

Caritas: love received and given

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Caritas: love received and given

By + Óscar Andrés Cardinal Rodríguez Maradiaga S.D.B.

“Charity is love received and given,” says Pope Benedict XVI in his third, social encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*. With these emblematic words, he refers to the cycle of love and its very origin: God our Father, who created the whole universe. The Pope challenges today’s meritocratic ideology, created and sustained within a neo-liberal culture that demands that everyone must justify their right to respect and recognition, and sometimes to life itself.

Pope Benedict’s pontificate has given prominence to love, in the sense of the Latin *caritas* or Greek *agape*. First we receive, then we are able to give, or can be asked to give back what we have received. “Since God has first loved us (cf. *1 Jn* 4:10), love is now no longer a mere ‘command’; it is the response to the gift of love with which God draws near to us” (*Deus Caritas Est* 1).

Having been its President since 2007, I know that Caritas Internationalis is immensely privileged to be at the heart of the life-giving cycle of love. Throughout its 60 years of service, it has been well aware that its ministry has been much more than the sum total of its efforts. It has been a gift. At the General Assembly in May 2011, we will come together to celebrate this precious gift and thank God for the love He has made grow throughout the 165 organisations around the world that make up the Caritas confederation.

We will look back to December 1951, when 13 member organisations¹ signed the first statutes of the confederation, prepared with the valuable support of Mons. Giovanni Battista Montini, later to become Pope Paul VI. Now, 60 years on, Caritas Internationalis is renewing its Statutes and Internal Rules to adapt them to the signs of the times in today’s world, as well as to the requirements of the Code of Canons of 1973 and the Chirograph *During the Last Supper* (2004).

¹ Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Switzerland, Netherlands, Italy, Canada, Luxembourg, Austria, Portugal, Spain and the USA

In our gatherings and celebrations we will not only look back at our history, but also forward to the future. We will find ourselves deeply enrooted in God's history of salvation, and we will strengthen one another in his or her love and faith. The challenges we are facing are real, and sometimes daunting. In the cultural crisis we are living through, the Holy Father accompanies us again and again. In his interview book *Light of the World*, he concludes: "This makes it all the more important for Catholicism to present its faith in a new and vital way and to re-proclaim it as a force for unity, a force of solidarity and of eternity's openness to time" (p. 114).

These encouraging words inspire our commitment to fight poverty and contribute towards building one human family. According to the spirit and vision of the encyclical *Spe Salvi*: "The true measure of humanity is essentially determined in relationship to suffering and to the sufferer. This holds true both for the individual and for society. A society unable to accept its suffering members and incapable of helping to share their suffering and to bear it inwardly through 'com-compassion' is a cruel and inhuman society" (*Spe Salvi* 38). Caritas has become for so many people a sign of true hope, a sign of God's love for and in this world.

Celebrating *caritas* is celebrating the mystery of faith

Our 60th anniversary is a moment of celebration, a moment of joy and happiness. Caritas' many staff and volunteers around the world are working every day to live out the truth that God's love reaches out to everybody in need. In the name of *caritas*, they bring that good news to all those who are suffering, wherever they may be. In all of these encounters, borders become meaningless and the human family reveals its real face, its real nature: we are all brothers and sisters. This fraternal vision of one human family leads us to actively seek to eliminate poverty from our world.

The practice of *caritas* is far more than the delivery of professional assistance. It also involves formation of the hearts of those who bring aid and emergency relief. In that context, theological reflection opens the minds and hearts of Caritas collaborators, whether they are paid staff members or part of the huge volunteer workforce. I have been present at many meetings at which moments of prayer, and most significantly, the celebration of the mystery of faith, have brought together the praxis of *caritas* and its faith. Caritas is concrete theology in action, a *locus theologicus*.

With this book, I want to share with Caritas workers, and the entire Church, some examples of theological reflection, inspired and led by the need to serve the spiritual thirst and hunger of those serving the poor. Often they feel alone and not understood or supported by their community. They are criticised by authorities, leaders and media. They are exposed to competition and egocentric greed.

We know that the Caritas confederation is a treasure of theological reflection and action, on all levels. Local priests who read the gospel together with their communities, making it speak to the realities of daily life, are one example of this effort. Articles and publications of eminent theologians fill the bookshelves and bedside tables of so many volunteers and collaborators because they inspire their action and strengthen their faith. This book aims simply to add, in the context of the 60th anniversary of Caritas Internationalis and the renewal of its Statutes, what I hope will be some helpful articles about its *raison d'être*.

The essays

The Jesuit priest Etienne Grieu's contribution leads the reader straight into the adventure of God with the human family He created, redeemed in Christ Jesus and accompanied tirelessly in His Holy Spirit. Fr. Grieu discusses who God is and who we are in *caritas*. He pleads for an ethics of resistance against competition and shows how, through open dialogue and the encounter of human persons, we can exist in responsiveness, and thus discover the true destination of men and women. In this anthropological, and at the same time, theological approach, the questions of justice and reconciliation become two radical keys for our journey through history.

The two Dominican Fathers Gustavo Gutiérrez and Timothy Radcliffe illustrate *caritas* at the heart of the Church's life and mission through biblical and doctrinal texts. "*Koinonía*" and "memory" are key concepts for a Christian lifestyle and for *caritas*, in the knowledge that His Kingdom leads human history beyond itself to its complete fulfilment, but at the same time, that it is present in history from now on. This eschatological approach reconciles high expectations and poor reality in the horizon of hope. In this way, it challenges Caritas to steadily surpass itself without putting unbearable burdens on its shoulders. Concrete life-giving gestures, as celebrated in the Eucharist and in the ceremony of the washing of the feet, make incarnate God's love for us in Christ.

A third contribution highlights Caritas as a trademark for God's presence among the poor. Fr. Erny Gillen discusses how God reaches out in our world and history, and how He is open to all people, especially to those in need. Jesus broke down the borders and norms that attempt to separate the righteous from the sinner prior to the end of time. St Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, re-opened the Church of Christ to everybody, without any borders and pre-conditions, apart from accepting and receiving the gift of faith. Caritas, as one of many charitable organisations within the Church and within civil society, opens and re-opens its doors again and again. Its particular presence, where there are disasters and humanitarian crises, is a living sign and witness for God's boundless and irrevocable love.

Maria Clara Bingemer and Fr. Klaus Baumann focus on the sacramental option of Christian life and thus of Caritas. Through baptism, a new community and a new equality are built. The surprising identification of God, through His Son Jesus Christ, with the poor and those in need changes the order of priority and precedence in a Christian vision of the world. The implications of this reversal become tangible in the Sacrament of the Eucharist as Pope Benedict XVI states in *Deus Caritas Est*: "A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented" (*Deus Caritas Est* 14). The option for the poor has to be translated again and again into concrete terms and actions, such as the fight against all types of discrimination and racism.

