Real Love Chases Away Fear, Greed and Slavery: Young Leaders Must Pave the Way

The future of our globalized world is in the hands of the young. We need to trust them. As a continuation of the November 2014 workshop on *Young People Against Prostitution and Human Trafficking*, one year later we are again issuing an invitation to them to take part in a workshop on raising awareness of the global emergency that is modern slavery. Our intention is to produce a handbook to be distributed among young people throughout the world, explaining the different forms of modern slavery and how youth can play a significant role in the global efforts to end it. Moreover, we intend to determine a clear strategy for the development of a global network of young people 'on the ground', in order to get the word out and to become a point of reference for agencies and institutions fighting this cause throughout the world.

We are inspired by the new encyclical *Laudato si'* where it says:

Learning to accept our body, to care for it and to respect its fullest meaning, is an essential element of any genuine human ecology. Also, valuing one's own body in its femininity or masculinity is necessary if I am going to be able to recognize myself in an encounter with someone who is different. In this way we can joyfully accept the specific gifts of another man or woman, the work of God the Creator, and find mutual enrichment. (§ 155) .

With the Pope several other religious and socio-political leaders have made appeals to our conscience, which we must not let fall on deaf ears. First of all, the representatives of the world's most influential religions who met at the Casina Pio IV on 2 December 2014, determined that:

In the eyes of God each human being, whether girl, boy, woman or man, is a free person, and is destined to exist for the good of all in equality and fraternity. Modern slavery, in terms of human trafficking, forced labour, prostitution, organ trafficking, and any relationship that fails to respect the fundamental conviction that all people are equal and have the same freedom and dignity, is a crime against humanity.

Furthermore on 1 August 2015 the United Nations established the following in Target 8.7 of the *Sustainable Development Goals*:

Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

This means that for the 193 UN member states these resolutions are a new imperative.

Likewise the mayors from the most influential cities, brought together by the Pontifical Academies of Sciences and Social Sciences on 21 July 2015, undersigned the following resolutions:

We also pledge to put an end to abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of modern slavery, which are crimes against humanity, including forced labour and prostitution, organ trafficking and domestic servitude. In addition, we commit ourselves to developing national resettlement and reintegration programs that will avoid the involuntary repatriation of trafficked persons.

Humanity is reacting progressively in the face of this tragedy, which involves more than 30 million people, with a new form of intergenerational and intra-generational solidarity. Young people are being called to reinforce this awareness and to communicate it to their generation and to the future ones, mindful that the road is made by walking.

+ Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo
Bishop Chancellor
www.pas.va
www.pass.va

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