



## **SOLIDARITY IN A GLOBAL WORLD: REASONS FOR HOPE**

### ***FOURTH INTERNATIONAL VEDOVATO SEMINAR***

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#### **Introduction:**

To be considering the geopolitics of solidarity in our fragmented and crisis-ridden world is a courageous act of faith, and I am honoured to be invited to contribute as the keynoter for this International Congress on the very relevant topic of “The Geopolitics of Solidarity” in honour of Senator Giuseppe Vedovato on his 99<sup>th</sup> birthday. I speak in the name of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace which, like the Church herself, exists “universally” in order to bring the Gospel and serve God’s people in every corner of the globe.

Nearly 50 years ago, the Ecumenical Council Vatican II published its decree on Ecumenism with the suggestive title, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, “the restoration of unity.” A fragmented Christianity is clearly contrary to the wishes of the Founder who prayed that “all may be one” (Jn 17:21). Responding to the scandal, this decree of Vatican II makes a clarion call for Christian unity and presents guidelines for praying and working towards it.<sup>1</sup>

At another fundamental level, a similar call to *unitatis redintegratio* of the globe our home is greatly needed and would be very welcome. This level encompasses everything created during all six days of Creation. Here *unitatis redintegratio* would call for the restoration of the brotherhood of humankind which is variously broken up, despite having a common fatherhood and so being rooted in a common origin. It would also call for respect for the integrity of all creation or, in other words, both environmental and human ecology.

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<sup>1</sup> “[M]oved by a desire for the restoration of unity among all the followers of Christ, [the Sacred Council] wishes to set before all Catholics the ways and means by which they too can respond to this grace and to this divine call” (Vatican II, *Unitatis Redintegratio* (1964), § 1).

In the case of a fragmented humanity and of a divided Christian family, *unitatis redintegratio* would call for the restoration of that unity or integrity which has long been violated by sinful human conduct but which belongs to both realities – humanity, Christianity – from their respective beginnings.

I have borrowed the expression *unitatis redintegratio* in order

- ◆ To identify my theme as humanity and creation deprived of their original essential qualities of brotherhood and integrity; and
- ◆ To present the virtue of solidarity, as Pope John Paul II describes it, and its pursuit in a globalizing world as working for the restoration of the unity and integrity of “man and his world” to use the celebrated expression of Antoine Saint-Exupéry.<sup>2</sup>

In what follows, then, I shall briefly explore the roots of solidarity in the mission of the Church and then, with reference to the Scriptures, Catholic Social Doctrine and the Liturgy of Ordination, explore *solidarity* in the life of God’s people, and how its pastoral implementation gives reason for hope.

### ***The Virtue of Solidarity:***

Thus we understand our theme, “solidarity in a context of globalization,” within the broad framework of salvation history including the triune God, creation, fall, the Christ event, the Church, and eschatological fulfilment.

In her life and mission, the Church has always understood herself *both as response* to the divine call to gather humanity into the *one body of Christ* in one sheepfold with one shepherd *and as means* for doing so. Our term *redintegratio* points toward this mission of reuniting humanity and healing it of division and renewing it in Christ. The Church has traditionally carried out this challenging task in various pastoral and missionary endeavours and expressed this self-understanding in theological disciplines of ecclesiology and missiology.

In addition, the Church has recently begun to employ language first developed in the world of labour unions and reflected-upon in thought-forms borrowed from the social sciences. Here emerges the new image and term “solidarity” under which the Church now pursues her traditional ecclesial mission of restoring humanity which, created one by God, was divided by sin and is being re-created – redeemed – in Christ. Solidarity bespeaks the on-going re-discovery of our belonging together, in radical inter-dependence, having a common weal and being co-responsible for it: we *are*, in other words, one another’s brother and keeper.

The context is rapidly-industrializing society with its burgeoning economies based on trade in raw materials and manufactured goods. On the one hand, liberal capitalism so exalted the individual’s interests and options over and above our common humanity as practically to discard all responsibility for others. The like-minded (and the similarly privileged) tended to cluster around similar preferences, displacing the often demanding interpersonal ties found not only in family, community and religion, but also in the workplace, in organizations and

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<sup>2</sup> “Man and his world” is the translation of the title *Terre des hommes* (1942).

even in society. Such liberalism puts all the stress on the individual to the point, in fact, of dehumanizing him. There was, needless to say, no room for solidarity.

