the divine nature, recreates and regenerates the human being – image of God – with attribution to each person of the Trinity

Grace, as a participation of divinity, is the work of the entire Trinity, and requires the in-habitation (*inhabitation*) of the Trinity in the soul of the just. But insofar as each Person represents a divine property, the participation of grace in the just, although common to the entire Trinity, is attributed or appropriated (*appropriatur*) to the Father as its author, to the Son as its Exemplar, and to the Holy Spirit, as the One who imprints on us the likeness with the Son: "adoption, though common to the

[21] "Vita enim viventis est ipsum vivere in quadam abstractione significatum: sicut cursus non est secundum rem aliud quam currere. 'Vivere autem viventium est ipsum esse eorum', ut patet per Philosophum, in II de Anima" (*Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, c. 96, ed. P. Marc, Marietti, Taurini-Romae, 1961, t. II, p. 109 b, nº 817).

whole Trinity, is appropriated to the Father as its author; to the Son, as its exemplar; to the Holy Ghost, as imprinting on us the likeness of this exemplar".[22] Grace is thus a participation of the same divine nature as it is realized in intra-Trinitarian life. For this reason, as *natura in natura,* it offers a new way of knowing and loving by which we formally know and love, which is participation in the way of knowing and loving as it is given by essence within divine nature. "Grace – Thomas said – as it is prior to virtue, has a subject prior to the powers of the soul, so that it is in the essence of the soul. For as man in his intellective powers participates in Divine knowledge through the virtue of faith, and in his power of will participates in the Divine love through the virtue of charity, so also in the nature of the soul does he participate in the Divine Nature, after the manner of a likeness, through a certain regeneration or re-creation".[23]

Through the application of the Thomist synthesis to the supernatural order, Saint Thomas manages to overcome both Platonic separatism and Aristotelian immanentism. Indeed, although God maintains his presence in a creature through an efficient, exemplary and final cause, he can never replace the function of an intrinsic formal cause, either in the natural or in the supernatural order.[24] Therefore, in the order of natural creation, although God is the first founding principle of all being,

[22] "Adoptatio, licet sit communis toti Trinitati, *appropriatur tamen Patri ut auctori, Filio ut exemplari, Spiritui Sancto ut imprimenti in nobis huius similitudinem exemplaris*" (*S. Th.*, III, q. 23, a. 2 ad 3).

[23] "Gratia, sicut est prius virtute, ita habeat subiectum prius potentiis animae, ita scilicet quod sit in essentia animae. Sicut enim per potentiam intellectivam homo participat cognitionem divinam per virtutem fidei; et secundum potentiam voluntatis amorem divinum, per virtutem caritatis; ita etiam *per naturam animae participat, secundum quandam similitudinem, naturam divinam, per quandam regenerationem sive recreationem*" (*S. Th.*, I-II, q. 110, a. 4 c).

[24] Cfr. *De Veritate*, q. 27, a. 1 ad 3, ed. Leon., t. XXII, 3, p. 791, l. 182-189.

goodness and perfection, nevertheless everything is and is called good by a resemblance to divine being and goodness (*inhaerens sibi*), which resemblance is formally its being and its goodness: "α) Everything is therefore called good from the divine goodness, as from the first exemplary effective and final principle of all goodness. β) Nevertheless, everything is called good by reason of the similitude of the divine goodness belonging to it, which is formally its own goodness, whereby it is denominated good. And so of all things there is one goodness, and yet many goodnesses".[25] In the same way, in the supernatural order, it is said that each regenerated human being is, lives, knows and loves through Being, Nature, Life, Knowing and Loving by the essence of the Trinity as an effective, exemplary and final principle. However, each man has a participated intrinsic *esse et operati gratiae sibi inhaerens* similar to the one and triune divinity, by which he formally is, lives, knows and loves supernatural recreation: "The Divine Essence Itself is charity, even as It is wisdom and goodness. Wherefore just as we are said to be good with the goodness which is God, and wise with the wisdom which is God (since the goodness whereby we are formally good is a participation of Divine goodness, and the wisdom whereby we are formally wise, is a share of Divine wisdom), so too, the charity whereby formally we love our neighbour is a participation of Divine charity. For this manner of speaking is common among the Platonists, with whose doctrines Augustine was imbued; and the lack of adverting to this has been to some an occasion of error".[26]

[25] *S. Th.*, I, q. 6, a. 4. Cfr. *In I Sent.*, d. 49, q. 5, a. 2 ad 3; *De Verit.*, q. 1, a. 5.

[26] "Ipsa essentia divina caritas est, sicut et sapientia est, et sicut bonitas est. α) Unde sicut dicimur *boni bonitate quae Deus est* [sicut principio exemplari, effectivo et finali], *et sapientes sapientia quae Deus est* [sicut principio exemplari, effectivo et finali], β) *quia bonitas qua formaliter boni sumus est participatio quaedam divinae bonitatis, et sapientia qua formaliter sapientes sumus est*

This in-habiting of the Trinity in the just is attributed to each person *in effectibus gratiae*: to the Son is attributed the participation of his own Sonship by essence as well as the communication of the gift of Wisdom; to the Holy Spirit is attributed the participation of Charity by essence; and to the Father is attributed the source of recreation. Thus, the Divine Persons, somewhat sealing our souls, give us the gift of enjoying a foretaste of that perfect possession of the gift of glory in Heaven.[27]

It is said that grace is created, inasmuch as human beings according to it are created, that is, constituted in a new being: "in novo esse constituuntur" (*S. Th.*, I-II, q. 110, a. 2 ad 3).

Starting from Saint Peter's idea of grace as "participation of divine nature" (θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως),[28] Saint Thomas finds Saint Paul's notion of "new creation" (καινὴ κτίσις).[29] Enlightening once more the structure of the supernatural order with an analogy taken from the structure of the natural order, Saint

participatio quaedam divinae sapientiae; ita etiam *caritas qua formaliter diligimus proximum est quaedam participatio divinae caritatis*. Hic enim modus loquendi consuetus est apud Platonicos, quorum doctrinis Augustinus fuit imbutus. Quod quidam non advertentes ex verbis eius sumpserunt occasionem errandi" (*S. Th.*, II-II, q. 23, a. 2 ad 1). It should be noted that Saint Thomas indirectly advises, by warning against Platonic extrincesism, that he has given new content to the notion of participation, namely: the immanence of the Aristotelian form: "qua *formaliter* boni sumus, ... *formaliter* sapientes sumus, ... *formaliter* diligimus proximum est *quaedam participatio divinae* ...".

[27] "Persona autem divina non potest haberi a nobis nisi vel ad fructum perfectum, et sic habetur per donum gloriae; aut secundum fructum imperfectum, et sic habetur *per donum gratiae gratum facientis*; vel potius sicut id per quod fruibili conjungimur, inquantum ipsae personae divinae *quadam sui sigillatione in animabus nostris relinquunt quaedam dona quibus formaliter fruimur, scilicet amore et sapientia*; propter quod Spiritus Sanctus dicitur esse 'pignus haereditatis nostrae'" (*In I Sent.*, d. 14, q. 2, a. 2 ad 2, Mand. I, p. 326).

[28] *II Pt.*, c. I, v. 4.

[29] *II Cor.*, c.V, v. 17.

