

The Cycle of Truth and Love: An Elucidation of the Encyclical “Caritas in Veritate”

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Foreword

Let us start with a question. Is it “Caritas in Veritate” (the Encyclical) or “Veritas in Caritate” (Eph 4:15)? Both expressions are acceptable, because both are saying that love and truth are simultaneously necessary and indispensable. Just reading the compendia or commentaries to this encyclical does not suffice to get a feeling for its authenticity and force. One must carefully and patiently finish reading the whole text that consists of 79 numbered paragraphs to realize that this encyclical points precisely to the ills of the time, and is a fitting document to give direction to the globalization presently taking place in the world.

Truth and charity are not two optional choices, but go in cycles, one complementing the other — it has always been so since ancient times. From the Bible, Ephesians 4:15-16, mentioned above, is an obvious example. Another example is a famous line of St. Augustine: “Oh, the perpetual truth, the true love, and the eternity of love!” Besides truth and love, St. Augustine added the word “eternity”. God is the eternal truth and the eternal love. It is only when one obtains that perpetual truth and eternal love from God that one can be satisfied.

The writer of this encyclical, Pope Benedict XVI, is a scholar with a great love for the Bible as well as for the writings of St. Augustine. This is the background of Pope Benedict’s third encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, which is based on and inspired by

the Bible and that Church Father. From his position as Pope, he reviewed the social teachings of the previous Popes over the last hundred years, and formulated the basic elements of this encyclical.

Caritas in Veritate (2009) aims to compare the traditions of the Church with the complex conditions of today's world in a situation of globalization, in order to find the right direction for the Church and humanity to go. Thus this encyclical is more complicated than the previous two (*Deus Caritas Est*, 2005 and *Spe Salvi*, 2007). This encyclical is divided into six parts: (1) The Message of *Populorum Progressio*, (2) Human Development in Our Time, (3) Fraternity, Economic Development and Civil Society, (4) The Development of People, Rights and Duties, and the Environment, (5) The Cooperation of the Human Family, and (6) The Development of Peoples and Technology. It is difficult to explain in detail a document of this length. Thus it may be better to highlight some of the more inspiring points. What follows are extracts from the encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, which was issued on 29 June 2009.

[The numbers in brackets below correspond to the paragraph numbers in this encyclical.]

Introduction, nos. 1-9

These nine numbers clarify step by step the two key words of the encyclical, namely "charity" and "truth".

(1) "Charity in truth", to which Jesus Christ bore witness by his earthly life and especially by his death and resurrection, is the principal driving force behind the "authentic development" of every person and of all humanity. It is a force that has its origin in God, Eternal Love and Absolute Truth. To defend the truth, to articulate it with humility and conviction, and to bear witness to it in life are therefore indispensable forms of charity. The search for love and truth are the vocation planted by God in the heart and mind of every human person.

(2) Charity is at the heart of the Church's social teaching. 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). Everything has its origin in God's love, everything is shaped by it, everything is directed towards it. Love is God's greatest gift to humanity, it is his promise and our hope. Pope Benedict XVI is aware of the ways in which charity has been, and continues to be, misconstrued. Hence the need to link charity with truth not only in the sequence, mentioned by St. Paul, of "veritas in caritate" (Eph 4:15), but also the inverse and complementary sequence of "caritas in veritate". Truth needs to be sought, found and expressed within charity, but charity in its turn needs to be understood, confirmed and practised in the light of truth.

(3) Truth is the light that gives meaning and value to charity. That light is both the light of reason and the light of faith. Without truth, charity degenerates into sentimentality. 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.