After these fundamental reflections, four more practical essays follow. These address three concrete issues: 1) leadership within Caritas and the Church; 2) advocacy through concrete development programmes and projects; and 3) theological and ethical criteria implemented within a concrete Caritas organisation. The fourth essay analyses the legal nature of Caritas as a public canonical association.

"Not to be served but to serve" (*Mk* 10:45) is the title of an article by Caritas Internationalis Secretary General Lesley-Anne Knight and Fr. Klaus Baumann. Bringing together modern management theories with a theology of "servant leadership", they develop an original model for leadership and cooperation within *caritas*. "Caritas leaders uncover the potential for growth of the other, and enable the individual and the team to see the horizon ahead."

In his contribution, Mons. Joseph Sayer demonstrates how, through project work in the field of international cooperation, authentic advocacy can be achieved. Apodictically, Jesus declares: "You are the salt of the earth," and "You

are the light of the world". This invitation to live to one's full potential without fear, encourages individual Caritas workers, as well as the organisations of the Church to serve "intelligently, creatively, cooperatively, making use of all our capacities, and above all through trust in the presence of the Holy Spirit in our age in our world today."

Mons. Peter Neher retraces the history of Caritas Germany (*Deutscher Caritasverband*) through the lenses of theological and of ethical criteria, starting with the irresistible will of God to be a friend of the living. Through a ~~threefold~~ concept of justice, sustainability, self-determined participation and empowerment, the domestic and international work of Caritas naturally evolves into a very specific and fraternal cooperation without borders. "Caritas does have a clear profile as a Catholic organisation that performs Church social work."

In the final contribution, Fr. Jean-Paul Durand analyses the international confederation that was created as an evolving legal body in a common effort between 13 member organisations and the Holy See. In 2004, Pope John-Paul II issued the Chirograph entitled *During the last Supper*, which granted "Caritas Internationalis" the necessary means and procedures to fulfil its vocation to act and to speak "*in nomine Ecclesiae*". At every level, from the parishes to the Holy See, the bounds between Caritas and ecclesial authority must be defined. "For its part, among all Christian Churches and other people and institutions of goodwill, the Roman Catholic Church lies at the heart of the relationship between justice and charity, which is a key relationship for Christian faith." The deeper purpose of canon law interventions is to protect the weak, because "between the strong and the weak, it is liberty which oppresses and law that frees" (Lacordaire).

Why Caritas needs and produces theology?

With this book I present some examples of theological reflection in the fields of basic research and applied sciences. The draft new Statutes of Caritas Internationalis make the Theology Commission an integral part of its constitution, along with the two other permanent statutory commissions, Legal Affairs and Finance. The explicit recognition of theology in its institutional work is a major milestone in the history of Caritas. What was previously always present in an implicit way, now becomes integrated as an intrinsic and cross-cutting competence.

In his various encyclicals, Pope Benedict XVI exposes the whole Church to the challenges of a deeper understanding of its diaconal mission, an integral

mission he for the first time officially recognises as an “*opus proprium*” (*Deus Caritas Est* 29). Caritas Internationalis responded to this challenge by following the example of many of its members who had already created spaces for theological reflection within their organisations. Through this theological action, new perspectives opened up. Working with the poor was transformed into an exchange with the poor. Reading the gospel in concrete situations brought justice back into the heart of charitable interventions. “The word of God sheds light on human existence and stirs our conscience to take a deeper look at our lives, in as much as all human history stands under God’s judgment” (*Verbum Domini* 99).

Caritas in Veritate reminds us that *veritas* cannot be claimed as being fully realised in a particular moment, a particular place or a particular body. The ongoing historic dynamic of Christ being the truth (*Jn* 14:6) as a living person invites us to never cease, to never give up, as we take our small steps and carry out our seemingly insignificant acts. The Christian message, including charitable work, is not only “informative” but also “performative”, as the Pope says in *Spe Salvi* (2). Caritas as a moral act must be built anew every day. Just as our moral culture evolves, *caritas* is never simply given or conceived once forever. “Freedom presupposes that in fundamental decisions, every person and every generation is a new beginning” (*Spe Salvi* 24). “What this means is that every generation has the task of engaging anew in the arduous search for the right way to order human affairs; this task is never simply completed. Yet every generation must also make its own contribution to establishing convincing structures of freedom and of good, which can help the following generation as a guideline for the proper use of human freedom; hence, always within human limits, they provide a certain guarantee also for the future. In other words: good structures help, but of themselves they are not enough” (*Spe Salvi*, 25).

The unity of the Caritas confederation has never been more crucial than it is today. When Pope Benedict XVI put forward the charitable expression of the church as its litmus test in our time, he opened at the same time a debate about orthopraxis. This debate has just begun. Caritas and all charitable activities related to the Church are recognised as *de facto* schools of faith and evangelisation. “His Kingdom is not an imaginary hereafter, situated in a future that will never arrive; his Kingdom is present wherever he is loved and wherever his love reaches us. His love alone gives us the possibility of soberly persevering day by day, without ceasing to be spurred on by hope, in a world which by its very

nature is imperfect. His love is at the same time our guarantee of the existence of what we only vaguely sense and which nevertheless, in our deepest self, we await: a life that is ‘truly’ life” (*Spe Salvi* 31).

The Holy Father comforts Caritas, while setting hope as its horizon: “All serious and upright human conduct is hope in action” (*Spe Salvi* 35). He knows that our imperfections are not the bottom line. “Life is like a voyage on the sea of history, often dark and stormy, a voyage in which we watch for the stars that indicate the route. The true stars of our life are the people who have lived good lives. They are lights of hope. Certainly, Jesus Christ is the true light, the sun that has risen above all the shadows of history. But to reach Him we also need lights close by” (*Spe Salvi*, 49).

In our experience with the poor, and together, we learn again and again: “It is never too late to touch the heart of another, nor is it ever in vain” (*Spe Salvi* 49).

Our vision: one human family, zero poverty

By now the theme of the Caritas General Assembly in Rome in May 2011 should be clearer in its deepest sense. To work for zero poverty with the horizon of hope and faith is not an idealistic goal of *realpolitik*. It is our imperative as the “salt of the earth” and “the light of the world”. We cannot accept any system of morality or politics in which the rich exploit the poor. We are committed to a fraternal world (cf. *Caritas in Veritate* 20) in which we live united as brothers and sisters in peace. In the Post-synodal Exhortation *Verbum Domini*, Pope Benedict XVI synthesises the ambiguity in the concept of poverty. “The Church also knows that poverty can exist as a *virtue*, to be cultivated and chosen freely, as so many saints have done. Poverty can likewise exist as *indigence*, often due to injustice or selfishness, marked by hunger and need, and as a source of conflict. In her proclamation of God’s word, the Church knows that a ‘virtuous circle’ must be promoted between the poverty which is *to be chosen* and the poverty which is *to be combated*; we need to rediscover ‘moderation and solidarity, these values of the gospel that are also universal ... This entails decisions marked by justice and moderation’” (*Verbum Domini* 107).