Thomas affirms the necessity of a true creation for the production of the being of grace (*esse gratiae*) by God, in the likeness of the first creation of the natural being (*esse naturae*). The Angelic Doctor argues in the following way: creation is a movement from nothing to being, which is double: the natural being and the being of grace. The first creation took place when the creatures were produced from nothing by God in his natural being, and then the creature was new, but because of sin it became old. Consequently, a new creation became necessary, to produce creatures to being in grace, a creation from nothingness, since those who lack grace are nothing.[30] The complete text of Saint Thomas is found in the *Commentary* to the famous passage of Saint Paul which says ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις: τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδιοὺ γέγονεν and affirms: "Then when Paul says, 'Therefore if then any be in Christ', he concludes from the foregoing that a certain effect follows, namely, *newness in the world*. Hence he says, 'if then any be in Christ', i.e., in the faith of Christ, or through Christ, he is made 'a new creature': 'for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love' (*Gal* 5:6). Here it should be noted that renewal by grace is called a creature. For creation is a change from nothing into being (existence). But there are two kinds of beings, namely, of nature and of grace. The first creation was made when creatures were produced by God from nothing to natural being (*esse naturae*); and then the creature was new, but became old by sin: 'he has made my flesh and my skin waste away' (*Lam* 3:4). Therefore, a new creation was required by which we would be produced to being (existing) in grace (*in esse gratiae*). This, too, is a creation from nothing because those who lack grace are nothing: 'and if I understand all mysteries

[30] For an in-depth study, cfr. Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, *La gracia como participación de la naturaleza divina*, PASS, Studia Selecta 5, LEV, Vatican City, 2021, 512 pp.

and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing' (*I Cor* 13:2); in his tent, i.e., of sin, 'dwells that which is none of his' (*Job* 18:15). Augustine says: 'for sin is nothing, and men become nothing, when they sin'. So it is clear that the infusion of grace is a creation".[31]

As the objects of God's love, men and women become themselves instruments of grace

This is an important milestone for the Angelic Doctor, since it allows him to affirm that the spiritual creatures recreated in

[31] *In Ep. II ad Cor.*, c.V, v. 17, lect. 4, ed. R. Cai, Marietti, Taurini-Romae, 1953, t. I, p. 483 b, nº 192. Thomistic exegesis, being deeper than the modern one due to its character of resolution in the theological-metaphysical basis, coincides with it. According to B. Rey the καινὴ κτίσις of Saint Paul, which would be inspired by Isaiah in a particular way LXV, 17 (השדח יקראר ם׳שרת ם׳מש אדרב ׳ננה ׳ב) "apparait comme l'accomplissement et la reprise de la première création, ou mieux: elle est la manifestation la plus éclatante de l'activité créatrice de Dieu qui ne cesse de faire du nouveau dans l'histoire depuis ses origines" (B. Rey, Créés *dans le Christ Jesus*, Paris, 1966, p. 39). Furthermore, in the aforementioned text the verb is *bara'* (אדב) "que la Bible réserve exclusivement à Dieu. L'hébreu *bara'* signifie proprement *faire voir du neuf, de l'inédit*, ce qui est le propre de Dieu (cfr. *Nb.* 16, 30: 'faire quelque chose d'inouï' – Bible de Jerusalem; 'opérer un miracle' – Dhorme); d'où la liaison essentielle avec la notion de *nouvelle* alliance, celle de 'cœur nouveau', et les antithèses 'choses anciennes, choses nouvelles', 'premier, dernier'. Les emplois bibliques du verbe *bara'* se rattachent ainsi autant à des faits de l'histoire qu'à la production de l'univers aux origines. Dieu a créé le salut, il a créé le peuple, et son action créatrice est sans cesse à l'œuvre dans le monde (*Is.* 41, 20; 43, 7; 48, 7; etc.). Cette action se caractérise par la nouveauté: Dieu crée parce qu'il agit de façon originale; quand il intervient il change la face des choses (*Jr.* 31, 22; *Is.* 48, 7; 65, 17; *Ps.* 51, 12; 104, 30). Dans la religion d'Israël, la notion de création est donc sotériologique, non seulement quand il est question de la création des derniers temps, la *nouvelle création*, mais aussi en ce qui concerne la création du *commencement*, comme le montre par exemple le rôle que joue le récit de *Gn.* 1 dans l'ensemble de la tradition sacerdotale ou l'adjonction du thème de la bénédiction à celui de la création en *Gn.* 1, 22, 28; 2, 3: la création est pleine d'espérance" (*Ibidem*, p. 39 and 40, nº 27).

the being of grace (*in esse gratiae*), can act as a particular active principle of the communication of the grace of Christ. Such communication or refusion (*refusio*) of grace between the just or between the saints clearly does not occur according to the infinite universality proper to the humanity of the Son of God, but only in relation to the particular fullness of their own measure of participation in friendship with God. In the lives of the saints, these ebbs and flows of grace are present between mother and son, teacher and disciple, spiritual guide and penitent, and vice versa, and also between friends and spouses, and in all human relationships that manage to become "bonds of perfection".[32] Even Saint Thomas maintains that a human being constituted in grace according to his friendship with God, can obtain the salvation of another, unless there is no impediment on the part of the one whose justification the friend of God wishes. "One may merit – Thomas said – the first grace for another congruously; because a man in grace fulfils God's will, and it is congruous and in harmony with friendship that God should fulfil man's desire for the salvation of another, although sometimes there may be an impediment on the part of him whose salvation the just man desires".[33] Finally, and in order to point out the excellence of the "fullness of the grace" of the Blessed Virgin, Saint Thomas introduces, in his late *Commentary on Hail Mary*, the decisive theme of grace *quantum ad refusionem*, and thus affirms the causality of Mary in the derivation of all grace towards human beings. But in addition, he also explicitly manifests the particular causality

[32] *Col.*, III, 14.

[33] "Merito congrui potest aliquis alteri mereri primam gratiam. Quia enim homo in gratia constitutus implet Dei voluntatem, congruum est, secundum amicitiae proportionem, ut Deus impleat hominis voluntatem in salvatione alterius, licet quandoque possit habere impedimentum ex parte illius cuius aliquis sanctus iustificationem desiderat" (*S. Th.*, I-II, q. 114, a. 6 c.).

of each saint, that is, a just person or friend of God, in the communication or "refusion" of the *esse gratiae* to another or other human beings. Indeed, the Angelic Doctor affirms: "It is a great thing in a Saint when he has grace to bring about the salvation of many, but it is exceedingly wonderful when grace is of such abundance as to be sufficient for the salvation of all men in the world, and this is true of Christ and of the Blessed Virgin".[34] This doctrine of the mutual refusion of grace finds confirmation in one of the most novel and decisive affirmations of the Magisterium of theologian Pope Benedict XVI, such as is offered by the central thesis of his Encyclical *Caritas in veritate*, which considers social life as an instrument of reciprocal exchange of the grace of Jesus Christ. "As the objects of God's love – Benedict XVI said – men and women become subjects of charity, they are called to make themselves instruments of grace, so as to pour forth God's charity and to weave networks of charity".[35]

This is how grace allows us to form such a personal, intimate and mutual bond of perfection with God's friends so that their various merits and graces also give rise to the reciprocal participation of their merits and graces. On the one hand, the merits and graces of the just make their prayers very effective: so they

[34] "Magnum enim est in quolibet sancto, quando habet tantum de gratia quod sufficit ad salutem multorum; sed quando haberet tantum quod sufficeret ad salutem omnium hominum de mundo, hoc esset maximum: et hoc est in Christo, et in Beata Virgine" (*In salutationem Angelicam expositio*, ed. R. Spiazzi, Marietti, Taurini-Romae, 1954, O. T. II, p. 240 b, nº 1118). Cfr. *In Ep. ad Hebr.*, c. XII, v. 23, lect. 4, ed. cit., t. II, p. 491 b, n° 708; *In Ep. ad Rom.*, c. VIII, v. 23, lect. 5, ed. cit., p. 122, n° 678; *S. Th.*, III, q. 27, a. 5 ad 1. There is no shortage of theologians who argue the possibility that a pure human being – specifically the Virgin Mary – like Our Lord, can obtain grace for others (including the first grace of conversion and the last grace of salvation) through condign merit. They base this on what Saint Thomas says in the *Summa Theologiae* (III, q. 64, a. 4): Christ can communicate to others his power of excellence.

[35] *Caritas in veritate*, § 5.

obtain from God the special graces we have asked for; in addition, they not only prevent us from losing our divine Sonship, but they encourage us to continue advancing to the heights of perfection and towards even greater merit. Where our strength does not reach, it is our friends, the saints, who come to help us and, with their prayers, their graces and their charity, make it possible for us to grow in grace and in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, something that we could never achieve on our own.[36]

On the other hand, the saints are members of the same body to which we belong, and they have the same head and the same soul as us. And as the prayers, the graces and the charity of the holy members are beneficial to all others, and just as the whole body ultimately possesses the infinite grace and universal merit of its head, Jesus Christ, so in a way the graces and merits of the saints are, by mutual participation, our merits as well.[37]

Communion of saints

This is the social dimension of grace to which Benedict XVI refers in *Caritas in veritate* and Francis in *Fratelli Tutti*. It is about the grace that comes to heal and elevate the human being as a "political animal", and not just as an individual person. Following Aristotle, who maintains that it is not enough for a good politician to love himself, he must also love the good of his city,[38] in the same way the human being, from the moment he is welcomed as a member of a city, that is to say, becomes a citizen, needs social virtues, such as love for the good of his city and for social justice.

