

3rd Catholic European Social Days, Bratislava, Slovakia

Ecological Transition workshop takeaways (March 20th 2022)

General remarks

- Quality of the interventions – the interconnection between the speakers – but also between the issues raised during these days. The connection between the social and ecological transition, as well as the digital transition (where we source the materials). We see how these issues are being driven by our lifestyles and way of living here in Europe. We can address these questions in an integral way.
- Quality of discussions within the workshops: synodal – listening – learning – growing – and moving together.
- Situations vary from country to country – but there are good examples, and this is an opportunity to act together and learn from each other
- The urgency of the crisis but the hope, the faith, and the solidarity that must guide the reflection and the actions
- The social and ecological transitions must go hand in hand
- Justice must be core to any transition
- Change will require personal conversion and transformation – but also responsibility and action from policy makers and business (society at large). It will take a global and concerted effort

Challenges and questions

- The gap between the urgency of the crisis – and our ambitions and goals – and the reality of what we can achieve – or the limits of the current policies in place. The change will not happen fast enough as things stand right now.
- Conflicting interests: financial, power and influence (political), personal vs collective (common good), war, priorities – short term vs long term.
- Sense of powerlessness, anxiety, fear
- Rich, wealthy countries have benefitted from the current scheme – and overconsume. Now we must do our part – and “pay”, sacrifice, reduce, to allow for less wealthy countries to have well-being and more comfort and security.
- Climate migration: how will we respond?

- Lack of understanding and common view on how human life relates to other life on this planet – diverging theologies and approaches. How do we fit into Creation and what is our responsibility? Is it changing? (Biodiversity)
- War: how does it change things? Priorities of policy? How can we make the connections clear between the impacts of war on the environment and the common destructive behavior at the root of ecological crisis and armed threat to human lives: integral development, integral ecology

What the Church can do:

1. **Teach – Educate – spread the message** – network – reach out – dialogue: There is a need for truth and transparency, about the science and about the human impact – the social impacts. Understanding of the urgency and the implications. Connecting between social and ecological justice. Frame the messages around what we will gain – better life for all. Frugality – Simplicity – Sufficiency
2. **Accompany – support**: change is difficult, can be painful. It requires faith, hope, and sacrifice sometimes. It requires community and collective intelligence. There is so much fear and uncertainty (war, energy crisis, food crisis). We can change out of love, rather than fear. This is a personal journey of change but also a society transformation.
3. **Be prophetic** as Church: Base action and example on social teachings and values. Share best practices within the church. Model the transformation – be coherent. Root this transition and conversion in our values. Justice, social and ecological, solidarity – global – social and intergenerational. Be inspired and inspire from our faith. Sacrifice and sharing, fair dialogue and responsibility.
4. **Advocate**: for changes in economic and financial policies – demand ambition, social justice, accountability and transparency from decision-makers. Push for changes at national level and all levels of power – based on our messages, aligned with our values. We need a new economy (Economy of Francesco).
 - a. Divest, reduction of our consumption and waste, ecological agriculture, renewable energy, reduce consumption of energy, alternative sustainable transportation, solidarity economy, water use, etc...
5. **Concrete action – a symbol, a sign of commitment**

JUSTICE – RESPONSIBILITY – LOVE – SACRIFICE – GOOD LIFE – COMMON GOOD - SOLIDARITY