(4) Because it is filled with truth, charity can be understood in the abundance of its values, and can be shared and communicated. Truth, in fact, is "logos" which creates diá-logos, and hence communication and communion. Truth, by enabling men and women to let go of their subjective opinions and impressions, allows them to move beyond cultural and historical limitations and to come together in the assessment of the value and substance of things. Truth opens and unites our minds in the "lógos of love": this is the Christian proclamation and the testimony of charity. In the present social and cultural context, where there is a widespread tendency to relativize "truth", practising charity in truth helps people to understand that adhering to the values of Christianity is not merely useful but essential for building a good society and for true integral human development. A Christianity of charity without

truth no longer has any real place for God in the world. Without truth, charity is confined to a narrow field, devoid of relationships. It is excluded from the plans and processes of promoting human development of a universal nature, in a dialogue between knowledge and praxis.

(5) Charity is love received and given. It is a “grace” (cháris). Its source is God. As the objects of God’s love, 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.

This dynamic of charity received and given is what gives rise to the Church’s social teaching, which is “**caritas in veritate**” in **re sociali**: the proclamation of the truth of Christ’s love in society. This doctrine is a service to charity, but its locus is truth. Without truth, without trust and love for what is true, there is no social conscience and responsibility, and social action ends up serving private interests and the logic of power, resulting in social fragmentation, especially in a globalized society experiencing difficult times, like at the present time.

(6) “Caritas in veritate” is the principle around which the Church’s social doctrine turns, a principle that takes on practical form in the criteria that govern moral action. Two of these are of special relevance to the commitment to development in an increasingly globalized society: **justice and the common good**.

Charity goes beyond justice, because to love is to give what is “mine” to the other; but it never lacks justice, which prompts us to give to the other what is “his”. On the one hand, charity demands justice: recognition and respect for the legitimate rights of individuals and peoples. On the other hand, charity transcends justice and completes it in the logic of giving and forgiving. 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. It also gives the theological and salvific value to all commitments for justice in the world.

(7) Another important consideration is the common good. It is a good that is sought not for its own sake, but for the people who belong to the social community and who can only really and effectively pursue their good within it. To desire the common good, and to strive to achieve it, is a requirement of justice and charity. Every Christian is called to practise this charity. When animated by charity, commitment to the common good has greater worth than a merely secular and political stand would have; it contributes to the building of the universal city of God, which is the goal of the history of the human family.

(8) In 1967, when Pope Paul VI issued the encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, he illuminated the great theme of the development of peoples with the splendour of truth and the gentle light of Christ's charity. He taught that life in Christ is the first and principal factor of development, and he entrusted to us the task of travelling the path of development with all our heart and intelligence. It is to be a "development of the whole man and of all men", leading to a progress "from less human conditions to those which are more human".

Forty years after that encyclical's publication, Pope Benedict XVI wished to follow the teachings of Pope Paul VI on integral human development, and apply them to the present moment. This continual application to contemporary circumstances began with the encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, with which Pope John Paul II chose to mark the twentieth anniversary (1987) of the publication of *Populorum Progressio*. Until that time, only *Rerum Novarum* (1891) had been commemorated in this way (with the promulgation of *Quadragesimo Anno* in 1931). Since 1987, a further twenty years have passed, and Pope Benedict XVI expresses his conviction that

Populorum Progressio deserves to be considered “the *Rerum Novarum* of the present age”.

(9) Love in truth — *caritas in veritate* — is a great challenge for the Church in a world that is becoming progressively and pervasively globalized. The risk for our time is that the *de facto* interdependence of peoples and nations is not matched by an ethical interaction of consciences and minds that would give rise to truly human development. Only in charity, illumined by the light of reason and faith, is it possible to pursue development goals that possess a more humane and humanizing value.

The Church does not have technical solutions to offer and does not claim “to interfere in any way in the politics of States.” She does, however, have a mission of truth to accomplish, in every time and circumstance, for a society that is attuned to man, and to his dignity and vocation. Without truth, it is easy to fall into an empiricist and sceptical view of life, incapable of rising to the level of praxis because of a lack of interest in grasping the values — sometimes even the meanings — with which to judge and direct it. For this reason, the Church searches for truth, and proclaims it tirelessly. Her social doctrine is a particular dimension of this proclamation: it is a service to the truth, which sets us free.