When we pray “Our Father who is in Heaven”, we pray it with the whole human family. The Lord’s prayer became our prayer and it is the prayer of each and every person as brother and sister of one God, and as members of one human family. In this unique prayer we realise our faith and share it universally.

“God’s word inspires men and women to build relationships based on rectitude and justice, and testifies to the great value in God’s eyes of every effort to create a more just and more liveable world. The word of God itself unambiguously denounces injustices and promotes solidarity and equality” (*Verbum Domini* 100).

When we are celebrating the Eucharist to thank God for His gifts and for *caritas* worldwide, especially for our fraternal confederation, we are challenged and strengthened in our purpose, namely “to serve and to be the advocate of the poor and of justice”, as it is so clearly stated in the postscript of our new Statutes. “Precisely because of the mystery (of the Eucharist) we celebrate, we must denounce situations contrary to human dignity, since Christ shed his blood for all, and at the same time affirm the inestimable value of each individual person” (*Sacramentum Caritatis* 89).

Acknowledgments

This book is my humble gift to the whole Caritas Internationalis confederation on the occasion of its 60th anniversary. I’m grateful to the members of the Theology Commission, who have worked hard together to make theology visible and tangible in Caritas’ Statutes and in its General Assembly. I would like to thank the authors for their work and for sharing their thoughts and convictions.

Thanks are also due to Michelle Hough and the General Secretariat Communications Team who assembled all the articles and organised the translations and the production of this book. Three proof-readers went through the texts to ensure consistent quality in all three languages – particularly important in a field where words have to be balanced and carefully chosen. They were Pierre-Yves Materne for the French, Vicente Altaba and Caritas Spain for the Spanish and Lesley-Anne Knight for the English. They all did a great job. Thank you!

Many thanks also to Editions Saint-Paul in Luxembourg who published this book.

Discovering who is God in Caritas

By Etienne Grieu SJ

Is charity, that love of which God is the event itself, a “theological place”? In other words, is it one of the “domains from which theological knowledge may develop its awareness”^{2,3}. Is not any experience of true love an introduction to knowing God? Likewise, surely any theology that is not focused on love is at risk of becoming separated from its source and withering?

These questions serve to emphasise that knowledge of God is not primarily a doctrine, however precisely it might be expressed. Rather it is an encounter, a welcome and a road travelled together in which relations with other people and the relationship with God are closely intertwined.⁴ Thus John was able to write: “Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God” (1 Jn 4:7).

This knowledge of God that consents to His love is present in Christian communities, and in their individual members, in their attitudes to those they meet. This leads to an understanding that charitable commitments and strug-

² Cyrille Michon & Gilbert Narcisse. 1998. *Dictionnaire critique de théologie*. Paris, Puf, 1998.

³ It depends what one means by “theological knowledge”. If it entails systematic compilation of any argued debate that may take place regarding God, then charity has little chance of being accepted as a “theological place”. Indeed, Melchior Cano, the 19th century theologian who came up with this notion, distanced charity, along with the other theological virtues, from the sources of theology. But if, rather than being reduced to a set of arguments, charity aims to present the history of the covenant and the event of salvation and narrates it in consistent language, then not only might one say that Caritas is a theological place, but also the ideal place for initiation into the life in God.

⁴ Here the concept of revelation proposed by the Second Vatican Council is relevant: “This plan of revelation is realised by deeds and words having in inner unity: the deeds wrought by God in the history of salvation manifest and confirm the teaching and realities signified by the words, while the words proclaim the deeds and clarify the mystery contained in them.” (*Dei Verbum*, no. 2).

gles for justice are not just a secondary, peripheral activity for the Church with respect to the heart of faith, but for Christians and communities they are rather an encounter with their Lord. “For the Church, charity is not a kind of welfare activity which could equally well be left to others, but is a part of her nature, an indispensable expression of her very being” (Pope Benedict XVI: *Deus Caritas Est*, 25a).

What special form does this appeal to love those who impart knowledge of God take today? Let me begin with this question, which involves proposing an interpretation of the current context of globalisation. On this basis, one might ask which features of the face of God are highlighted on this occasion. This could lead to the emergence of a way of being in the world.

What are the specific priorities for charity today?

Globalisation enables countless actors to relate to each other. In itself this is not a bad thing – unless the rationale of competition takes centre stage and aims to exclusively regulate such relations, thereby making all the actors involved feel insecure. This raises questions for people regarding their own value, the position they may hold and their usefulness. Some people, the weakest and least efficient, may feel that their reasons for existing in the world are being questioned. It is understandable that people, companies and even regions, countries and entire continents may be anxious about whether they can carry on as individual actors and bearers of a history and a richness that only they can express.

In view of this, it seems to me that charity raises three notable points:

It rejects regulation of human relations in accordance with mere accounting criteria;

It constantly seeks to reach out to those who “don’t count” and who live in the shadow of death – primarily to maintain the bonds of a shared history with them;

It demands the rediscovery of the importance of the bonds which call for life and which keep people’s heads above water.

We shall investigate these points later on.

Caritas: resisting the invasion of accounting criteria

In the area of established interchanges, we all seek to contribute something that is uniquely ours, to introduce ourselves to others and try through gestures,

words and deeds to express ourselves, to share with them the extraordinary nature of our being, which also largely remains a mystery to us. In view of this, we are constantly obliged to invent ways of bringing our uniqueness into play in order to make ourselves accessible and understandable to others.

When the area of interchange is almost exclusively dominated by competition, we instinctively tend to express ourselves in terms of what may be compared, measured and calculated, while what is unique about us becomes uninteresting because by definition uniqueness cannot be compared. Any element of individuality must therefore be put to one side for the benefit of elements that play a part in the quirks of competition, which constitute measurable capacities and efficiency. This approach enables actors to hold their own in the field of calculated transactions, but they can hardly say who they are any more.

So are we moving towards the extinction of uniqueness? Of course not. It will always find a way to express itself, but it only has marginal spaces such as private life, circles of friends and inter-personal relationships in which to do so – apart from means of expression that are only accessible to a small minority, such as artistic creativity, literature or hobbies.⁶ Many people who have been dispossessed of a position or the means of saying who they are have only anger to make their voices heard. They turn themselves into fierce promoters of a national, cultural or religious identity deemed to be better than others, which is often adapted to suit immediate needs; or they become destructive and violent, and appear to be only a caricature of themselves.

Despite these reactions, which are sometimes much open to doubt, a world that is almost exclusively organised on the basis of calculated transactions blinds itself to uniqueness: everything is standardised, homogenised, foreseeable and flat. Everything is measured, but anything truly new risks passing by totally unnoticed. Yet the real novelty, perhaps the only one within our grasp, comes, as Hannah Arendt pointed out, from “the actualisation of the human condition of natality”: the birth of a new being, one who was completely immeasurable and would surprise the whole world⁵. But such births cannot take place without love.