On the other hand, an opposing reaction was provoked by such extremes, not only of theory but especially of suffering on the part of the labouring poor, and this opposition is 19<sup>th</sup>-century collectivism or communism. If excessive individualism tended to dehumanize, collectivism subordinated everyone to the *collective will* of the party and state. What passed for solidarity was a drab, dominative and state-imposed uniformity, where relationships and responsibilities were established by “social contracts”. Having no room to act in freedom and show personal responsibility, personal morality was reduced to compliance with stern duty and law.

In the face of these contrasting worldviews, for about a century, the Church has been using the term “solidarity” in her social doctrine to denote “common interests uniting a group or a nation” or even humanity, and to “differentiate Catholic social theory from the modern theories of liberalism and communism.”<sup>3</sup> Underlying or upholding the notion of solidarity are the Church’s traditional views of the human person as essentially social and of society as organic and cooperative. This twofold conviction eventually became expressed as every human person’s basic *vocation to solidarity*. Thus Blessed John Paul II calls solidarity a virtue, a moral and social attitude, “a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.”<sup>4</sup> *Redintegratio unitatis* appeals to this notion of solidarity in Catholic social teaching and to the family life that needs to be at its root. Thus solidarity is very much in consonance with the nature and understanding of the Church especially as family of God.

### ***The Church as Family of God:***

This expression was proposed by the African Synod in 1994 to underline the *brotherliness* and the *belongingness* of all members of the Church. Blessed John Paul II subsequently invited the world community also to consider itself as a family. Recognizing that, in the process of globalization, development and peace depend on the ability of persons and peoples to reduce imbalances and establish bonds of solidarity, the Pope asked the international community to see itself as family of nations. For

the idea of family immediately evokes something more than simple functional relations or a mere convergence of interests. The family is by nature a community based on mutual trust, mutual support and sincere respect. In an authentic family, the strong do not dominate; instead the weaker members, because of their weakness, are all the more welcomed and served.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The term *solidarity* got introduced into the Catholic social vocabulary via the works of Catholic social theorists like H. Pesch, G. Gundlach and O. von Nell-Breuning. Cf. Matthew L. Lamb, “Solidarity,” in Judith A. Dwyer, ed., *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, Collegeville, Minnesota, USA: Liturgical Press, 1994, pp. 908-912.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987), § 38.

<sup>5</sup> John Paul II, *Address to the 50th United Nations General Assembly*, 1995, § 14.

Solidarity must therefore play its part in the realization of this divine plan on the levels of both persons and of national and international communities; for it is God who, by reason of our creation and redemption in Christ, calls us to solidarity: a life of interconnectedness and interdependence.

### ***Solidarity in a Global World:***

Let us now see how *unitatis redintegratio* and solidarity are lived out in the Church on mission to the modern global world. For example, a Catholic deacon is ordained as a minister of the word, of the altar and of charity, and the Church's *diakonia* into which he is ordained embraces Catholic Social Doctrine and its practice. The rite of ordination concludes with the Bishop presenting the Book of the Gospels to the new deacon, saying: "Believe what you read. Teach what you believe. Practice what you teach." With this triple exhortation, the rite highlights that the deacon will find in the Scriptures the inspiration to study, pray, preach and minister. These words, at once comforting and challenging, point to how in pastoral practice the Scriptures and Tradition, including the Social Teaching of the Church, actually become reasons for hope in a global world.

### ***"Believe what you read":***

In the history of the pilgrim people of God, we find many instances of solidarity; and for our reflection I want to offer some biblical passages to stress the point that it is God who places before us the reality of being one people rather than divided nations, so that we might realize our interconnectedness. In the Hebrew Scriptures we find some very important cautions and affirmations concerning the stranger and warnings about what distances us from others.

God says: "You shall not oppress or afflict a resident alien, for you were once aliens residing in the land of Egypt" (Ex 20:20). "You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; you shall love the alien as yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the Lord, am your God" (Lev 19:34).

These exhortations favour understanding the whole rather than just the parts, entertaining unity rather than suspicion and overcoming rather than announcing our differences.

For, more deeply, the whole cannot survive if a member is missing. "So Miriam was confined outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not start out again until she was brought back" (Num 12:15). Until someone ostracized has rejoined the community and so reunited the group, the group does not function. The presence of the other betters and indeed constitutes the group.