Chapter One: The Message of *Populorum Progressio*

Populorum Progressio, which Pope Paul VI promulgated more than forty years ago in 1967, with its message of charity and truth, is still valid today. Considering the issue of development, one should first of all begin with the Tradition of the apostolic faith, a patrimony both ancient and new, outside of which *Populorum Progressio* would be a document without roots, and issues concerning development would be reduced to merely sociological data (10). The publication of *Populorum Progressio* occurred immediately after the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, indicating its close connection to the Council. It set out, from this

background, to convey two important truths. The first is that the whole Church is engaged in promoting integral human development. The second truth is that authentic human development concerns the whole person in every single dimension. It should not be enclosed within history, but should have the perspective of eternal life; otherwise, humanity loses the courage to be at the service of higher goods. People cannot develop through their own powers alone. They need God (11).

The link between *Populorum Progressio* and the Second Vatican Council does not mean that Paul VI's social magisterium marked a break with that of previous popes, one pre-conciliar and one post-conciliar. On the contrary, there is a single teaching, built on the foundation handed on by the apostles to the Fathers of the Church, and then further explored by the great Christian doctors. (12).

Populorum Progressio is closely connected to the overall magisterium of Pope Paul VI. He underlined the indispensable importance of the Gospel for building a society according to freedom and justice, animated by love. He clearly understood that the social question had become worldwide, and he grasped the interconnection between the impetus towards the unification of humanity and the Christian ideal of a single family of peoples united in solidarity and fraternity. In the notion of development, he proposed Christian charity as the principal force at the service of development (13). Paul VI considered that idealizing technical progress, or contemplating the utopia of a return to humanity's original natural state, are two contrasting ways of detaching progress from its moral evaluation and hence from our responsibility (14).

Two further documents by Paul VI without any direct link to social doctrine — the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (1968) and the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) — are highly important for delineating the fully human meaning of the development that the Church proposes (15). In *Populorum Progressio*, Paul VI taught that progress is a vocation, a call from

God (16). A vocation is a call that requires a free and responsible answer. The types of messianism always build their case on a denial of the transcendent dimension of development, in the conviction that it lies entirely at their disposal. This false security becomes a weakness, because it involves reducing man to subservience, while the humility of those who accept a vocation is transformed into true autonomy, because it sets them free (17).

Besides requiring freedom, integral human development also demands respect for its truth. Paul VI said that the essential quality of authentic development must be integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every man and of the whole man. In promoting development, the Christian faith does not rely on privilege or positions of power, nor even on the merits of Christians, but only on Christ (18). Finally, the vision of development as a vocation brings with it the central place of charity within that development. Paul VI, in *Populorum Progressio*, pointed out that the causes of underdevelopment are not primarily of the material order, but in forgetting that all people are brothers and sisters belonging to one human family. Christ, our elder brother, gathers us into one big family. It is Christ's charity that drives us on: "*caritas Christi urget nos*" [the love of Christ overwhelms us] (2 Cor 5:14) (20).

Chapter Two: Human Development in Our Time

The economic, social, and political concerns that Paul VI raised some forty years ago have only worsened in the world today. When profit becomes the exclusive goal, produced by improper means and without the common good as its ultimate end, things no longer work. The recent economic crisis thus becomes an opportunity for discernment, in which to shape a new vision for the future (21). Today the picture of development has many overlapping layers. The actors and the causes in both underdevelopment and development are manifold. The world's wealth is growing in absolute terms, but inequalities are on the increase. Corruption and illegality are unfortunately evident in rich

countries as well as in poor ones. On the part of rich countries, there is excessive zeal for protecting knowledge through an unduly rigid assertion of the right to intellectual property (22). Many areas of the globe today have evolved considerably, but economically and technologically only. The collapse of the economic and political systems of the Eastern European bloc in 1991, after the events of 1989, still leave behind many problems that need to be solved (23). Today, economic and social development have gone beyond national boundaries, so it is not easy for governments to control the situation. It seems more realistic to re-evaluate the role and power of the government, and to establish new forms of international authority and of peoples' solidarity (24).