This is why one may regard charity as something that fights with all its strength against the reduction of the world to a system of calculated transac-

⁵ Hannah Arendt, *Condition de l'homme moderne* Paris, Calmann-Lévy. Originally *The Human Condition*, 1958.

tion. It does this through various mediations and makes its appeal heard each time someone refuses the *diktat* of competition and every time other criteria are taken into account that say in one way or another that someone is valued for who they are, rather than for what they might yield.

Making history with those one forgets

A world dominated by competition engages in a formidable task of classification, not only of performances but also of people. Right at the bottom of the chart are those who are not efficient enough. They thus become invisible to others, as they are unable to demonstrate their usefulness in any of the various exchanges we take part in⁶. Therefore, they lack a point of balance, they are reduced to living on welfare and are not called on to make their contribution to building the world. They also feel humiliated because they scarcely have the means to say who they are or to make people notice the unique treasure they bear. Charity cannot accept this kind of situation. It sees such outcasts as a sign of the profound malfunctioning of the social bond. In contrast, charity invests its energy and joy in seeking out those who have been sidelined. It does not rest until it has found them – for no reason other than the pleasure of rediscovering voices and faces that might disappear.

Those who have been abandoned compel other people, if they wish to travel with them along the same road for a while, to step out of a rationale of calculated efficiency. They encourage a return to basics: rediscovering that we do not live as part of a ranking allocated to us, but rather as part of an encounter in which the uniqueness of each person is called into play and may be expressed. A “bond” relationship is therefore given priority, in which we all truly commit ourselves with regard to others simply for who they are rather than for anything we might hope to gain from them. This is what allows each of us to share the treasure with others. This kind of relationship also prompts the writing of stories, as it puts everyone in a creative frame of mind, and of slow germinations, events, reversals and revelations. Life created in this way through a bond regains its dimensions, its vigour and capacity to bring about something new.

⁶ This question of social invisibility was recently highlighted in chapter 7 of: Honneth, A. 2006. *La société du mépris. Vers une nouvelle théorie critique*. Paris, La Découverte. Also in: Le Blanc, G. 2009. *L'invisibilité sociale*. Paris, Puf.

When charity calls the tune, those who are used to being forgotten have a central position because they are the ones who force us to abandon the accounting rationale and take us back to the source, to the truth of relationships that really do sustain life. This is borne out by the joy and peace that are experienced in encounters with the most vulnerable. Of course, this does not mean that any concern for efficiency should be considered as the antinomy of charity. People working for Caritas are well aware of this because they have to be operational. At the same time, they sense that what is crucial is not the smooth running of the organisation, but rather the encounters that enable those in distress to recover their strength, confidence and voices, as well as their capacity to act and make friends with other people. So the efficiency imperative finds its rightful place: it simply serves charity.

Rediscovering the bonds that call for existence

Through the above-mentioned term “bond”, we rediscover a means of truly engaging with others whereby they find themselves called upon, and in turn discover that they too are capable of welcoming others. Nowadays, these bonds are severely put to the test, sometimes marketed and often devalued. Yet these bonds enable the expression of each person’s uniqueness, not in the form of a monologue or a protracted search for oneself by oneself, but through a relationship. This relationship may take the form of a joint effort. It should even be able to generate a world in which we are called on to offer a contribution that only we as individuals can make. Hence charity feeds into politics, an area where it has great difficulty in making its voice heard, as rather than engaging in a power struggle it relies on trust and creates justice. From the viewpoint of charity, the world may be regarded as a fabric of appeals through which we are constantly re-launched into existence, and no longer merely a field of competition.

The importance given to bonds capable of calling upon people’s uniqueness implies moving away from the vision common in political philosophy of actors as individuals who are fully equipped and ready to work in the world. Indeed, no one can speak without being called upon. We thus rediscover how much we depend on each other, and the responsibility we all have as human beings with the capacity to call on other people.

Obviously, insisting on this point does not mean treating all calculations with disdain and dreaming of a society without accounting. That would be a way of dismissing justice in the name of charity. In fact, no society can do with-

out forms of measurement. Quite simply, a society becomes idolatrous when it starts to believe that rankings in various scales of comparison tell the truth about who we are and who gives life.

Charity renews knowledge of God

On the basis of these three points that particularly concern charity nowadays, which features of the face of God would be brought to attention?

Which truth?

The commitment towards those who “do not count” is in contrast to the tendency to classify, which is prevalent throughout society. This practice does not tell the truth about individuals, because their uniqueness is consistently overlooked, nor about what truly gives life, because stances are adopted that no longer allow freedom. Consequently, those who are reference points and highly placed in the ranking of this type of classification often manifest their dissatisfaction. Having reached the top, all they have left to do is launch into the song: “I can’t get no satisfaction”.

Undoubtedly, such dissatisfaction also leads to arguments about ways of evaluating. None of the means is completely suitable, and all of them may be challenged by asserting other broader and more respectful criteria. These permanent negotiations are not futile, as in part they enable justice to make progress. But charity proposes a far more radical criticism of classification systems: what it questions is not so much the way in which accounts are carried out so much as the fact of counting itself. More precisely, the fact of giving disproportionate weight to various criteria such as efficiency, market value, reputation, authority or capacity for influence,⁷ as if our lives depended on them. Charity is opposed to the establishment of these criteria as ultimate benchmarks, such as when a low ranking, according to such criteria, results in marginalisation. It reveals that we are merely talking about a modern version of the idol.

On the contrary, the joy and fruitfulness that arise from the journey undertaken with those who “don’t count” grant access to the reality of the question of truth. What turns out to be true in the many relationships we enter into?

⁷ See: Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot, 1991. *De la justification: les économies de la grandeur*, Paris, Gallimard.

Is it not about what we exchange when we share a little of what we are, what always eludes us? Does such joy not indicate that this is where we can find solid foundations to build on? This is somewhat paradoxical, because no one can claim to master this game of mutual appeals. Is not truth itself to be sought in terms of this “letting go”? Thus we discover that it is alive and not fossilised, happy and not restrictive, humble and not arrogant, gentle and not brutal. This truth is creative, and has everyone giving birth to something. It is closely connected with love. Does not the truth of our God have this form and flavour? It is something other than a truth that appears like an external force that breaks both our idols and ourselves, but which in the end is tinged with violence.

The road we travel with people we normally forget about allows us to approach another truth that has more to do with trust than certainties. This opens up a path that gives access to the true and living God, who is the God of love.

A contagious God

The bonds of love bring about an experience of freedom, first of all because they bring clearly into perspective all the requirements for success, the images which are presented as examples, and the fear of failure that accompanies these little taskmasters. But the experience of freedom brought about by charity does not stop there. Love is always associated with a commitment, and therefore with decisions, that imply the exercising of freedom. If it is merely an erratic feeling, then it is not really love. People loved in this way are well aware when they find themselves reduced to being used in this way.