[36] Cfr. *S. Th.*, II-II, q. 83, a. 4.

[37] *I Cor.*, XII, 12 ff.

[38] ἅμα δὲ οὐδὲ χρὴ νομίζειν αὐτὸν αὑτοῦ τινα εἶναι τῶν πολιτῶν, ἀλλὰ πάντας τῆς πόλεως, μόριον γὰρ ἕκαστος τῆς πόλεως: ἡ δ᾽ ἐπιμέλεια πέφυκεν ἑκάστου μορίου βλέπειν πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ὅλου ἐπιμέλειαν (Aristotle, *Polit.*, VIII [Θ], 1, 1337 a 28-30, ed. Ross, Oxford, 1957).

In a similar way, when he is welcomed to participate in the heavenly beatitude, which consists in seeing and "tasting" God, the human being becomes a citizen and member of the Heavenly Jerusalem, that society blessed by the Lord, in which, Saint Paul tells us, we become "fellow citizens of the saints and relatives of God".[39] Hence the human being, once he is incorporated into the celestial kingdom through grace, is called to possess not only personal virtues but also social virtues infused by the Holy Spirit in his soul, for which love for the common good of society as a whole, which is a divine good as an object of beatitude, is a prerequisite (*praeexigitur*).

Now, in the same way that loving the good of a city in order to possess and dominate it does not make a politician a good person – for even a tyrant loves his city and seeks its good, but in order to subdue it for his own benefit – loving the good that is shared with the blessed in order to possess it does not make man good in terms of beatitude, since the wicked also desire such good. Only loving this good in itself, so that it lasts and spills over onto others, and does not act against them, makes someone good with respect to that society of the blessed in which grace makes us participate.[40]

[39] "So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God" (*Eph*., II, 19).

[40] "Philosophus dicit in VIII Polit. (cap. 1, 1337 a 28 ff.), quod ad hoc quod aliquis sit bonus politicus, requiritur quod amet bonum civitatis. Si autem homo, in quantum admittitur ad participandum bonum alicuius civitatis, et efficitur civis illius civitatis; competunt ei virtutes quaedam ad operandum ea quae sunt civium, et ad amandum bonum civitatis; ita cum homo per divinam gratiam admittatur in participationem caelestis beatitudinis, quae in visione et fruitione Dei consistit, fit quasi civis et socius illius beatae societatis, quae vocatur caelestis Ierusalem secundum illud, *Ephes.* II, 19: *estis cives sanctorum et domestici Dei*. Unde homini sic ad caelestia adscripto competunt quaedam virtutes gratuitae, quae sunt virtutes infusae; ad quarum debitam operationem praeexigitur amor boni communis

Being inhabitants of the heavenly city while still on Earth as pilgrims, is a fundamental reason for the reciprocal "refusion" of grace among God's friends, which is necessary to heal and elevate human society on Earth to the heavenly city. The grace of the sacrament of matrimony, of which the spouses are ministers, heals and elevates the social cell, but the refusion among all the justified, called to implement the ebb and flow of grace in the society of saints – which includes both those who already enjoy God directly, and the pilgrims who are on the way to Him – is what is destined to heal and elevate the entire social body. It is the Church that in this hour is called to indicate the path of communication of the grace of Christ through those who are his "living stones".[41] According to St. Thomas, Christ can communicate to others his power of excellence, as indeed he has done to the Church insofar as she has established the sacraments as we know them today. The Saint says: "Christ had a twofold power in the sacraments. One was the power of authority, which belongs to Him as God: and this power He could not communi-

toti societati, quod est bonum divinum, prout est beatitudinis obiectum. Amare autem bonum alicuius civitatis contingit dupliciter: uno modo ut habeatur; alio modo ut conservetur. Amare autem bonum alicuius civitatis ut habeatur et possideatur, non facit bonum politicum; quia sic etiam aliquis tyrannus amat bonum alicuius civitatis ut ei dominetur: quod est amare seipsum magis quam civitatem; sibi enim ipsi hoc bonum concupiscit, non civitati. Sed amare bonum civitatis ut conservetur et defendatur, hoc est vere amare civitatem; quod bonum politicum facit: in tantum quod aliqui propter bonum civitatis conservandum vel ampliandum, se periculis mortis exponant et negligant privatum bonum. Sic igitur amare bonum quod a beatis participatur ut habeatur vel possideatur, non facit hominem bene se habentem ad beatitudinem, quia etiam mali illud bonum concupiscunt; sed amare illud bonum secundum se, ut permaneat et diffundatur, et ut nihil contra illud bonum agatur, hoc facit hominem bene se habentem ad illam societatem beatorum" (*De Caritate*, q. un., a. 2 c., ed. cit., Q. D. II, p. 758 f.). Cfr. also, *De Virtutibus in Communi*, q. un., a. 9.

[41] λίθοι ζῶντες (*I Peter*, II:5).

cate to any creature; just as neither could He communicate the Divine Essence. The other was the power of excellence, which belongs to Him as man. This power He could communicate to ministers; namely, by giving them such a fullness of grace – that their merits would conduce to the sacramental effect – that by the invocation of their names, the sacraments would be sanctified – and that they themselves might institute sacraments, and by their mere will confer the sacramental effect without observing the sacramental rite. For a united instrument, the more powerful it is, the more able it is to lend its power to the separated instrument; as the hand can to a stick".[42]

The Beatitudes, the works of mercy, the washing of the feet and the Good Samaritan

Pope Francis has proposed the Beatitudes as the program of his pontificate, which are the new and central teachings of Jesus Christ to which all the others refer, just as Moses had proposed the commandments, followed by many other norms that refer to them. Thus, both the "works of mercy" and the attitude of the Good Samaritan are actions that respond to the Beatitudes. Undoubtedly, the behaviour of the Good Samaritan, proposed by *Fratelli Tutti*, is the most complete icon of the novelty of the "Beatitudes", as is the performance of the Beatitudes in the "works

[42] "Christus in sacramentis habuit duplicem potestatem. Unam auctoritatis, quae competit ei secundum quod Deus. Et talis potestas nulli creaturae potuit communicari, sicut nec divina essentia. Aliam potestatem habuit excellentiae, quae competit ei secundum quod homo. Et talem potestatem potuit ministris communicare, dando scilicet eis tantam gratiae plenitudinem ut eorum meritum operaretur ad sacramentorum effectus; ut ad invocationem nominum ipsorum sanctificarentur sacramenta; et ut ipsi possent sacramenta instituere; et sine ritu sacramentorum effectum conferre solo imperio. Potest enim instrumentum coniunctum, quanto fuerit fortius, tanto magis virtutem suam instrumento separato tribuere, sicut manus baculo" (*S. Th.*, III, q. 64, a. 4 c.).

of mercy". In the words of *Fratelli Tutti:* "This parable eloquently presents the basic decision we need to make in order to rebuild our wounded world. In the face of so much pain and suffering, our only course is to imitate the Good Samaritan".[43] With this parable, as well as with the gesture of the washing of the feet – much loved by Pope Francis – Jesus Christ has wanted to give us "an example, that you also should do as I have done to you",[44] knowing that exemplary actions inspire good deeds more than words. He recommended the Beatitudes and the works of mercy, since whoever gives bread to the hungry washes their feet and is a Good Samaritan, the same as those who offer hospitality, dress the naked, visit the sick or those in prison, to those who are operators of peace, thirst for ≠ justice, and so on. Saint Paul invites us to "contribute to the needs of the saints".[45] The Lord himself connects the Beatitudes to feet washing as a service to our neighbour, when he concludes this gesture by instructing the Apostles: "If you know these things, *blessed* are you if you do them".[46]

With the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus Christ answers the question of who is our neighbour that we should love. And this is the last fulfilment of the law and the new commandment, and fittingly enough he ends the fulfilment with love, for "love is the fullness of the law".[47] Concerning the notion of neighbour it should be considered that for some people neighbours are only household members and relatives, but according to the truth of the words of Christ every human being is our neighbour, including the angels: indeed, Luke says that the one who

[43] *Fratelli Tutti*, § 67.