From the social point of view, systems of protection and welfare are finding it hard, and could find it even harder in the future, to pursue their goals. The global market has prompted new forms of competition. Even the workers' associations feel powerless. The mobility of labour has certain positive aspects, but it can also create instability in life plans and may even lead to situations of human decline (25). On the cultural plane, interaction between cultures has increased significantly. The increased commercialization of cultural exchange today leads to a twofold danger. The first is a cultural eclecticism that is often uncritically accepted. This easily yields to a relativism that does not serve true intercultural dialogue. Secondly, there is the opposite danger of cultural leveling and indiscriminate acceptance of certain types of conduct and life-styles. What eclecticism and cultural leveling have in common is the separation of culture from human nature. When this happens, humanity runs new risks of enslavement and manipulation (26). Life in many poor countries is still extremely insecure as a consequence of food and water shortages. In this aspect, international organizations still have much room for improvement (27).

One of the most striking aspects of development in the present day is the important question of "respect for life". Abortion and demographic control are regarded as parts of

development, and are often promoted by their respective governments. In fact, openness to life is at the centre of true development (28). The denial of the right to religious freedom hinders development. (29). Interaction at the different levels of human knowledge are required to promote the authentic development of peoples. Knowledge must be “seasoned” with the “salt” of charity. Deeds without knowledge are blind, and knowledge without love is sterile (30). This means that moral evaluation and scientific research must go hand in hand. Charity allows various disciplines (faith, theology, metaphysics, and science) to come together in a collaborative effort (31).

The significant new elements involved in the development of peoples today urgently demand new solutions. Charity will enable remarkable convergences and possible solutions to come to light. With the systemic increase of social inequality, the economy also suffers. This happens through the progressive erosion of “social capital,” that is, the network of relationships of trust, dependability, and respect for rules, all of which are indispensable for any form of civil coexistence. Lowering the level of protection accorded to the rights of workers, or abandoning mechanisms of wealth redistribution, hinder the achievement of lasting development. The earth’s state of ecological health, and the cultural and moral crises of man, demand further and deeper reflection on the meaning of the economy and of its goals (32).

More than forty years after *Populorum Progressio*, its basic theme, namely progress, remains an open question, made all the more acute and urgent by the current economic and financial crisis. It is significant that some of the causes of this situation were identified in *Populorum Progressio*, especially the explosion of worldwide interdependence, commonly known as globalization, began to emerge at that time. It is advancing at ferocious pace today. It is critical that we have the guidance of charity in truth, to create a “civilization of love” (33).

Chapter Three: Fraternity, Economic Development and Civil Society

“Charity in truth” places man before the astonishing experience of gift. As a consequence of original sin, man has forgotten all of this. In the list of areas where the pernicious effects of sin are evident, the economy has been included for some time now. The conviction that the economy must be autonomous, that it must be shielded from influences of a moral character, has led man to abuse the economic process in a thoroughly destructive way. (34).

The market is subject to the principles of so-called “commutative justice”, which regulates the relations of giving and receiving between parties to a transaction. But the social doctrine of the Church has unceasingly highlighted the importance of “distributive justice” and “social justice” for the market economy. If the market is governed solely by the principle of the equivalence in value of exchanged goods, it cannot produce the social cohesion that it requires in order to function well. (35). Economic activity cannot solve all social problems through the simple application of commercial logic. This needs to be directed towards the pursuit of the common good, for which the political community in particular must also take responsibility. In commercial relationships the principle of gratuitousness and the logic of gift as an expression of fraternity can and must find their place within normal economic activity. It is a demand both of charity and of truth (36).