Creating a story with the most vulnerable assumes entering into a bond relationship, in other words one without any preconditions: “I’m not getting involved to get something out of you, but simply because you are you”. There is no deadline: “My commitment is not a fixed-term contract”. It is a bond which is capable of overcoming disappointments and non-responses.

The kind of commitment to which charity leads enables us to rediscover our God as the One who makes bonds and who constantly seeks to repair damaged links with humanity. To achieve this, He puts himself at risk with regard to his people, and commits himself without preconditions in a relationship that He does not intend to question, whatever the response or non-response might be. And when He approaches us in this way, He calls for a word in return that might echo his own, and more than a word, an opening up of our whole being towards other people. He counts on his interlocutor’s ability to reply to Him in the same spirit.

He automatically regards others as free spirits who are capable of committing themselves from the depths of their being. So, by proposing his liberating love, God shares what He is with humanity. By enabling them to make friends in return as He does, He engages his interlocutors with His own way of being and lets them join the Trinitarian dance. In this sense our God is contagious.

The bond of charity that we experience is the touchstone that verifies the fruitfulness of the bond relationship. We can simply say that it is a “life-sized” initiation to the divine life.

Astonishing power

The test of time allows us to see what this bond relationship produces. This gives rise to people who dare to speak out and share what they bring, even who they are, with others. That is how everyone’s uniqueness gets heard: it is never completely revealed, always somewhat mysterious and always capable of surprising us and arousing wonder. This is where the power of God, the event of His love, is manifested. In general, this power has to face many storms and setbacks, a sign that love is constantly fighting against mistrust, fear and the security of forms that are familiar to us, but that also keep us set in our ways.

But love never gives up the fight. Its power was most strongly expressed on the cross. There, the reflexes which tend to cut us off from others are gently turned around in order to achieve the opposite of what they originally aimed for. They wanted to take hold of this man and silence his upsetting words; and there he was, completely subject to their will. And so violence ended up as this gift: it missed the target which it was aiming to silence. Instead, this was the most beautiful expression of a bond ever uttered: “This is my body, which is for you; this cup is the new covenant in my blood”. And perpetrators of violence may feel at home here too, simply by accepting that they also benefit from this gift, as happened to the centurion at the foot of the cross (*Mk 15:39*). Thus they are liberated from their sins, not through a humiliating capitulation but because God keeps His invitation open right to the end, to the heart of our refusal, and the only response to all our rebuffs is to say once again: I love you.

A way of being in the world

The desire to serve charity highlights several features of the face of God. Here I mention three: a truth conveyed through the heart and human freedom, a covenant that invites entry into God himself, and a power that aims to

undo from the inside what is closed and violent and hence highly vulnerable. Does not all this call for a certain way of being in the world, of living and acting within it?

Living “responsively”

We have seen that charity reveals the vital importance of the bond relationship. By giving primary importance to this type of bond, are we not led to see human beings in a slightly different way? Far from being the individuals often depicted in advertising, who get by on their own and impose themselves on others, human beings are recognised as opening up in response to love they have received. They are “responsive beings” who constantly assert their uniqueness, yet their identities are not based on themselves alone nor on their interlocutors, but rather on the interplay of their relationships. This applies to the extent that it is impossible to know exactly what they might owe to someone else. So the question of identity may ultimately be regarded as secondary to the benefit derived from experience shared with others. And what happens is birth, in both the literal and figurative sense.

Believers also have this experience with their God and with everyone they meet, especially those who count least. Believers are a response to God and their brothers and sisters. But they are also granted the freedom to call on others – both God and their brothers and sisters – because at the same time their response is saying something that has never been heard before and that has the strength of a first appeal. This is how we move forward together in our march on this Earth.

Radicalisation of the question of justice

The experience of charity, the road travelled with the most disadvantaged and keeping company with a God who calls for a covenant, requires a radicalisation of the sense of justice. Finally we discover that it is not merely a question of managing rewards correctly, but that it also entails enabling everyone to share their uniqueness, which today they can only imagine.

This is what opens up the ideal of a place that is organised in such a way that all its citizens are called on to make their own specific contributions. Ultimately therefore, justice is a matter of everyone participating in the life of the place. This ideal constantly seeks political expression, but charity demonstrates that it does not limit itself to inter-personal relations, but also tends to nurture ways in which we can live together. How can a society organise itself through

its structures, the interplay of its institutions, its laws and the way it regulates trade to appeal to all of its members, starting with the most vulnerable, so that they can make their unique contributions?

This perspective makes it possible to address tensions and conflicts in a peaceful manner. When we are aware that confrontation does not say who we ultimately are, but that this truth lies in the bond that we are all called on to participate in, then we can disagree with each other, sometimes even harshly. It is no longer a drama that brings everything into question.

A history of commitment, celebration and forgiveness

If one wishes to give more room to charity and the face of God that reveals itself, importance must also be given to history and to the long periods of time when free people tirelessly sought and called on each other. Really being able to speak about history implies some kind of involvement, not in the practical sense of objectives to be achieved, which requires effort and which often leaves actors exhausted and bitter, but rather in the sense of a freedom that feeds on relationships with others, as may be seen in the bond relationship. When commitment is lacking, what happens to us loses its unity and breaks into fragments that cannot be described to anyone.

Such a story assumes celebrations, events where the gift is acknowledged and welcomed with all the joy it gives rise to. It also involves forgiveness, because we never measure up to charity.⁸ Thus forgiveness is like the gentle recognition that God is greater than our hearts.

Conclusions

When implemented and not kept secretly at the bottom of our hearts, charity becomes *diakonia*. It makes manifest, in a very specific way, the path of the One who came to serve, to renew the bonds of the covenant even if it meant handing His life over for the multitude (*Mk* 10:45). That is why charity is an eminent “theological place”, because it places us in His footsteps. Today it is undoubtedly in the best position to speak about the true and living God, the God who liberates, who “gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not” (*Rom* 4:17).

⁸ Here I have in mind the very beautiful work by Jean Vanier, *La communauté, lieu du pardon et de la fête*, Paris, Montreal, Fleurus Bellarmin, 1981.

Caritas at the heart of the Church's life and mission

By Gustavo Gutiérrez OP and Timothy Radcliffe OP

“God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him’ (1 Jn 4:16). These words from the *First Letter of John* express with remarkable clarity the heart of the Christian faith: the Christian image of God and the resulting image of mankind and its destiny” (*Deus Caritas Est* 1). In Jesus Christ we meet the mystery of love in person and know we are God’s children but we are forever journeying towards that full encounter with God face to face, when we shall know who we are because we shall see him as he is (1 Jn 3:2).