[44] ὑπόδειγμα γὰρ ἔδωκα ὑμῖν ἵνα καθὼς ἐγὼ ἐποίησα ὑμῖν καὶ ὑμεῖς ποιῆτε (*John*, XIII:15).

[45] ταῖς χρείαις τῶν ἁγίων κοινωνοῦντες (*Rom.*, XII:13).

[46] εἰ ταῦτα οἴδατε, μακάριοί ἐστε ἐὰν ποιῆτε αὐτά (*John*, XIII:17).

[47] πλήρωμα οὖν νόμου ἡ ἀγάπη (*Rom.*, XIII:10).

was shown mercy by the Samaritan is called his neighbour.[48] Hence the person who shows us mercy is our 'neighbour', such as the angels and so is the person to whom we owe mercy, such as a victim. This precept was already present in Leviticus.[49]

The Lord chose to use the term 'neighbour' to make us understand the new notion of love that he was proposing, which is the essence of fraternity and social friendship. For all friendship is based on some likeness or closeness: "Every being loves its own kind".[50] But there is a certain natural similarity, as all human beings belong to the same species. Hence just as it is natural that every being loves its own kind, it is also natural that every human being loves his kind. Another likeness is political: citizens of the same country must love one another, and this is political friendship. Similarity today is also cosmopolitan, since people should love one another as citizens of the world: and this is cosmopolitan friendship. But there is also the similitude of grace, and this is broader because it extends to all who aspire to the happiness of the Beatitudes, namely, human beings and angels: this is the precept of charity that is based on that union generated by participation in the divine nature of Christ. Therefore, his saying 'love your neighbour' is not to be understood as only referring to those who share the same blood, family ties or country, but to all those who aspire to the Beatitudes or happiness.

Importance and topicality of *Fratelli Tutti*'s plea

As Pope Francis constantly teaches us: "Jesus with the Beatitudes gives us the 'protocol' with which we will be judged". As a punctual response to the trending topic of the Covid-19 pandemic which attacks our body, but also to the more subtle and dangerous evil that poisons our soul, *Fratelli Tutti* offers a path

[48] Cfr. *Luke,* X:36–37.
[49] *Lev.* XIX:18.
[50] *Sir.* XIII:19.

to the Beatitudes centred on fraternity and social love founded on the grace of Christ. Thus, against the new colonialism of mainstream thought (*pensée unique*), individualism, selfishness, violence against the human being and nature, slavery, war and hatred, the Encyclical proposes the healing and uplifting medicine of the love and grace of Christ.

The global response to the Covid-19 pandemic reveals that the fundamental importance of the religious dimension indicated by *Fratelli Tutti* as part of human dignity is eroding.[51] By ignoring the religious dimension of the human person or, worse, setting it aside as non-essential, this transcendent dimension of the person gradually becomes optional instead of being recognized as the basic dimension of the human being. "It should be acknowledged – according to *Fratelli Tutti* – that 'among the most important causes of the crises of the modern world are a desensitized human conscience, a distancing from religious values and the prevailing individualism accompanied by materialistic philosophies that deify the human person and introduce worldly and material values in place of supreme and transcendental principles'".[52] In a not so distant cultural time, H. Grozio's expression of living and acting *etsi Deus non daretur* – as if God did not exist – has been discussed and rightly criticized. But there is a worse danger and that is to live *etsi Christus non daretur*, as if Christ and his grace and love did not exist. Inspired by the fathers of the Church, Hegel already recognizes that the idea of human dignity and freedom is the fruit of the Message and grace of Christ and of his Holy Spirit: "It was through Christianity that this idea [freedom and human dignity] came

[51] Cfr. Paul Richard Gallagher, *Video message at the 46th session of the Human Rights Council, L'Osservatore Romano*, 24 February 2021, p. 6.

[52] *Fratelli Tutti*, § 275. Quoting *Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*, Abu Dhabi, 4 February 2019, *L'Osservatore Romano*, 4-5 February 2019, p. 6.

into the world. According to Christianity, the individual as such has an infinite value as the object and aim of divine love, destined to live in absolute relationship with God himself as spirit, and have God's spirit dwelling in him: i.e. man is in himself destined to supreme freedom".[53] Without God and without Christ, human beings are nothing more than a product of chaos-chance or the evolution of matter without an incorruptible soul, because God is no longer creating and saving human beings and nature but vice versa.

With the grace of Christ and his love, we will already partially enjoy the Beatitudes in this life, which the diligent exercise of individual and social virtues and works of mercy fully promise us for the next life. Grace is nothing other than a beginning of heaven's glory in us.[54] According to Saint Thomas, this is the reason why the Apostle speaks of the "fruits of the Holy Spirit", whose sweetness and softness we can already taste in this life, and not of flowers that only ripen at harvest time and whose fruit can only be gathered later.

How then, in a suffering and developed society like ours, can we manifest and invigorate, with the grace of Christ and his love, the essence of social reality as service, as taught by the Magisterium of Pope Francis based on the Beatitudes, the works

[53] "Diese Idee ist durch das Christentum in die Welt gekommen, nach welchem das Individuum als solches einen unendlichen Wert hat, indem es Gegenstand und Zweck der Liebe Gottes, dazu bestimmt ist, zu Gott als Geist sein absolutes Verhältnis, diesen Geist in sich wohnen zu haben, d.i. daß der Mensch an sich zur höchsten Freiheit bestimmt ist" (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Werke*, Band 10, Frankfurt a. M., 1979, p. 300 ff.)

[54] *S. Th.*, II-II, q. 24, a. 3 ad 2. Also: "Gratia Spiritus Sancti quam in praesente habemus, etsi non sit aequalis gloriae in actu, est tamen aequalis in virtute: sicut et semen arborum, in quo est virtus ad totam arborem. Et similiter per gratiam inhabitat hominem Spiritus Sanctus, qui est sufficiens causa vitae aeternae: unde et dicitur esse 'pignus hereditatis nostrae' *II Cor.* I, 22 [Cfr. *Ephes.*, I, 14]" (*S. Th.*, I-II, q. 114, a. 3 ad 3). In addition: "gloria, quae nihil est aliud, quam gratia consummata" (*S. Th.*, I, q. 95, a. 1 arg. 6).

of mercy, and the good Samaritan? Can the Church that has inherited from Christ the power of excellence find a new way to spread his grace, which is the novelty that the Lord has brought to the world, our highest dignity and anticipation of eternal life? We already rejoice in the hope of knowing that this is possible.

Fraternity as a Principle of Social Order. Remarks on the Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* by Pope Francis

Stefano Zamagni

1.

Fratelli Tutti, on fraternity and social friendship is an authentic *ispiera* – the ray of light that, penetrating through a crack in a shadowed environment, illuminates it, making visible what is stationed within. This encyclical letter is a magnificent companion to *Laudato si'*. While the latter focuses on the baleful consequences stemming from the disconnection between Humanity and Creation, *Fratelli Tutti* urges us to create the universal fraternity needed to achieve "one world with a common plan". This is a fitting message for a world that is rent by populism, nationalism, ethnocentrism and dangerous failures of global cooperation, even in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The specific aim that Pope Francis' third encyclical (after *Lumen fidei*, 2013 and *Laudato si'*, 2015) pursues is twofold. On the one hand, its aim is to awaken in everyone, believers and non-believers or otherwise believers, the passion for the common good, urging everyone to draw direct consequences. On the other hand, it is to clarify concepts that are too superficially taken as synonyms or almost. The resulting confusion of thought does not help either dialogue or the prospect of the necessary lines of action. I will try and clarify.

Fraternity does not have the same meaning as brotherhood and even less as solidarity. While that of brotherhood is an immanent concept that speaks of the belonging of people to the same species or to a given community of destiny, fraternity is a transcendent concept that lays its foundation in the recognition

of the common fatherhood of God. Brotherhood unites friends, but it separates them from non-friends; it makes associates (an associate is "one who is associated for certain interests", 102) and therefore excludes the united from the others. Fraternity, on the other hand, precisely insofar as it comes from above (the fatherhood of God) is universal and creates brothers, not associates, and therefore tends to erase the natural and historical boundaries that separate.