The Church’s social doctrine has always maintained that justice must be applied to every phase of economic activity. The economy in the global era seems to give a place of privilege to contractual exchange, which regulates relations of exchange between goods of equivalent value. But directly or indirectly it also demonstrates its need for political logic and the logic of the unconditional gift, both of which are not based on equivalent exchange (37). In *Centesimus Annus* Pope John Paul II spoke of the need for a system with three subjects: the market, the State and civil

society. Charity in truth requires that shape and structure be given to those types of economic initiative which, without rejecting profit, aim at a higher goal beyond the mere logic of the exchange of equivalents, and of profit as an end in itself (38).

Populorum Progressio called for the creation of a model of market economy capable of including within its range all peoples, and not just the better off. *Rerum Novarum* had written this somewhat ahead of its time. Today it is evidently insufficient to satisfy the demands of a fully humane economy. Law by itself cannot establish the market of gratuitousness. Only individuals and civil society based on solidarity can do this (39). Today's international economic scene, marked by grave deviations and failures, is almost exclusively answerable to its investors, thereby limiting its social value. Labour and technical knowledge are universal goods. Yet it is not right to export these things merely for the sake of obtaining advantageous conditions (40). The continuing hegemony of the binary model of market-plus-State has accustomed us to think only in terms of private business on the one hand, and the State on the other. In reality, business has to be understood in an articulated way. Business activity has a human significance, prior to its professional one. "Political authority" also involves a wide range of values, which must not be overlooked in the process of constructing a new order of economic productivity, socially responsible and human in scale (41).

Globalization is neither good nor bad. We should not be its victims, but rather its protagonists, acting in the light of reason, and guided by charity and truth. If badly directed, it could even trigger a global crisis (42).

Chapter Four: The Development of People, Rights and Duties, The Environment

Many people today are only concerned about their rights, but not their responsibilities. People appeal for the utmost respect for their rights, but the basic rights of many others remain

unacknowledged, or are even violated in much of the world. If the only basis for human rights is to be found in the deliberations of an assembly of citizens, those rights can be changed at any time. The sharing of reciprocal duties is a more powerful incentive to action than the mere assertion of rights (43). To consider population increase as the primary cause of underdevelopment is mistaken. In economically developed countries, the signs of crisis are observable in societies that are registering an alarming decline in their birth rates. Due attention must obviously be given to responsible procreation. (44).

The economy needs ethics to function correctly, ethics, which are both human and just. They are the standards, which emphasize the inviolable dignity of the human person and the transcendent value of natural moral norms (45). The traditional distinction between profit-based companies and non-profit organizations can no longer reflect reality. Today, there is a broad new composite reality, which embraces the public and private spheres. It does not exclude profit, but instead considers it as a means for achieving human and social ends (46).

This type of enterprise should also be pursued in those countries that are excluded or marginalized from the influential circles of the global economy. In development programmes, the principle of the centrality of the human person, as the subject primarily responsible for development, must be preserved. The people who benefit from development ought to be directly involved in its planning and implementation. At times it happens that expensive bureaucracies consume an excessively high percentage of funds intended for development. Hence all international agencies and non-governmental organizations should be transparent (47).

Development is closely related to our relationship with the natural environment. The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole. God has given it to us as the setting for life (48).

Questions linked to the environment today need to give due consideration to the energy problem. The fact that some States, power groups and companies hoard non-renewable energy resources represents a grave obstacle to development in poor countries. The stockpiling of natural resources, which in many cases are found in the poor countries themselves, gives rise to exploitation and frequent conflicts between and within nations. These conflicts are often fought on the soil of those same countries, with a heavy toll of death and destruction. The technologically advanced societies can and must lower their domestic energy consumption (49). This responsibility regarding energy is a global one, concerned with the whole of creation, which must not be bequeathed to future generations, who may face a world depleted of resources (50). The way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself, and vice versa. This invites contemporary society to make a serious review of its life-style, which is prone to hedonism and consumerism. The Church has a responsibility towards creation and she must assert this responsibility in the public sphere. The decisive issue is the overall moral tenor of society (5). Truth and love cannot be produced: they can only be received as gifts. Their ultimate source is not, and cannot be, mankind, but only God. The God whom we believe and love, is himself Truth and Love (52).