The kernel of the message of Jesus is the announcement of the love of God, expressed in the proclamation of His Reign. The Kingdom leads human history beyond itself to its complete fulfilment, but, at the same time, it is present in history from now on. This double dimension is expressed in the classic sentence: the Kingdom is “already, but not yet fully” in history; it is present and promised. The victory is won but the conflict with what oppresses humanity is not yet over. The Reign of God is grace, and simultaneously a responsibility entrusted to us. The life of the disciples of Jesus Christ is located between the gift and the task: “Inherit the kingdom prepared for you (...) for I was hungry and you gave me food” (Mt 25:34-35).

The mission of Caritas Internationalis is integral to the mission of the Church. Its identity is rooted in the Church’s preaching of the gospel. To explore this, we shall consider a) the relationship between communion of the Church in Christ and the Church’s mission that opens it to all of humanity; b) how the celebration of the memory of Jesus implies the preaching of God’s love; and c) the task and identity of Caritas Internationalis.

Forming and living *koinonía*

In the gospels, God’s reign is proclaimed in biblical images: consolation, earth, satiety, mercy, vision of God, children of God (cf. Mt 5:5-10). All these

terms have in common the affirmation of life in its different manifestations. In the gospels, to enter in the Kingdom is to enter into the fullness of life (*Mk* 9:43, 47). The encounter with our God who is love always summons us further on the pilgrimage toward the Kingdom. It invites us to discover anew who we are faced with, this mystery of love beyond our imagination.

The Church, Pope Paul VI reminds us, “exists in order to evangelise” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi* 14). It proclaims the Kingdom of God through word and deed. To evangelise is the “deepest identity” of the Church (*ibid.*), and the Church is called to enter ever more profoundly into an understanding of who She is, listening faithfully to the gospels and responding to the needs of strangers and the needy. For this reason, Pope Paul VI could say, during the Council, that “we believe that it is a duty of the Church at the present time to strive toward a clearer and deeper awareness of itself and its mission in the world, and of the treasury of truth of which it is heir and custodian” (*Ecclesiam Suam* 18). The identity of the Church is both given and always to be discovered, as God summons us further in our pilgrimage towards the Kingdom and the fullness of life.

This deepest identity is to be like “a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race” (*Lumen Gentium* 1). The Church, announcing the loving presence of God in our midst, reveals the basis of our unity in the single family of humanity, gathered into Christ. The Church is not an introverted community, distancing itself from the struggles of humanity, but discovers itself in reaching beyond itself, embodying God’s infinite hospitality made incarnate in our Lord.

The Council fathers, therefore, did not intend to define the exact and precise boundaries of the Church. They were aware, in the title of the first chapter of *Lumen Gentium*, of “the Mystery of the Church.” By “mystery” Vatican II did not mean an enigma or something incomprehensible, but the reality of God’s purposeful love, in which we live and discover the goal and purpose of our lives, as when Paul spoke of “the mystery of the gospel” (*Rom* 16:25; *Eph* 3:3-9). This does not mean an esoteric and exclusive relationship with God that marks us off from those who do not believe. Rather it must be shared with all human beings, as God’s will is to bring all into union in Christ. This is an abiding challenge for the Church.

Different and complementary terms are used to speak of the Church. A term particularly valued in the Council documents and in the Synod that marked the 25th anniversary of the Council’s closure, is the biblical term “communion”, which translates the Greek word *koinonía*, often used in the New Testament.

Pope John Paul II said that “communion and mission are profoundly connected with each other, they interpenetrate and mutually imply each other, to the point that *communion represents both the source and the fruit of mission: communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion*” (*Christifidelis laici* (1988) 32, emphasis in the text). This fruitful relationship is filled with consequences that the document *Ad Gentes* helps us to understand.

Communion has three major dimensions. First of all, it is a sharing in the love of the Father and the Son, which overflows into the Spirit, so a love which is mutual but overflows beyond itself. So the mission of the Church is rooted in the “mission” of the Son and the Holy Spirit, coming forth from the Father. So “the pilgrim Church is missionary by Her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father” (*Ad Gentes* 2). To be Christian is to live in *koinonía* with the Father: “If we say that we are in communion with God while we are living in darkness, we are lying, because we are not doing the truth” (*1 Jn* 1:6).

We are also in *koinonía* with the Son: “You can rely on God, who has called you to the communion with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (*1 Cor* 1:9; cf. *1 Jn* 1:3); and finally, with the Holy Spirit: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (*2 Cor* 13:13; cf. *Phil* 2:1). So we have been called to be “participants (*koinonoi*) of the divine nature” (*2 Pet* 1:4).

Secondly, this communion that we have in the life of the Trinity must be shared with each other. It is a communion which creates community. The First Letter of John says it well: “What we have seen and heard, we proclaim to you, so that you too may share our life. Our life is communion with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ” (*1 Jn* 1:3). It overflows in the Eucharist, in which our communion with Christ is embodied in our communion with each other: “The blessing-cup, which we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ; and the loaf of bread which we break, is it not a communion in the body of Christ?” (*1 Cor* 10:16).

There is a third meaning of *koinonía*, and that is the concrete gestures of solidarity toward other people, especially those in need. Paul identifies as *koinonía* both the Eucharist and also the call to organise help for the Christians in Jerusalem and he speaks of “the generosity of your fellowship towards them and towards all” (*2 Cor* 9:13, cf. also *Rom* 15:26-27).

So in the gospels *koinonía* is a rich term which holds together communion with God and communion with others, the love of God and the love of our neighbours. In *Deus Caritas Est*, Pope Benedict XVI says “Love of God and love of neighbour are thus inseparable, they form a single commandment”, and again, “Love of God and love of neighbour have become one: in the least of the brethren we find Jesus himself, and in Jesus we find God” (nos. 18 and 15).

This fusion is founded on our faith in an incarnate God, in the “word of God that becoming flesh in Jesus Christ became also history and culture” (Inaugural speech in Aparecida (2007) n.1). So the experience of our communion with God, as the Body of Christ, drives us to reach out to the whole of humanity and to every culture. We are impelled to open ourselves to humanity, responding to Paul’s command: “Remember Jesus Christ.” (2 Tim 2.8).

Remember Jesus Christ

From this biblical perspective, we can ask: what is the place of forging a just world in the proclamation of the kingdom? In recent decades, the Magisterium of the Church and theological reflection have insisted on a holistic understanding of the preaching of the gospel. God calls Abraham to establish “righteousness and justice” (Gen 18:19). This is integral to the preaching of the Kingdom. In the Roman Synod on “Justice in the World” (1971), it is said that the mission of the Church “includes the defence and the promotion of the dignity and the fundamental rights of the human person” (no. 37). We can find a similar idea in the great text of Pope Paul VI on this issue (cf. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1974) 29).

Pope John Paul II frequently insisted on this. In his inaugural speech, to the Bishops’ Conference of Puebla (1979), he said: the “evangelising mission has, as an essential part, action for justice and the tasks of the human promotion” (III, 2). And in an address to the bishops of Honduras, quoting *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* no. 41 and his discourse to the Bishops’ Conference of Santo Domingo, the Pope affirmed, “It must not be forgotten that concern for the social dimension is part of the Church’s evangelising mission and that human promotion is part of evangelisation, because the latter tends towards the integral liberation of the person” (4th December 2001). We find the same insistence in Pope Benedict’s inaugural speech in the Conference of Aparecida (2007): “We must remember that evangelisation has always developed alongside the promotion of the human person and authentic Christian liberation...The Church is the advocate of justice and of the poor” (note 3).