Cain's murder of his brother suggests that fraternity is not based on blood. Biological fraternity does not exist, meaning that there is no fraternity if we do not acknowledge our responsibility towards one another. Whereas brotherhood has a naturalistic premise, fraternity presupposes a common Father (*Lumen Fidei*, 54), which makes us guardians of each another. Indeed, when the Lord God peremptorily asked: "Cain, where is Abel, your brother?", the murderer replied: "Am I my brother's keeper?". Cain acquired the title of brother only after admitting his guilt, that is, after taking responsibility for his actions. Fraternity, in the proper sense, is an invention of Christianity, even though common opinion associates it with the Republican triad. That is not our case, however. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789) contained the words "liberty" and "equality", but not "fraternity", which was added later and never received much attention. We know why: no one had forgotten that that word had served to justify, and even legitimize, the terrible injustices of the *Ancien Regime*. The French Enlightenment's choice of word disposition proved to be detrimental: liberty and equality, both conceived within the prevailing value of Modernity – individualism – are inherently divergent, conceptually contradictory principles.[1] Fraternity is what strikes a balance between liberty and equality. Frédéric Boyer wrote:

[1] Amartya Sen formally proved this in his famous 1970 paper, *The Impossibility of a Paretian Liberal*.

"Liberty, without the awareness of having to share it with the other, becomes violence. And equality, without the awareness that it is primarily for the other, becomes mortal loneliness". As Edgard Morin reminds us, liberty can be instituted and equality imposed. Fraternity, on the other hand, is not established by law; it comes from a personal experience of responsibility and must be practiced, first and foremost, for the good of the other, not because we feel obligated by some ruling. As Pope Benedict XVI recalled in his speech at the Teatro della Scala in Milan on the occasion of the seventh World Meeting of Families (June 1, 2012): "We are not in need of an unreal discourse by a distant God, or of a *brotherhood* which is not challenging. We seek a God who is close. We seek a *fraternity* which sustains others in the midst of suffering and thereby helps them journey on".[2]

Fraternity is equally different from solidarity. It is a great merit of Christian culture to have been able to decline, in both institutional and economic terms, the principle of fraternity, making it become a cornerstone of social order. It was the Franciscan school of thought that gave this term the meaning it has preserved over time. There are pages of the Rule of Francis which help better understand the proper meaning of the principle of fraternity, which is to constitute, at the same time, the complement and the overcoming of the principle of solidarity. Indeed, while solidarity is the principle of social organization that allows the unequal to become equal, fraternity is the principle that allows the already equal to be diverse – mind you, not different. Fraternity allows people who are equal in their dignity and fundamental rights to express their plan of life or their charisma differently. The seasons we have left behind, the 1800s and especially the 1900s, were characterized by great battles, both cultural and political, in the name of solidarity and this was a good

[2] Vv.Aa., *La Famiglia, il lavoro, la festa,* Milan, Centro Ambrosiano, 2012, p. 17, (italics added).

thing; think of the history of the trade union movement and the struggle for the conquest of civil rights. But the good society in which to live cannot be satisfied with the horizon of solidarity, because while a fraternal society is also a solidary society, the converse is not true. What makes the difference? Gratuitousness. Where this is lacking, there can be no fraternity. Gratuitousness is not an ethical virtue, as is justice. It concerns the supra-ethical dimension of human action; its logic is that of superabundance. The logic of justice, on the other hand, is that of equivalence, as Aristotle already taught. So we understand why fraternity goes beyond justice. In a perfectly just society – provided this is achievable – there would be no room for hope. What could its citizens ever hope for the future? Not so in a society where the principle of fraternity had managed to take root, precisely because hope is nourished by superabundance.

The fact that a human society in which the sense of fraternity is lost, and where everything comes down, on the hand, to improving transactions based on the trading of equivalents, and on the other hand to increasing the transfers made by public welfare organisations, is not a sustainable society, has been forgotten, would explain why it is that despite the quality of the intellectual forces at play, no credible solution has yet been offered for that trade-off. A society in which the principle of fraternity fades from view, is a society with no future; that is, a society is not capable of progressing if it is only capable of "giving to receive", or of "giving as a duty". This is why neither the liberal-individualist vision of the world, in which everything (or nearly everything) constitutes a trade-off, nor the State-centric vision of society, where everything (or nearly everything) is based on a sense of duty, can safely lead us out of the shallows, where the fourth industrial revolution is severely testing our existing model of civilisation.

A question arises spontaneously: why did Pope Francis choose the parable of the Good Samaritan as the foundation of

his approach to fraternity? The question makes sense because the Gospel says nothing (nor does it imply) about the relationship of reciprocity which, as we know, is necessary to preserve the bond of fraternity over time. Relationships between brothers and sisters are of reciprocity, not of exchange of equivalents of value and much less of command. Reciprocity is giving without losing and taking without taking away. There is no reciprocity between the Samaritan and the victim lying on the ground. The parable, therefore, is more an icon of solidarity or brotherhood than of fraternity in the proper sense. So what, then? With this choice, Pope Francis wanted us to fully understand the difference between proximity and closeness. The Levite and the priest were certainly close to the victim (all three were Jews), but were not in his proximity. Closeness is enough for brotherhood; fraternity postulates proximity.

The concept of neighbour is clearly outlined in the New Testament, both in the Sermon on the Mount and in the parable of the Good Samaritan. The scribe asks Jesus who his neighbour is; in turn, Jesus replies by modifying the question into subjective terms: "Who acted as a neighbour?" Rather than defining the category of "neighbour", he clarifies that it is necessary to effectively "become someone's neighbour". Jesus accurately describes all of the Samaritan's concerned and compassionate gestures: he helps the injured man and pays for his care as his wounds heal. This is exactly the line of thinking in *Fratelli Tutti*. Pope Francis starts with recognising the current anthropological syndrome, which in the encyclical takes on various names: "complete separation between individuals and human community"; libertarian individualism; loss of roots; lack of integration between generations, and so on. Globalization standardizes peoples and cultures but does not unite them; it produces progress but not justice; it generalizes but does not provide universal meaning. Enlightened humanism failed because it decapitated the most Christian category, making it a contradictory ethical

and political idea, that is, fraternity without a fraternal method turned into a coercive ideological program. Invoking social friendship (*Fratelli Tutti*, 94, 99) or, rather, social charity (*Fratelli Tutti*, 176, 182) is a strong thesis, because it aims at putting charity in practice within the context of effective politics, if one does not want to settle for mere brotherhood.[3]

2.

Where do the above clarifications lead us, in practice? For reasons of space, I will focus here on just a few relevant implications, those that I consider most urgent for the present time. First, it is necessary, once and for all, to realize the serious damage that the cultural matrix of libertarian individualism is producing. Individualism is the philosophical position according to which it is the individual who attributes value to things and even to interpersonal relationships. And it is always the individual who alone decides what is good and what is bad; what is right and wrong. In other words, everything to which the individual attributes value is good. There are no objective values for individualism, but only subjective values or legitimate preferences. Hence the implication that one must act "etsi communitas non daretur" (as if the community did not exist).

On the other hand, libertarianism is the thesis according to which, in order to establish individual freedom and responsibility, it is necessary to resort to the idea of self-causation, for which only the self-caused agent is fully free, as if he were God. We can now understand how the code word of this era was able arise from the combination of individualism and libertarianism, that

[3] The recent essay by Charles Wilber, *Was the Good Samaritan a Bad Economist?*, Norton, New York, 2021 is also interesting. The American economist wittily argues that, according to the paradigm of *homo oeconomicus*, the Good Samaritan may have acted in an irrational and therefore commendable way.

is, from libertarian individualism: "volo ergo sum", that is, "I am what I want". The radicalization of individualism in libertarian terms, has led to the conclusion that every individual has a "right" to expand as far as his/her power allows him/her. Freedom as a release from all ties is the dominant idea in our societies today. Since they would limit freedom, ties are what must be dissolved. By mistakenly equating the concept of tie with that of bond, the conditionings of freedom – bonds – are confused with the conditions of freedom – ties, in fact. And this is because libertarian individualism fails to conceptualize the freedom of subjects "quae sine invicem esse non possunt" (which cannot be without reciprocity). If one admits that the person is an entity in an ontological relationship of proximity to the other, libertarianism has no reason to exist.