Chapter Five: The Cooperation of the Human Family

One of the deepest forms of poverty a person can experience is isolation. If we look closely at different kinds of poverty, we see that they arise from isolation, from a lack of love, or from difficulties in being able to love. Poverty is often produced by a rejection of God's love, and by man's basic and tragic tendency to close in upon himself. Today humanity appears much more interactive than in the past: this shared sense of being close to one another must be transformed into true communion. The development of peoples depends, above all, on a recognition that

the human race is a single family. The human family does not submerge the identities of individuals, peoples and cultures, but makes them more transparent to each other and links them more closely in their legitimate diversity (53). This perspective is illuminated by the relationship between the Persons of the Trinity. The Trinity is absolute unity insofar as the three divine Persons are pure relationality. The Church is a sign and instrument of this unity (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. Other cultures and religions teach brotherhood and peace. Some religious and cultural attitudes, however, do not fully embrace the principle of love and truth. They do not oblige men and women to live in communion, but rather cut them off from one another as each searches for one's own well-being. Religious syncretism can give rise to separation and disengagement. One possible negative effect of the process of globalization is the tendency to favour this kind of syncretism. Religious freedom does not mean religious indifferentism, nor does it imply that all religions are equal. Discernment is needed. Such discernment has to be based on the criterion of charity and truth. (55).

Religions can offer their contribution to development only if God has a place in the public realm, specifically in regard to its cultural, social, economic, and particularly its political dimensions. Reason always stands in need of being purified by faith, while religion always needs to be purified by reason in order to show its authentically human face (56). Fruitful dialogue between faith and reason can render the work of charity more effective within society, and it constitutes the most appropriate framework for promoting fraternal collaboration between believers and non-believers in their shared commitment to working for the justice and peace of the human family. A particular manifestation of charity between believers and non-believers is undoubtedly the principle of subsidiarity (57).

The principle of subsidiarity must remain closely linked to the principle of solidarity and vice versa, since the former without the latter gives way to social privatism, while the latter without the former gives way to paternalistic social assistance that is demeaning to those in need. This general rule must also be taken broadly into consideration when addressing issues concerning international development aid, lest people are locked into a state of dependence and even foster situations of localized oppression and exploitation in the receiving country. Indeed, the most valuable resources in countries receiving development aid are human resources. Herein lies the real capital that needs to accumulate in order to guarantee a truly autonomous future for the poorest countries (58). Cooperation for development must not be concerned exclusively with the economic dimension. Cooperation offers a wonderful opportunity for an encounter between cultures and peoples. Poor and rich countries alike, if they fail to take account of their own or others' cultural identities, or the human values that shape them, they cannot enter into meaningful dialogue. Technologically advanced societies must remember the virtues that have made it possible for them to flourish throughout their history (59).

In search for solutions to the current economic crisis, development aid for poor countries must be considered a valid means of creating wealth for all. What aid programme is there that can hold out such significant growth prospects — even from the point of view of the world economy — as the support of populations that are still in the initial or early phases of economic development? In this way, it is actually possible to improve social services and welfare programmes, and at the same time to save resources by eliminating waste and also by being less bureaucratic. One possible approach to development aid would be to apply effectively what is known as fiscal subsidiarity, allowing citizens to decide how to allocate a portion of the taxes they pay to the State to foreign aid (60). Greater solidarity at the international level is seen especially in the ongoing promotion of greater access to education, which refers not only to vocational training, but also to the

complete formation of the person. An example is international tourism, which can be a major factor in economic development and cultural growth, but can also become an occasion for exploitation and moral degradation, as in the case of sexual tourism (61).