As a condition for development, people must overcome their differences. This realization challenges families, communities, religious affiliations, nations large or small towards that effective unity which Catholic Social Teaching calls solidarity, and only genuine solidarity is sufficiently robust to confront the persistent problems, whether local, regional or international, which bedevil man and his world. Addressing this issue, Catholic Social Doctrine calls us to *inter-dependence*.

It is above all a question of interdependence, sensed as a system determining relationships in the contemporary world, in its economic, cultural, political and religious elements, and accepted as a moral category. When interdependence becomes recognized in this way, the correlative response as a moral and social attitude, as a “virtue,” is solidarity.<sup>6</sup>

Interdependence is not something humanly fashioned but rather “built-into” us as children of God, for it is He who fashioned our human nature to be interdependent and shaped our lives to be lived in solidarity with our brothers and sisters.

But interdependence or solidarity are not one truth off by itself. *Believe what you read* involves the *whole* graced event of an act of faith. It means to open oneself affectively and spiritually to what always comes first: God’s initiative of grace. More cognitively, then, the struggle becomes to understand what is happening in the acts of faith by becoming clearer on God’s design and especially the One in whom one believes: Jesus Christ ... and discovering how to put these beliefs into action.

So, amidst the temptations to divisiveness, if we correctly grasp the human nature God created us in and which His Son redeemed – if, in other words, *we believe what we read* – we would seize the call to our family unity and solidarity with others as necessary parts of God’s design.

**“Teach what you believe”:**

Good teaching comes from what we believe, and what we believe is Jesus Christ, the truth of the world. Not because of our power but because of His power are we able to underscore His desire for the world. Truth, therefore, becomes our mode of teaching.

What does it mean to teach? It means to proclaim in the very way the risen Christ mandates his disciples: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to everyone” (Mk 16:15). To fulfil this mandate, we must understand “everyone” as intrinsically interrelated, not as isolated or, worse, in competition with or hostile towards one another. Teaching the Gospel leads to *unitatis redintegratio*, restoring fraternal and solidary unity in the human race.

Teaching means accepting the implicit mandate to understand the other, and this includes understanding the needs of the other:

In fact, it would appear that needs are best understood and satisfied by people who are closest to them and who act as neighbours to those in need. It should be added that certain kinds of demands often call for a response which is not simply material but which is capable of perceiving the deeper human need.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987), § 38.

<sup>7</sup> John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus* (1991), § 48.

First comes the religious impulse: Christians are preferentially drawn to the poor as a locus where Christ crucified continues to suffer. Out of nearness comes learning to understand the needs of those who suffer because of their insufficient integration into the society and cultures around them. Here it is that solidarity becomes a virtue, an asset and advantage in making the needs of others our own.

In today's global context, Pope Paul VI further specifies the method of teaching what we believe, namely, to get everyone talking about the message which one has been given to communicate:

Dialogue, therefore, is a recognized method of the apostolate. It is a way of making spiritual contact. It should however have the following characteristics:

- 1) Clarity before all else; the dialogue demands that what is said should be intelligible. We can think of it as a kind of thought transfusion. It is an invitation to the exercise and development of the highest spiritual and mental powers a man possesses. This fact alone would suffice to make such dialogue rank among the greatest manifestations of human activity and culture. In order to satisfy this first requirement, all of us who feel the spur of the apostolate should examine closely the kind of speech we use. Is it easy to understand? Can it be grasped by ordinary people? Is it current idiom?
- 2) Our dialogue must be accompanied by that meekness which Christ bade us learn from Himself: "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Mt 11:29). It would indeed be a disgrace if our dialogue were marked by arrogance, the use of bared words or offensive bitterness. What gives it its authority is the fact that it affirms the truth, shares with others the gifts of charity, is itself an example of virtue, avoids peremptory language, makes no demands. It is peaceful, has no use for extreme methods, is patient under contradiction and inclines towards generosity.
- 3) Confidence is also necessary; confidence not only in the power of one's own words, but also in the good will of both parties to the dialogue. Hence dialogue promotes intimacy and friendship on both sides. It unites them in a mutual adherence to the Good, and thus excludes all self-seeking.
- 4) Finally, the prudence of a teacher who is most careful to make allowances for the psychological and moral circumstances of his hearer (Mt 7:6), particularly if he is a child, unprepared, suspicious or hostile. The person who speaks is always at pains to learn the sensitivities of his audience, and if reason demands it, he adapts himself and the manner of his presentation to the susceptibilities and the degree of intelligence of his hearers.