A second powerful invitation that comes to us from Pope Francis' pressing magisterium is that of hastening the transition from the traditional (and now obsolete) model of responsibility to a richer model, equal to the challenges underway. In fact, the traditional interpretation of responsibility identifies it with the accountability of what a subject, autonomous and free, produces or puts into being. This notion therefore postulates the ability of an agent to be the cause of his/her acts and as such to be required to "pay" for the negative consequences that derive from them. This still prevalent conception of responsibility, however, leaves in the shadow what it means to *be* responsible.

For some time now, however, a sense of responsibility has begun to take shape that places it beyond the principle of free will and the sole sphere of subjectivity, to place it in function of life, to found a commitment that binds in the world. From the Latin *res-pondus*, responsibility essentially means carrying the weight of things, taking care of the other – as Lorenzo Milani's "I care" taught us. Not only do you answer "to" but also "of". On the one hand, responsibility today requires us to ask ourselves the problem of the constraints to which the decisions we

make will be exposed over time in order to continue to be effective. On the other hand, the ability to respond cannot only refer to the immediacy of the present circumstances, but must include those temporal dimensions that ensure some continuity of the response itself. This is why the experience of responsibility cannot be exhausted in simple imputability. The statement of M.L. King "You may not be responsible for the situation you are in, but you will become responsible if you do nothing to change it" has rightly remained renowned. We are responsible not only and not so much for what we do, but rather for what we don't do, even though we could do it. The omissive action is always more serious than the commissive one.

It is worth addressing a third practical implication of the discourse developed in *Fratelli Tutti*. If we want to be right regarding the unworthy phenomenon of growing social injustices and the spread like wildfire of aporophobic attitudes – according to A. Cortina, aporophobia is the contempt for the poor and the different – we need to think seriously about a credible model of global governance. What is the difficulty in this regard? That of how to reconcile the internal governance rules of individual countries, each of which has its own specific history, its social norms of behavior, its cultural matrix with the uniformity of the rules that inevitably characterize global governance (D. Rodrik). Never forget, in fact, that the constraints external to the country, when it has to shape its domestic policies, always entail a cost in terms of democratic legitimacy – a cost which, as is happening nowadays, ends up reinforcing irrational pressures towards sovereign populism. It is therefore a question of choosing between two alternative concepts of global economic governance, known as "globalization enhancing global governance" and "democracy-enhancing global governance". The basic idea of the second option is that when one starts drawing the rules at a transnational level, it is necessary to include among the objectives to be pursued not only the increase in efficiency

in the allocation of resources, and therefore of income, but also the enlargement of the democratic base. To put it another way, it is indeed true that globalization increases the space of negative human rights (i.e. freedom *from*), but it also restricts the space, if not corrected by social safeguard clauses, of positive human rights (i.e. freedom *of*). Pope Francis does not hesitate to take a stand in favor of the second option. (See n. 154 et seq.).

And with good reasons. Pope Francis is clear about how the notion of the common good should be understood. The overly simplistic way in which this category was treated in the Conciliar Decree *Gaudium et Spes* (GS) certainly cannot be accepted by those who – like Pope Francis – know the difference between common good and total good. GS n. 74 states that: "The common good embraces the sum of those conditions of the social life whereby men, families and associations more adequately and readily may attain their own perfection (2)". The common good, therefore, is not an end in itself, but only an instrument for the good of an individual or a group. John Paul II corrected this "oversight" in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, published in 2004: "The common good does not consist in the simple *sum* of the particular goods of each subject of a social entity. Belonging to everyone and to each person, it is and remains common, because it is *indivisible* and because only *together* is it possible to attain it, increase it and safeguard its effectiveness… No expression of social life – from the family to intermediate social groups, associations, enterprises of an economic nature, cities, regions, States, up to the community of peoples and nations – can escape the issue of its own common good, in that this is a *constitutive element* of its significance and the *authentic reason* for its very existence" (n. 164-165; italics added). It should be noted that this definition not only underlines the specific notion of the common good – its non-separability – but also shows how to achieve it. In particular, "[In the democratic State] those responsible for government are required to interpret the common good

of their country not only according to the guidelines of the majority but also according to the effective good of all the members of the community, including the minority" (n. 169). The State, therefore, interprets what the common good is, but does not determine or sanction it, because the State is "an expression of the civil society" (n. 168), not the opposite, as the many versions of the ethical State would like to imply.

3.

A noteworthy novelty of this encyclical, which has not gone unnoticed and which will continue to be discussed for a long time, is constituted by chapter V, significantly and provocatively entitled "A Better Kind of Politics". There are two wrong ways – Pope Francis tells us – to face the challenges of this moment. On the one hand, the way of those who give in to the temptation to remain above reality with utopia; on the other hand, the way of those who place themselves below reality with dystopia, with resignation. We cannot fall into such traps. We cannot wander between the carefree optimism of those who see the historical process as a triumphal march of humanity towards its complete realization and the desperate cynicism of those who think, along with Kafka, that "there is a point of arrival, but no way". Welcoming the perspective of fraternity today means this: not considering ourselves either as the mere result of processes that fall outside our control, or as a self-sufficient reality without the need for relationships with the other. In other words, it means thinking that what awaits us is never entirely determined by what precedes us. If we want the social order that we call capitalism to be able to fully respect the right of each individual to decide for himself/herself how to value his/her life and, at the same time, be able to show equal consideration for the destiny of each person, there is no other way than that of politics, but a better kind of politics! Taking note that capitalism today risks paralysis, or, worse, collapse, because it is becoming more capi-

talist than it is useful for, is the first step to start a credible project of transformation of the existing social order.

In particular, *Fratelli Tutti* strongly insists on the shortcomings stemming from the separation between market and democracy which has taken place in the last forty years. After stating that "The marketplace, by itself, cannot resolve every problem, although much we are asked to believe this dogma of neoliberal faith" (168), Pope Frances writes: "Here I would once more observe that politics must not be subject to the economy, nor should the economy be subject to the dictates of an efficiency-driven paradigm of technocracy" (177). One of the many legacies that modernity has left us – certainly not a positive one – is the belief that access to the "economics club" is granted to profiteers if you are an entrepreneur, and to utility maximizers if you are a consumer. This absurd conceptualization – generated by the theoretical error that confuses the market economy, which is the *genus*, with its particular *species*, which is the capitalist system – has conflated economics with the place (regulated by efficiency) where wealth is produced, and not also where it is distributed and has led us to think of the social sphere as the place of redistribution, where solidarity and/or compassion (public or private) are the fundamental canons. We have seen and are still seeing the consequences of this separation. In the last thirty years the indicators of interstate and intrastate social inequality have increased outrageously, even in those countries where the welfare state has played an important role in terms of resource management.

Yet, legions of economists and political philosophers long believed that Kant's proposal – "let's make the cake bigger and *then* divide it equally" – was the solution to the problem of equity. This calls to mind the eloquent aphorism launched by the neo-conservative economic thought according to which "a rising tide lifts all boats", hence the famous trickle-down effect thesis: wealth sooner or later trickles down to everyone,

even the poorest, as a sort of beneficial rain. *Evangelii gaudium* is where Pope Francis proves this dangerous metaphor false. *Fratelli Tutti* indicates that the way out of this problem is to put back together what has been artfully separated. Taking a stance in favour of that concept of the market (typical of the civil economy paradigm associated to the name of the Neapolitan Antonio Genovesi)[4] according to which the social bond cannot be reduced to the "cash nexus" alone, the encyclical suggests that human sociality can be experienced within a normal economic life, not outside of it, as the dichotomous model of social order based on State and Market pillars would like us to think. The challenge to accept therefore is that of Plato's second navigation: the economy must neither be seen as conflicting, endemically and ontologically, with the good life, because it is considered a place of exploitation and alienation, nor as the place where all of society's problems can be solved, as the Anarchist-Liberal thought suggests.

4.

A major obstacle to universal fraternity is the worrying increase in social inequalities, year after year, both in advanced nations and on a global scale. Why is it that inequalities are increasing at a faster pace than national income? Why is it that public opinion is so little interested in such a devastating phenomenon? A recent work by the well-known economist Branko Milanovic, *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization* (2016) helps us find an answer to these questions. Milanovic's main argument is that inequality is not pre-ordained, neither is it a constant in time or space. It is not destined to be since it is related to the rules of the economic game, that is, to the insti-

[4] For a rational reconstruction of this theoretical paradigm, see L. Bruni and S. Zamagni, *Civil Economy. Another Idea of the Market*, Newcastle u.T., Agenda, 2016.

tutional arrangements that countries have decided to fix. One only has to think of economic institutions such as the labour market, the banking system, the welfare model, the tax system and so on. The design of these arrangements will have different consequences in terms of the way income and wealth are distributed among those who contributed to the production of that income and wealth. Neither are inequalities a constant over time, since there are periods in history in which they increase, and others in which they decrease; neither are they a spatial constant, since there are countries in which the Gini Index – which measures the gap between rich and poor – is higher than in other countries.