Another aspect of integral human development is migration. This is a striking phenomenon because of the sheer numbers of people involved, the social, economic, political, cultural and religious problems it raises, and the dramatic challenges it poses to nations and to the international community (62). Another problem is the direct link between poverty and unemployment. Regarding this, Pope John Paul II, in 2000, issued an appeal for “a global coalition in favour of ‘decent work’” (63). While reflecting on the theme of work, it is appropriate to recall how important it is that labour unions, which have always been encouraged and supported by the Church, should be open to the new perspectives that are emerging in the role of work. Examples of these are the conflicts between workers and consumers, distinctions between the respective roles and functions of trade unions and politics, and defending labour especially on behalf of exploited and unrepresented workers (64).

Finance, therefore, through the renewed structures and operating methods that have to be designed after their misuse, now needs to go back to being an instrument directed towards improved wealth creation and development. If love is wise, it can find ways of working in accordance with provident and just expediency, as is illustrated by much of the experience of credit unions and micro-finance. This can help to avoid usury (65). Global interconnectedness has led to the emergence of a new political power, that of consumers and their associations. This is a phenomenon that contains positive elements to be encouraged as well as excesses to be avoided. It is good for people to realize that purchasing is always a moral, and not simply economic, act (66).

In the face of the unrelenting growth of global interdependence, recession is global as well. There is need for a reform of the United Nations Organization, and likewise of

economic institutions and international finance, so that the concept of the family of nations can acquire real teeth. One also senses the urgent need to find innovative ways of implementing the principle of the responsibility to protect and of giving poorer nations an effective voice in shared decision-making. This seems necessary in order to arrive at a political, juridical and economic order which can increase and give direction to international cooperation for the development of all peoples in solidarity. For this, there is urgent need of a true world political authority, as Pope John XXIII indicated in the 20th century (67).

Chapter Six: The Development of Peoples and Technology

The development of peoples is intimately linked to the development of individuals. The development in question is not simply the result of natural mechanisms, since we are all capable of making free and responsible choices. Our freedom is profoundly shaped by our being, and by its limitations. Not only are other persons outside our control, but each one of us is outside his or her own control. A person's development is compromised, if he claims to be solely responsible for producing what he becomes. The development of peoples is just the same (68). The challenge of development today is closely linked to technological progress. Technology is a profoundly human reality, linked to the autonomy and freedom of man. In technology we express and confirm the hegemony of the spirit over matter (69).

Technological development can give rise to the idea that technology is self-sufficient when too much attention is given to the "how" questions, and not enough to the many "why" questions underlying human activity. Produced through human creativity as a tool of personal freedom, technology can be understood as a manifestation of absolute freedom, the freedom that seeks to prescind from the limits inherent in things. The process of globalization could replace ideologies with technology, allowing the latter to become an ideological power that threatens to confine

us within an *a priori* that holds us back from encountering being and truth. Hence the pressing need for formation in an ethically responsible use of technology. Moving beyond the fascination that technology exerts, we must re-appropriate the true meaning of freedom, which is not an intoxication with total autonomy, but a response to the call of being, beginning with our own personal being (70).

This deviation from solid humanistic principles that a technical mindset can produce is seen today in certain technological applications in the fields of development and peace. Often the development of peoples is considered a matter of financial engineering, the freeing up of markets, the removal of tariffs, investment in production, and institutional reforms — in other words, a purely technical matter. Development will never be fully guaranteed through automatic or impersonal forces. Development is impossible without upright men and women, without financiers and politicians whose consciences are finely attuned to the requirements of the common good. When technology is allowed to take over, the result is confusion between ends and means, such that the sole criterion for action in business is thought to be the maximization of profit, in politics the consolidation of power, and in science the findings of research. The flow of technological know-how increases, but it is those in possession of it who benefit, while the peoples who live in its shadow remain unchanged. For them there is little chance of emancipation (71).