Memory is a frequent theme in the Bible. During His Last Supper with His friends, Jesus institutes the Eucharist and says: "Do this in memory of me" (*Lk 22:19* and *1 Cor 11:23-25*). This is a memory that encompasses His life, His teachings, His proclamation of the Kingdom, His closeness to the poor, His passion, His endurance until the cross and his resurrection. This is a recollection that is lived out in following Jesus in our daily life. It overflows into the thanksgiving that is the Eucharist.

The Gospel of John does not include the narration of the institution of the Eucharist in his account of that final evening with the disciples. It presents another story that is not included in the other synoptic gospels – the washing of the feet. The story ends with the following words from Jesus: "If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you must wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may do the same that I have done to you" (*Jn 13:14-15*). Jesus' command to "do the same" recalls his injunction in the other gospels to "do this in memory of me".

We remember by finding ways to re-enact such humble, life-giving gestures in our time. These make incarnate God's love for us in Christ. Pope John Paul II wrote: "It is not by chance that the Gospel of John contains no account of the institution of the Eucharist, but instead relates the 'washing of feet' (cf. *Jn 13:1-20*): by bending down to wash the feet of his disciples, Jesus explains the meaning of the Eucharist unequivocally" (*Mane Nobiscum* (2003) no. 28). This service makes us authentic disciples of Jesus.

So our memory of Jesus includes our remembrance of the poor. "Remember the poor," Paul tells the Galatians (*Gal 2:10*). Our remembrance of God is shown in our remembrance in love of all his children, and especially those who are the most poor and despised. This memory is not a fixation on the past; it impels us to live out God's all encompassing love in the present. Augustine says that "memory is the present of the past".

To celebrate the Eucharist and to be of service to others are two inseparable ways of remembering Jesus. In the first account that we have of the Eucharist, Paul rejects the way that the rich in the community treat the poor when they gather: "When you meet together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. For in eating, each goes ahead with his own meal, and one is hungry and another is drunk" (*1 Cor 11:20f.*).

Pope John Paul II insists on this unity between the celebration of the sacrament and the building of community. "There is one other point which I would

like to emphasise, since it significantly affects the authenticity of our communal sharing in the Eucharist. It is the impulse which the Eucharist gives to the community for a *practical commitment to building a more just and fraternal society*" (*Mane nobiscum* (2004) no. 28, emphasis in the text). Our sharing the body and blood of Christ must always overflow into the building of a community in which the dignity and the humanity of everyone are recognised and cherished, for we are all God's children.

So liturgy and prayer are not, for Christians, separable from our ordinary lives in which we must face the challenges of building a loving and just society. A Eucharist in which our lives are not opened to those who are despised and excluded is not an act of thanksgiving directed to "God with us", Emmanuel (*Mt 1:23*).

The Christian community, and everyone who believes in Christ, are called to give witness to the fundamental unity of the two commandments, to love God and our neighbour, remembering the vast outreach of God's love. This is the setting in which we should place Caritas Internationalis, in the preaching of the Church. It is what gives it its identity and defines its mission.

The task of Caritas Internationalis

The mission of the Church is a complex reality. The social concern for justice, the promotion of human flourishing, is obviously not the whole and sole task of the Church, but it is "an essential" part of it, and an indispensable dimension of our *koinonía*.

Caritas Internationalis is at the heart of the Church's mission, a sign of the love that God has for humanity in Jesus Christ. The name Caritas Internationalis means "love between nations" and expresses our hope for the Kingdom of God in which all enmity and division will be defeated. Caritas, as an expression of the mission of the Church, gives witness to the presence of God's love for all people and, above all, for the least and most "insignificant" persons, for the poor: it is the preferential option for the poor, emphasised by Pope Benedict XVI (cf. Inaugural discourse in Aparecida). Solidarity with the poor implies both being personally close to them and, at the same time, being attentive to the human causes of poverty in the world.

Pope Benedict has affirmed his intention "to call forth in the world renewed energy and commitment in the human response to God's love" (*Deus Caritas Est* 1.1). His presentation of the commandment of love in the gospels is especially relevant for the task of Caritas. The gospels speak of the love of God and the

love of neighbour, but the Pope underlines the profound unity of both: "Love of God and love of neighbour have become one: in the least of the brethren we find Jesus himself, and in Jesus we find God" (*id.* 15 and 18). As a result: "closing our eyes to our neighbour also blinds us to God" (*id.* 15).

Today the Church faces new challenges in our global world. Benedict XVI said in the Message for the World Day of Peace (2009): "Fighting poverty requires attentive consideration of the complex phenomenon of globalisation" (no. 2). How can we be faithful to what we have received, in the gospels and the tradition of the Church, and faithful to the gift that God offers in this new world in which humanity is bound together more closely than ever before? How can we face the challenges of climate change, which threatens the very future of humanity? How do we respond to a new economic dynamism in which countries such as China and India are emerging as major centres?

Caritas Internationalis has a key role to play in the Church's response to these new challenges, and not just to the suffering and injustices of a world economy that brings plenty to some and destitution and violence to others. It is an expression of what the Church is as the sign and the sacrament of the "unity of the entire human race" (*LG* 1).

We remember how St Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles, summoned the Church to open Herself to all people, their histories and their cultures. How can we become a better image of our Lord, in whom "there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (*Gal* 3:28). We must be freed from a narrow euro-centric view, that of old Christendom, to discover the values of all other cultures and traditions, to be sensitive to what they have to give and what they need to receive, and to remember the advice received by Paul from the "the pillars" of the Church of Jerusalem: "Remember the poor" (*Gal* 2:10).

If Caritas Internationalis is to be an effective sign of the Church's identity and mission, then it will be helpful for it to clarify its own identity, as a confederation of 165 institutions. Christian identity is both given by our response to the gospels, and discovered as we encounter Christ in each other and in strangers. Caritas is part of the Church's outreach to those in need, the poor, regardless of who they are, and what their faith is, if any. Caritas does this most effectively when its constituent institutions discover their identity together, in a common mission and vision rather than having identities that are exclusive or competitive, each preserving its proper autonomy but invigorated by its friendship with the others.

The sign of God made man: a world of boundless *caritas*

By Prof. Dr Erny Gillen

You are standing in the marketplace of Gressier, Haiti, and talking over how to proceed. The local priest is engaged in heated discussion with the Red Cross representative over where would be the best place to build the health centre. The Malteser International representative doesn't know yet whether his organisation will be staying or not. Caritas Switzerland, Caritas Austria and Caritas Luxembourg want to rebuild homes destroyed by the earthquake. The local priest believes the rebuilding would be best carried out by collaborating with a non-religious local NGO, since this organisation has been working with local people for a long time and knows them well. Caritas Haiti and Caritas Internationalis want to distribute more kitchen sets and shelter kits. The search is still on for trucks and volunteer helpers, and further heavy rainfall is expected this evening.