The question therefore is: if increasing inequality is not the result of a lack of resources, or of insufficient technological know-how, or of particular adversities affecting given categories of individuals, then what it is ultimately due to, and above all, why are there not waves of protest against such a state of affairs? The most plausible answer is that this is due to the continued belief in the dogmas of injustice within our societies. (Pareto, indeed, saw inequality as a sort of iron law which the human race would never be free of). Basically, there are two dogmas in question here. The first is that society as a whole benefits if each individual pursues his/her own personal interests. This is untrue on two counts: firstly, because Smith's argument of the invisible hand, in order to hold true, postulates that markets be close to the ideal of free competition, with no monopolies or oligopolies, nor asymmetric information. However, everyone knows that the conditions for perfect free competition are never met in practice. This is why the famous Cambridge economist Joan Robinson wrote that "the invisible hand might do its work but by strangulation" ("The pure theory of international trade", *Review of Economic Studies,* 1946, p. 99). Secondly, because different people possess different skills and abilities: consequently, if the rules of the game are shaped in such a way as to reward con-

duct of an opportunistic, dishonest, immoral kind, then those persons whose dispositions are characterised by such tendencies, will end up crushing the others. Likewise, avidity, that is, the passionate desire to possess things, is a characteristic trait of human nature. Therefore, if incentive systems are introduced into the workplace – not rewards, but incentives – then it is clear that the more avid workers would tend to dominate their less avid colleagues. Thus it can be said that poor people are such not by nature, but as a result of social conditioning, that is, due to the way in which economic institutions are designed.

The other dogma of inequality is the belief that elitism should be encouraged since it is highly effective; in other words, the wealth of the majority of the population would grow to a greater degree if the abilities of the few were promoted. Therefore, greater resources, attention, incentives and prizes should go to the most gifted members of society, since it is their endeavour and commitment that guarantees society's advancement. Consequently, the exclusion of the less gifted from the economic activity – through their employment in temporary and precarious jobs and/or their unemployment, for example – is not just normal, but is also necessary if the GDP growth rate is to increase.

Citing technical reasons for concealing specific ideological choices is not good science. Aristotle wrote that the debate over equality and inequality centres on the criteria governing the distribution of goods and resources among groups, and aims to identify methods with which to deal with the diversity among citizens in a fair way. Thus it is wrong – fallacious even – to try and legitimise, or even to justify, inequality as a measure designed to maintain the incentive to work, to reward merit, and ultimately to guarantee efficiency; since as Vilfredo Pareto, the inventor of the efficiency concept in the late nineteenth century pointed out, efficiency belongs to the category of means and not that of ends. It is necessary to establish beforehand what end is to be pursued in an efficient manner, and this requires

making explicit the value judgement which can then guide the pursuit of that end. Economists, with few worthy exceptions, are responsible for the fact that despite being aware of the redistributive effects of globalisation, they have failed to talk about or discuss the matter outside academic circles, at least not until recently. Perhaps this is because they feared offering arguments in favour of populist theses; however, the outcome has been that the hegemony of one-track thinking has ended up fostering the most obnoxious forms of radicalism.

During the years after the end of World War Two, Simon Kuznets ("Economic growth and income inequality", *American Economic Review*, 45, 1955) had offered a glimmer of hope with his famous curve: an inverted U-shaped relation between income inequality and economic growth. By setting out pro-capita income on the x-axis, and the Gini coefficient, as the indicator of the degree of inequality, on the y-axis, the resulting curve would suggest that during the early phases of a nation's development, when pro-capita income is growing but is still low, disparities tend to increase; later, when the critical threshold of average income has been reached, the curve begins to fall. Thus the Gini coefficient gradually diminishes as the growth process advances. However, the famous American economist had pointed out that the reversal of the slope of the curve would not be the result of market forces alone, but thanks to the targeted initiatives adopted by the government and by the various civil society organizations.

However, what actually happened was that from the 1970s onwards, following the success of the neo-liberal ideological and political project, this latter condition was sidelined, and consequently the Kuznets curve was interpreted as meaning that there was no longer any need to unduly worry about the question of inequality, given that over time things would have adjusted themselves provided the economy continued to grow at a substantial rate. This conclusion is what formed the basis of

the well-known *trickle-down effect* thesis. This would also explain why it was that until the beginning of the new century, economists in general tended to display a kind of benign neglect with regard to the distributive question. They felt they had to focus on growth theory instead just to explain how the tide was to be raised. Unfortunately, the rising tide only managed to raise up the luxury yachts! The International Monetary Fund has recently expressed a rather singular position – singular insofar as it is in complete contrast with the same organisation's previous position – as described by J. Ostry et al., "Neoliberalism: oversold?", *Finance and Development*, IMF, June 2016. According to the authors of this work, neoliberalism's distributional policies have had strongly perverse effects on inequality. They are referring, in particular, to the liberalisation of capital movements and to fiscal consolidation, that is, to austerity policies.

Many of the social ideologies that are around in our world are obstacles to universal fraternity. Defenders of neoliberal ideology argue that positive spillovers on the poor of the free-market economy justify the toleration of greed, and even rename avarice as "entrepreneurship". Another ideological source of resistance to universal fraternity is the view that one's obligation to share with others ends at the borders of one's nation. Whence the tension between the global and the local highlighted by Pope Francis.

5.

To conclude, a famous passage by William Blake – a poet and artist nourished by the Holy Scriptures – helps us grasp the power of the principle of fraternity: "I sought my God and my God I couldn't find; I sought my soul and my soul eluded me; I sought to serve my brother in his need, and I found all three: My God, my soul, and thee". Indeed, it is in the practice of giving as gratuitousness that the person jointly encounters his/her own self, the other and God. We live in a desert era of thought, which

struggles to conceive the complexity of the human condition. It is a crumbled thought that struggles to see the relationships between the many dimensions of our crisis. Fraternity and social friendship, in the manner of a social vaccine, then show us the open way out of the gloomy situation of the existing.

Fratelli Tutti proposes a heart open to the world in response to the challenges of our time, advancing the ethics of fellowship and friendship, of goodwill and dialogue, in an effort to dispel "the dark clouds over a closed world" (Ch. 1). The message of hope that emanates from *Fratelli Tutti* is that despite the many negativities, "Today we have a great opportunity to express our innate sense of fraternity" (n. 77). The pandemic – which has become an *experimentum crucis* of our human condition – is the extraordinary circumstance that helps us grasp this message. The great challenge is therefore how not to lose our subjective sense of liberty while not threatening the other's space, not just by not invading it, but by contributing to its enrichment.

Final Discussion

Marcelo Suárez-Orozco: Three reflections that flow from the papers and from reading the encyclical. First, the phrase that jumps out from the encyclical is the phrase of the illiteracy of caring and this to me points to a fundamental problem in education, a problem that the papers do not directly address.

The second problem is the taking of the individual, the secular religion of individualism as a given that needs to be examined much more carefully. The principally Anglo-Saxon notion of the supremacy of the individual is the exception anthropologically to the ethnographic rule, where the self in the other dominates the fundamental cultural categories of participation and of social belonging. Those are my main reflections. I'm grateful for the opportunity to listen and to learn, thank you.

Pierpaolo Donati: What I want to say is that there is the issue of the recognition of fraternity. I mean, Stefano, you rightly said that fraternity is innate naturally in people, there is an innate sense of fraternity in humanity, among people, and on the other hand, almost all the speakers said that that fraternity comes from above, in the sense that we are brothers and sisters because we have a common Father. All is right, I mean there is an innate sense, a natural sense of fraternity, as well as an ontological reality of fraternity, of being brothers and sisters.