In a dialogue conducted with this kind of foresight, truth is wedded to charity and understanding to love.<sup>8</sup>

To teach what you believe, then, is to apply the qualities of dialogue – clarity, meekness, confidence and prudence – to the ministry of teaching Jesus Christ and him made flesh, crucified and risen.<sup>9</sup>

**“Practice what you teach”:**

The third and final instruction, “practice what you teach,” might seem to imply that Christian ministry goes in only one direction, from “read” through “believe” to “preach”. But a deeper understanding of practice includes a receiving that can enrich our reading of scripture, our understanding of the faith and how we teach it.

This more complex comprehension requires the first step of the method of the Social Doctrine of the Church.

The exposition of the Church's social doctrine is meant to suggest a systematic approach for finding solutions to problems, so that discernment, judgment and decisions will correspond to reality, and so that solidarity and hope will have a greater impact on the complexities of current “situations”.<sup>10</sup>

Pope John XXII adopted the method developed by Fr. Joseph-Léon Cardijn, later Cardinal, and gave it formal recognition in *Mater et Magistra*:

There are three stages which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice. First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgment on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles. These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: look, judge, act.<sup>11</sup>

Expanding on this much-appreciated approach, Bernard Lonergan S.J. urges attentiveness both to empirical reality and to context. “See, understand, judge and act,” he would say: “Be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible”<sup>12</sup> or, as the ordaining Bishop exhorts: “Practice what you teach.”

Truth needs to be sought, found and expressed within the ‘economy’ of charity, but charity in its turn needs to be understood, confirmed and practised in the light of truth. In this way, not only do we do a service to charity enlightened by truth, but we also

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<sup>8</sup> Paul VI, *Ecclesiam Suam* (1964), §§ 81-82.

<sup>9</sup> Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead (Acts 4:10); Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Cor 2:2).

<sup>10</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004, § 9.

<sup>11</sup> John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra* (1961), § 236.

<sup>12</sup> Bernard J.F. Lonergan S.J., *Method in Theology*, New York: Herder and Herder, 1972, ch. 14.

help give credibility to truth, demonstrating its persuasive and authenticating power in the practical setting of social living.<sup>13</sup>

So the final step of practicing what we preach is incarnational: the truth of love is expressed in concrete action for the other. This is the bond we call *solidarity*. It is to the practice of this truth that we are called.

Pope Benedict speaks about the neighbour by elaborating on the parable of the Good Samaritan:

Until that time [of Jesus], the concept of ‘neighbour’ was understood as referring essentially to one’s countrymen and to foreigners who had settled in the land of Israel; in other words, to the closely-knit community of a single country or people. This limit is now abolished. Anyone who needs me, and whom I can help, is my neighbour. The concept of “neighbour” is now universalized, yet it remains concrete.<sup>14</sup>

It is a globally valid concept which constantly needs to be put into practice locally.

The well-known question is posed to Jesus: “And who is my neighbour?” Jesus gives an incarnational response which weds belief, proclamation and practice. In this parable the focus shifts from the person suffering to the one called to act with mercy toward the other, the stranger, the family member, the student, the immigrant, and so forth. And what is proclaimed for our practice is the principle of practicing mercy in local arenas and to a global world. This formalizes our bond of solidarity.

The programme of the Good Samaritan, the programme of Jesus, is “a heart which sees”.<sup>15</sup> The turning-point<sup>16</sup> is found in compassion, it is the experience of “to suffer with,” and like mercy, *miser cordia*, compassion is both Divine and human. Thus our hope is, first, to be faithful to God, and second, to recognize Christ in those we meet and to treat them, which is to say Him, with compassion. This twofold hope links our hearts to the Heart of our Lord and involves us in the coming of the Kingdom of God.

This is the charity which the Church seeks to practice throughout the world. Blessed John Paul II lays out the approach and method of Christian charity:

Faithful to the mission received from Christ her Founder, the Church has always been present and active among the needy, offering them material assistance in ways that neither humiliate nor reduce them to mere objects of assistance, but which help them to escape their precarious situation by promoting their dignity as persons. With heartfelt gratitude to God it must be pointed out that active charity has never ceased to be practised in the Church; indeed, today it is showing a manifold and gratifying increase. In this regard, special mention must be made of *volunteer work*, which the

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<sup>13</sup> Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, § 2.

