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DELLE GIORNATE CATTOLICHE SOCIALI EUROPEE

L'EUROPA OLTRE LA PANDEMIA: UN NUOVO INIZIO

***“Fraternità umana e Cura del Creato, unica Via per uno Sviluppo integrale”***

***The Concept of Integral Development:***

In his encyclical letter, *Populorum progression* (1967), Pope Paul VI did not only teach that “*development is the new name of peace*”, he went on to identify “*integral development as the path to peace*” (76). *Integral Development* for the pontiff meant a “wholesome or a holistic development” of the human person, namely, the development of all dimensions of the human person (social, economic, political, spiritual, cultural, personal etc.) and of all persons of every age. He wrote, “*What we hold important is man, each man and each group of men, and we even include the whole of humanity*” (Paul VI, PP, 14). Development is not limited to material growth. It is about the development of each person, the whole person and all peoples.

Three decades later, Pope Benedict XVI expanded the concept of *development* into an “*integral human development*” and rooted it in God's love for humanity and humanity's love for each other in his encyclical letter, *Caritas in veritate* (2009). He wrote: “*Love in truth - caritas in veritate is the principal driving force behind the authentic development of every person and of all humanity. Love — “caritas” — is an extraordinary force which leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace*”. Thus, between the Pope who opened Vatican Council II and the Pope who closed it, an idea about the ***development & flourishing of the human person*** is born, which subsequent Popes developed to feed into the teaching about ***Integral Human Development*** by Pope Francis (*Laudato si* and *Fratelli tutti*). In *Laudato si* (13), therefore, Pope Francis does not address just a “*concern to bring the whole human family together to seek and to generate a sustainable and integral development*”, his dream is to promote the development of the entire person, the development of all people (14), while caring for the earth (115). For, “*development takes place by attending to the inestimable goods of justice, peace and the care of creation*” (Motu Proprio, 17/08/2016).

In the Social Teaching of the Church, then, the classic understanding of ‘integral and authentic development’, is rooted in a ***relational anthropology*** and in the ***inter-connectedness*** and the ***inter-relatedness of all things***. Accordingly, the human person is created to coexist with others and to pursue the common good aiming, at an ***inclusive wellbeing***.

*Integral (human) development* then, is

- ❖ ***holistic*** (not restricted to economic growth)
- ❖ ***for all people, Inclusive***; For, the nature of authentic development requires that “*Either all the nations participate, or it will not be true development*” (SRS, 17)
- ❖ ***about the whole human person*** (not just his/her material dimension)

- ❖ *offers feasible models of social integration* (does not foment inequality)
- ❖ *comprises the care for the environment* (it is not just a “natural resource” for material growth)
- ❖ *the path for peace* among people (not another cause for violence and destruction)
- ❖ *the path to what is the good and makes human person/life flourish, which is the vocation of the human family.*

Clearly, *integral development* is promoted by the basic characteristic of the human person, as a *relational being (relational anthropology)*: in relationship with one another in the communion of *fraternity* and in relationship with creation, both in the common vocation of praise of God (according to St. Francis of Assisi), and in the charge of “*tilling and to keeping*” the earth. These are expressions of the themes of *Human Fraternity* and *Care of Creation*, which the two encyclical letters: *Laudato si* and *Fratelli tutti* take up.

### ***Human Fraternity and the Care of Creation as Path to Integral Development:***

When, at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Millennium, *Globalization* and globalized structures became the common experience of life, Pope Benedict XVI observed that although “*the truth of globalization as a process and its fundamental ethical criterion are given by the unity of the human family and its development towards what is good* (42), it has succeeded only to make us neighbours. It has not yet made us “brothers” (19); for the latter requires *charity*, that love of God that “*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*” (Civ., 2). It is rooted in our common *filiation* (children of God) in Christ, who is the *firstborn of the many brothers* we are.

Accordingly, our common *filiation* in Christ which makes us brothers (and sisters) invites us not only to promote “a sustained commitment to *promote a person-based and community-oriented cultural process of world-wide integration that is open to transcendence*” (42). It also challenges us to know the unity and true dignity of all men and to use everything that is not God only insofar as it brings us closer to Him (CCC. 42).

Concretely,

- the sharing in a common *filiation* of the Churches in Europe prescribes for the Churches and their faithful a deep sense of their human *fraternity*: their common origin in Christ and their communion as members of the one *Church-family of God*, and their dependence on and *care for God’s creation*,
- the common *filiation* enjoins on the Church a respect of the dignity of all people and a commitment to promoting their common good,
- in *solidarity*, the Churches assume responsibility for the wellbeing (integral development) of one another; and where necessary, grant help (*subsidiarity*) to weaker members to contribute to the development of each member of the Churches and all the Churches.

At its core the Churches in Europe must be the seedbed of that piety which is and becomes a storehouse of values that offers people answers of Christian wisdom to the great questions of life. This wisdom is a Christian humanism that radically affirms the dignity of every person as a child of God,

establishes a basic fraternity, teaches people to encounter nature and understand work, provides reasons for joy and humor even in the midst of a very hard life. (cf. CCC., 1676)