Now the question that I think is very relevant is the recognition of this reality, how people come to recognize that there is an ontological fraternity and the consequences of that fact, so the problem is the conditions for this recognition, which conditions we need: are they linked to a religious faith or can they be social and natural, I would say, come from people in a natural way? That is the issue. In order to recognize fraternity, do we need a religious faith or is it a question of mere human recog-

nition between people? This is the problem of the relationship between nature and the supernatural, in the face of which we need a relational theory that is capable of connecting them and at the same time distinguishing them.

Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo: I agree this is a real question and we can say that the meaning, and more precisely, the goal, of fraternity is to be happy. According to the Gospel, the way to achieve this happiness is through the Beatitudes. All those who aspire to happiness and fraternity, should do so following the Beatitudes and Matthew 25, as Pope Francis says, which is the protocol by which we will be judged, and is, at the same time, the concretion of the Beatitudes.

Of course, not all people can have the grace of the sacraments, but they can have the grace of Christ, which, as everybody knows, is not tied to the sacraments. Therefore, in this sense, all those who follow the Beatitudes are brothers and sisters, not only because they belong to the same human species with the same DNA as homo sapiens, but also because they have the same Father as Jesus Christ, our older brother. In this sense we can say that the whole of humanity is Jesus Christ's sibling, in act or in potency (according to Aristotle for the being), because all are called to this fraternity in the implementation of the Beatitudes. Nevertheless, my problem is that since the Church has always maintained the need for sacramental grace to cure and elevate human fraternity, as we can see in particular in the sacrament of marriage, according to St Thomas Aquinas, it is possible to extend the grace of the sacrament of marriage as a kind of web that extends beyond the marriage itself to all the relationships of fraternity that seek this happiness.

Roland Minnerath: It is very important to ask whether fraternity is made for all human beings: of course it is, because God does not propose something which is not yet inscribed in our

nature; but, as we are sinners, we prefer to leave it aside and do something else. So the important thing is the question raised by Bishop Sánchez Sorondo, the question of grace. It is obvious that living in a spirit of fraternity needs the grace of Christ, because it goes beyond my natural inclination to be egocentric and to follow my own interests, so Christ's grace is given beyond the boundaries of the Church. This is very important and Vatican II has stressed this question that the Holy Spirit may act in the heart of people who are able precisely to overcomes their own selfishness and to give up their life for something good for others. This is imitating Christ, in a way, and even if they do not know where it comes from, this capacity to love people for their own sake comes from the Holy Spirit, and so it is a grace of Christ.

Rocco Buttiglione: I think we should connect fraternity and brotherhood. I agree that you can separate them conceptually, but brotherhood, the biological fact of brotherhood, is a calling to fraternity. I am a father of four and a grandfather of twelve, and a cornerstone of education is to help children understand what it means to be brothers and sisters. It is not naturally given. And in this education – well, there are many factors, an infinite number of factors, but in the end it all depends on the grace of God. I used to say to my wife "well, the most important thing that we can do for them when they are more than 20 years old – until 20 years old, you have a certain control of the situation – after 20 years, the only thing you can do is to pray to the Holy Virgin that the grace of God helps them". I think we see this in the family. In the family you create the capacity for fraternity but I think it can be expanded to the whole of mankind. Of course, all human civilizations are an attempt to force a fraternity and nevertheless in this attempt you always find an element of indetermination. Will it succeed? It may not succeed. And not only of indetermination: there is a mixture of demoniac ele-

ments in all civilizations. There is a wonderful book by Cardinal Daniélou on the mystery of the salvation of nations and he says there is an original revelation of God to Noah, and those religious are good, because they derive from the original revelation and promise of God to Noah, but they are also corrupted by the Devil and this is the reason why we need Jesus Christ to bring them back to the truth.

Rodrigo Guerra López: Thank you, I would like to go back to the problem of recognition that was stated at the beginning of this dialogue, recognition of brotherhood. Is it truly necessary to recognize that we come from God, that we have a common father? I would say the answer is yes from a "quoad se" point of view. There is a metaphysical and a theological source of brotherhood in the very condition of God as Father. However, the problem of recognition is a problem of knowledge, it's a problem of practical knowledge. Paul Ricœur has written a beautiful paper on the topic on the recognition of the other, on the recognition of the dignity of the other, and I would say that Wojtyła and Hildebrand have also made important reflections on a very peculiar problem of knowledge that is called "value blindness". There are some habits that we can acquire that eclipse our capacity for recognizing the other as a brother united by a common dignity. So I would say, even though the theological and metaphysical source of fraternity is God the Father, the problem of recognition is a "quoad nos" challenge, mainly based on some habits and some cultural elements that sometimes eclipse the recognition of the other, mainly when the other is deformed by poverty, or deformed in his or her shape by sin, by sickness, by different sources of pain in our lives. I would say that somehow *Fratelli Tutti* invites us to overcome this value blindness. This overcoming is mainly based, of course, on grace, but also on our natural capacity to transcend appearances and focus in depth in the intrinsic dignity of the other.

Pierpaolo Donati: I want to add something about the last intervention by Rodrigo. I think that in Ricœur, recognition is exactly the recognition of the Other, of the face of the Other, of the dignity of the Other, but there is no relationship in between Ego and Alter. Now, fraternity is a relationship, and we need to recognize not only the Other as myself (Soi-même comme un autre, Ricœur says), but the relationship which links me and you.

Now, in Ricœur there is no relationship, as well as in Lévinas. They both say that there is no social relationship between them properly, that the social is something alien, strange in respect to the two people who look at each other in some way, so there is the need for a culture which can recognize that relationship. To recognize the relationship of fraternity, nature understood only as built into the human person is not enough, is not sufficient; you need a culture which can help people recognize the relational content, the relational quality and the causal properties of a fraternity as a relationship, so Ricœur is not enough. We need social sciences capable of accounting for the socialization processes that lead to the recognition and management of social relationships such as fraternity, starting from the family up to the relationships between peoples.

Stefano Zamagni: Well, I think there is a point of clarification deriving from Aristotle himself between sociality and sociability. Aristotle writes that sociality is recognition of the existence of the other, that is what Lévinas and Ricœur do. Sociability means the need that I have to stay in relation with you and the need that you have to stay in relation with me. The point is that most people confuse sociality with sociability, I don't know why, because they are completely different concepts. I can say, look, I recognize that you exist, and you are there, but I never want to interact with you, I never want to spend an evening talking to you, and that is what makes the difference, I agree, between the line of thought of Lévinas etc. Of course, we know the reasons why they say so, but it is proper not to confuse the two things.

Helen Alford: I want to just come back to the first presentation and some of the other things, also something you said, Stefano, about fraternity as a social principle, because I think we've got a number of overlapping things here, especially between Benedict and Francis: we've got the idea of reciprocity, we've got the idea of gratuitousness and now we've got fraternity as well. I'm wondering whether we could relate them better. You know, before I would have thought that we had solidarity with gratuitousness, that solidarity was a sort of general principle, gratuitousness or maybe reciprocity. Now it's more fraternity and I'm wondering whether we could get confusion amongst people if we don't sort of clarify what these words mean and what the overlap is between them. I don't think it's all that clear in what we said, so I'm just interested what other people think about that.

Stefano Zamagni: You are right, but you see, the point is that solidarity can be impersonal. When I give money to the poor in Africa, for instance, I am solidarious with them, but I never interact, perhaps I don't even know the face of those receiving my donation.

On the other hand, reciprocity presupposes the knowledge of the face of the other, with whom I interact. In other words, the difference is between establishing impersonal links or personal links. It is true that solidarity is much easier, because provided that you are, relatively speaking, generous, everybody gives an offer, a donation, etc, but to establish interpersonal relations, that is the real problem. That is the difference between donation and gift. Donation is something which is donated, it is an object; gift is an interpersonal relation, which is much more difficult.

Paolo Carozza: I would just like to say one sentence of gratitude for everybody, it's been a privilege to just sit back and listen to all these wonderful papers and be educated, without having to do any work by myself, it's the perfect situation, and welcome also

to our new colleagues at the Academy that I've not had a chance to interact with yet in this context – it's wonderful to have you here. Secondly, we, the Academy, are organizing, in conjunction with the University of Notre Dame, a conference for this fall, in October, on inequality and the reconstruction of the common good and it promises to be very substantive and very engaging, so I hope that all of you will choose to participate, at least remotely, if you can't come and be there in person.