<sup>14</sup> Benedict XVI, *Deus caritas est* (2005), § 15.

<sup>15</sup> Benedict XVI, *Deus caritas est* (2005), § 31.

<sup>16</sup> Card. Carlo Maria Martini, *Farsi prossimo*, 1986.



Church favours and promotes by urging everyone to cooperate in supporting and encouraging its undertakings.”<sup>17</sup>

During the early persecutions, members of the Christian communities were deeply involved in providing social services. Once the persecutions of Christians ended, the Church used its new freedom to influence society:

The spirit of Christian charity and devoted self-sacrifice which had once so impressed the pagan world was by no means dead. Rather, the needs of the times called forth new efforts in the service of Christian charity. History records innumerable examples of practical works of mercy. The Church was a social power in the declining culture of those days. The bishops were obliged to substitute for a corrupt and decrepit officialdom: to assume the duties of public welfare servants; to supply the needy and suffering with food, clothing and shelter; and in many instances, even to organize the defence of cities... The relief of the poor, the care of slaves, of prisoners and of travellers became their concern. A part of the Church's income was set aside to aid the poor. In large cities such as Constantinople and Antioch, the Church's work among the poor was to a great extent highly organized. There arose many institutions for the relief of every human need: hospitals, poor houses, orphanages, foundling homes, shelters for travellers, etc., which had been entirely unknown in pre-Christian times.<sup>18</sup>

Throughout history, in response to its nature and mission, the Church has always considered service to the poor and the needy as one of its essential tasks. With a renewed vigour in our own time, the Church learns to exercise a preferential love or option, as learned from her Founder. For centuries, at various stages in the development of societies, the Church has inspired and sustained an incredibly large network of institutions and organizations, which have been to a large extent the precursors and foundations of today's social services or programmes of public assistance. And the Church continues to solicit and channel the goodwill, talent and resources of its members in that direction, mindful that her King chose to identify himself with the needy, the thirsty, the hungry, the homeless, and the oppressed: “As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me” but “as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me” (Mt 25: 40,45). This close and constant proximity to the poor and suffering of the world has made the Church “an expert in humanity” as Pope VI so well expressed it addressing the United Nations in 1965.<sup>19</sup> Examples include the Church's excellent pastoral approach to people infected with HIV, ill with AIDS, affected by HIV/AIDS or at risk; the Church's accompaniment of displaced, refugees, undocumented; promotion and defence of *dalit* (“untouchables”) in India; educational, medical and social services to under-served or abandoned populations in rural Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the poorest areas of the developed world, too.

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<sup>17</sup> John Paul II, *Centessimus Annus* (1991), § 49.

<sup>18</sup> Karl Bihlmeyer, *Church History*, Westminster: Newman Press, 1968, vol. 1, p. 373.

<sup>19</sup> Pope Paul VI, Discourse to the United Nations General Assembly, 1965 (original in French).

Thus, the sequence we are following begins with the Gospel message which gives rise to religious conversion which in turn impels towards charity. The impulse of charity matures in understanding and practice through the Social Teaching of the Church, now interpreted in each time, applied in each place, of our globalizing world.

The Church “further teaches that a hope related to the end of time does not diminish the importance of intervening duties but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives.”<sup>20</sup> When I work toward this goal, my belief touches reality and is incarnational.

This hope cannot be some ideal wish for the future or some work which I rely on others to fulfil. Rather, it is each one’s personal challenge, which each one must acknowledge and embrace. It is the duty of each and every one of us, to embrace these possibilities in the real world and to work to transform our global world. Our solidarity will show that this better world is possible. Our solidarity will make manifest that when God’s mercy touches us, together we can build a new world based on His love. We believe what we read, we teach what we believe and we practice what we teach.

With this “complexified” sense of the three-fold exhortation to *diakonia*, let us look at some examples of trying to improve or increase global solidarity.

### ***Concrete Reasons for Hope:***

Activities, organizations and movements, which bring people together to work for some component of the common good, generate solidarity and become concrete signs of hope. Let me mention several examples:

One example could well be the *Note* which the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace published in October 2010, *Towards reforming the international financial and monetary systems in the context of global public authority*.<sup>21</sup> The *Note* elaborates § 67 of *Caritas in veritate*, applying the principle of solidarity to human activities which, very much affecting the common good, need to be guided by human moral choices – indeed, by solidarity – and not by allegedly blind – in the sense of impartial – market forces.