Even peace can run the risk of being considered a technical product, merely the outcome of agreements between governments or of initiatives aimed at ensuring effective economic aid. All this is necessary, but if such efforts are to have lasting effect, they must be based on values rooted in the truth of human life. One must align oneself with the many individuals deeply committed to bringing peoples together and to facilitating development on the basis of love and mutual understanding. (72). Linked to technological development is the increasingly pervasive presence of the means of social communications. It seems quite absurd to maintain that they

are neutral. Given the media's significance in affecting what the human person sees and hears, we must reflect carefully on its influence, especially in regard to the ethical-cultural dimension of globalization and the development of peoples in solidarity. Thus the main aim of the media should be to promote the dignity of persons and peoples. It needs to be clearly inspired by charity and placed at the service of truth (73).

A particularly crucial battleground in today's cultural struggle between the supremacy of technology and human moral responsibility is the field of "bioethics", where the very possibility of integral human development is radically called into question. The fundamental question, which asserts itself forcefully is: is man the product of his own labours or does he depend on God? We are presented with a clear either/or decision. Faced with these dramatic questions, reason and faith can come to each other's assistance. Only together can they save man. Entranced by an exclusive reliance on technology, reason without faith is doomed to flounder in an illusion of its "own omnipotence". Faith without reason risks being cut off from everyday life (74).

Today the social question has become a radically anthropological question, in the sense that it concerns not just how life is conceived but also how it is manipulated. This happens when bio-technology places life increasingly under man's control. *In vitro* fertilization, embryo research, the possibility of manufacturing clones and human hybrids: all this is now emerging and being promoted in today's highly disillusioned culture, which believes it has mastered every mystery, because the origin of life is now within its grasp. Yet we must not underestimate the disturbing scenarios that threaten our future, or the powerful new instruments that the "culture of death" has at its disposal — abortion, systematic eugenic programming of births, a pro-euthanasia mindset — are a damaging assertion of control over life, that under certain circumstances is deemed no longer worth living. What is astonishing is the arbitrary and selective determination of what to put forward today as worthy of respect. Insignificant matters are

considered shocking, yet unprecedented injustices seem to be widely tolerated (75).

One aspect of the contemporary technological mindset is the tendency to consider the problems and emotions of the interior life from a purely psychological point of view, even to the point of neurological reductionism. In this way man's interiority is emptied of its meaning and gradually our awareness of the human soul's ontological depths is lost. Development must include not just material growth but also spiritual growth, since the human person is a "unity of body and soul", born of God's creative love and destined for eternal life (76).

The supremacy of technology tends to prevent people from recognizing anything that cannot be explained in terms of matter alone. Yet everyone experiences the many immaterial and spiritual dimensions of life. It requires new eyes and a new heart, capable of rising above a materialistic vision of human events, capable of glimpsing in development the "beyond" that technology cannot give. Only so is it possible to pursue the integral human development that takes its direction from the driving force of charity in truth (77).

Conclusion

(78) Without God, man neither knows which way to go, nor even understands who he is. *Populorum Progressio* mentioned that man cannot bring about his own progress unaided, because by himself he cannot establish an authentic humanism. The greatest service to development, then, is a Christian humanism that enkindles charity and takes its lead from truth, accepting both as a lasting gift from God. Openness to God makes us open towards our brothers and sisters and towards an understanding of life as a joyful task to be accomplished in a spirit of solidarity. On the other hand, ideological rejection of God and an atheism of indifference, oblivious to the Creator and at risk of becoming equally oblivious to human values, constitute some of the chief

obstacles to development today. God's love calls us to move beyond the limited and the ephemeral; it gives us the courage to continue seeking and working for the benefit of all.

(79) Development needs Christians with their arms raised towards God in prayer, Christians moved by the knowledge that truth-filled love, *caritas in veritate*, from which authentic development proceeds, is not produced by us, but given to us. For this reason, even in the most difficult and complex times, besides recognizing what is happening, we must above all else turn to God's love. Development requires attention to the spiritual life, a serious consideration of the experiences of trust in God, spiritual fellowship in Christ, reliance upon God's providence and mercy, love and forgiveness, self-denial, acceptance of others, justice and peace. All this is of *man*, because man is the subject of his own existence; and at the same time it is *of God*, because God is at the beginning and the end of all that is good, all that leads to salvation.