A second example could be the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in June 2012. Its two themes are (a) a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and (b) the institutional framework for sustainable development. Several Permanent Observers and dicasteries or departments of the Holy See are contributing to the intricate negotiations leading to an outcome document or international agreement. Moreover many members and leaders of the Church, in various

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<sup>20</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), § 21.

<sup>21</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Towards reforming the international financial and monetary systems in the context of global public authority*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011.

capacities, will be attending the Conference to learn, to dialogue, to lobby for greater global solidarity.

A third and related example is in the field of sustainable energy – for the fact that energy is not equally available, accessible and sustainable throughout the world really damages the possibility of sustainable development. Energy scarcity and financial operations related to energy are making worse the problem of hunger in several countries. Energy resources and energy transport are triggers of political and military instability and of conflicts in several countries, having consequences at regional level and affecting global stability. Energy production and consumption are affecting environment, climate, economies and societies, challenging our ability to achieve development and to ground a sustainable future. At the same time, breakthroughs in science and subsequent progress in technology

In the spirit of *The Note* and with a view to Rio+20, the Holy Father reminds us that *protection of the environment, of resources and of the climate, require all international leaders to act jointly and to show a readiness to work in good faith, respecting the law, and promoting solidarity with the weakest regions of the planet.*<sup>22</sup> Energy requires responsibility so that hope for a better future and confidence in human dignity and capacity for good may never be extinguished. *This responsibility is a global one, for it is concerned not just with energy but with the whole of creation, which must not be bequeathed to future generations depleted of its resources*<sup>23</sup>. Along these lines, the Pontifical Council is reflecting in the light of Catholic Social Doctrine on the linked theme of a green economy and sustainable energy, which are definitely matters of justice, genuine and integral development, and enduring peace.

The three examples show how, for the pilgrim Church on earth and for every Christian, there is a special call of the Spirit to become committed decisively and generously so that the many dynamics underway will be channelled towards better prospects of unity and the common good or, in other words, both environmental and human ecology. An immense amount of work is to be done – and it can only be done together – towards the integral development of all peoples and of every person. This is a mission that is both social and spiritual, which “to the extent that the former can contribute to the better ordering of human society, it is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God.”<sup>24</sup>

## **Conclusion:**

We began seeking reasons for hope by hearing Vatican II’s call to restore unity wherever broken:

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<sup>22</sup> Benedict XVI, Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, New York, 2008.

<sup>23</sup> Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate* (2009), § 50

<sup>24</sup> *Towards reforming...*, p. 39, quoting Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), § 39.

What has revealed the love of God among us is that the Father has sent into the world His only-begotten Son, so that, being made man, he might by His redemption give new life to the entire human race and unify it.<sup>25</sup>

On this basis, it is the family of man and the whole family of nations which must heed the urgent imperative of solidarity. Both unity and solidarity are based on the basic truth of our creation as children of the same Father and as members of the one global household. Now unity and solidarity are actively taken up by the Church Family of God as social doctrine, pastoral challenges and manifold ministry.

Our context is now decisively globalization. In this history we are living, God's grace at work may contribute to building a better world. Here,

the Church's primary responsibility is to proclaim and embody the religious values that are constitutive of Christian faith ... the mission of the Church in the context of a rapidly changing globalized world operates primarily through what we have described as the healing vector of the scale of values, mediating the essential ingredient of grace to people, to cultures and to social structures so that evil is overcome and life and love permeate the world.<sup>26</sup>

During the Ordination liturgy, when entrusting the Gospels to each new Deacon, having exhorted him to "believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach," the Bishop concludes this moment of the ceremony by praying: "May God who has begun this good work in you bring it to fulfilment."

And so too I conclude by praying that God give you the gifts of believing what you read, teaching what you believe and practicing what you teach. May all this be done with hope and May God generously bring these good things to fulfilment in you and all of His people.

Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson  
Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace

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<sup>25</sup> Vatican II, *Unitatis Redintegratio* (1964), § 2.

<sup>26</sup> Neil Ormerod and Shane Clifton, *Globalization and the Mission of the Church*, London: T & T Clark, 2009, p. 167.