In a humanitarian emergency, people and organisations grow together when the focus is on identifying need and helping. The Red Cross has pitched its tents in the priest's garden. Caritas is being housed by a local NGO.

The priest reports that a TV team is on its way. This creates a flurry of activity among the helpers. The search is on to find the t-shirts, hats and badges needed to identify and differentiate. The Swiss flag and the Red Cross suddenly appear. The distinctive signs that identify Caritas, CRS, Secours Catholique, Cordaid and Trócaire are prominently displayed. The sense of coordination that had existed before is temporarily masked by this colourful scene. What is visible to the eye are individual organisations and their donors. In front of the cameras, every organisation wishes to see its brand and country of origin shown off in the best light.

The stress is over. The cameramen have moved on. And now everyone comes together again under the leadership of the local priest to discuss the situ-

ation of those in need. This evening, everyone will meet up again in the Red Cross tents for the debriefing.

Theological introduction: when God reaches out

In the beginning, there is chaos, confusion and disorder. Then God parts the land from the water, the sky and its stars from the Earth. A space for differences is created. Order is created from the undifferentiated soup of chaos. Into this fragmented unity, God places man in his own image. In order not to put at risk the unity of the human family, man is not to know nor to exploit the difference between good and evil.⁹

But the aspiration for freedom is so strong that man falls from the paradise of happiness and being, and has to pay the price of freedom. The fight for life and for survival has begun: “me and my people” against “you and your people”. We begin to assert ourselves against the other.

Through prophets, signs and laws, God sought to make Himself understood to man in the history of salvation.¹⁰ When He could see no other solution, He sent His own son into the world to bring about man’s reconciliation and to save him from himself and from death. In his incarnation, God is calling man to peace and not to destruction. In Jesus Christ, He makes clear that the Kingdom of God has indeed already begun. Salvation is with us. Evil, sin and death can be transcended. Jesus shows the way.

Three Jesuanic starting points

Man

Neither work nor religion nor moral standards will ultimately save man. It is not by the sweat of her brow or in her work that Mary, Martha’s sister, will serve the Lord. Mary, who listens to the Word of God and who is open to the Lord, has made the better choice.¹¹

⁹ Cf. *Gen 2, 16ff.*: And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die”.

¹⁰ Cf. *Heb 1:1*.

¹¹ *Lk 10:41ff.*: “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed – or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the examples of those who pass by, demonstrate that it is not belonging to the priesthood or to the “right” religion that is the key element, but the “seeing heart”¹² which is the basis for Christ-like action.¹³

The manner in which Jesus treats the Lord’s Commandments, as handed down to man in the Decalogue, shows that the law is not to be interpreted against its intent in issues relating to helping someone in dire need.¹⁴

The massive cleansing undertaken by Jesus places the idea of “man and woman created by God” right back at the heart of things. The determining factor concerns the person themselves, not their work or religion or moral standards. Work that does not serve humanity is meaningless and distorted. Religion that blinds people to others in need is false. Moral laws that place themselves above the person and their salvation lose their legitimacy.

Need

The actions of Jesus are oriented to the person. He speaks to all people who are searching for God.¹⁵ He heals the sick and the lame.¹⁶ He gives sight to the blind.¹⁷

The miracles Jesus performed show that the Kingdom of God is close at hand. It is frequently, and unexpectedly, revealed in the encounter of believers with God.

¹² Cf. *Deus Caritas Est* 31b

¹³ *Lk* 10:33ff.: But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

¹⁴ *Mk* 2:27ff.: Then [Jesus] said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

¹⁵ Cf. *Mt* 9:11ff.: When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

¹⁶ Cf. *Mt* 8:1-4; *Mt* 8:16-17; *Mt* 9:1-8; *Mt* 15:29-31 and many others.

¹⁷ Cf. *Mt* 9:27-31: As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!” When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” “Yes, Lord,” they replied. Then he touched their eyes and said, “According to your faith let it be done to you”; and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, “See that no one knows about this.” But they went out and spread the news about him all over that region.

In his parables, Jesus draws a picture of the Kingdom of God that is small and hidden.¹⁸ It grows in the faith and in the hope of those who do good to their fellow human beings. The growing child becomes a symbol of the blessed person.¹⁹

Boundlessness

When God liberates His Son from humanity's violent grasp, and takes Him back into his own life, He introduces a new perspective into His history with mankind. The life of each individual continues in Him beyond death. The whole of humanity, the whole of history, is moving towards God. When we meet with our Lord and Master and Judge at the end of our days, He will not ask us about the fruits of our labours, our religious affiliations or our moral conduct, but about our humanity and our own incarnation throughout history.²⁰

Jesus' own life and story reveals to us that the Kingdom of God is near.²¹ The incredible becomes possible. It is realised amongst men in the form and person of Jesus Christ. He stands for the unity of the human family and unity with God. He is alpha and omega, the beginning and the end. He is God made man, simultaneously man and God. The victory over death is won in Him.

All people say the Lord's Prayer as His brothers and sisters. The Church that follows Him calls all people together and is open to all people. Faith is a gift. It cannot be earned through work, religion or the law. (*Deus Caritas Est* 39²²) The God of love was made flesh and lived amongst us.²³

¹⁸ Cf. *Mt* 13:31ff.: The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches. Cf. also: *Mt* 13:44-46

¹⁹ Cf. *Mt* 19:13-15: Blessing the Children; also: *Lk* 7:11-17: Raising of a Widow's Son, *Lk* 8:40-56: Raising the Daughter of Jairus.

²⁰ Cf. *Mt* 25:31-46: Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.

²¹ Cf. *Mk* 1:15: "The time has come," [Jesus] said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

²² Cf. *Deus Caritas Est*, Pope Benedict XVI, 2005 (DCE) 39: "Love is possible, and we are able to practise it because we are created in the image of God. To experience love and in this way to cause the light of God to enter into the world—this is the invitation I would like to extend with the present Encyclical."

²³ *Jn* 1:14

Anyone who lives the truth of love becomes a child of God. The Church accompanies humanity on the path of love. Since the love of God and the love of one's neighbour (*Deus Caritas Est* 22²⁴ and 14²⁵) come together visibly in the Church, the Church itself becomes a sacrament of the unity of the entire family of man with God.²⁶

First aid for the initial signs of structural fossilisation: the Pauline intervention

The fact that the Catholic Church rests on the shoulders of the two Apostles Peter and Paul is no matter of chance. Both men made a decisive contribution to the shape of the present-day Church.

In the very first Council, known as the Apostolic Council, the different approaches and directions taken by these two Apostles came together to produce a common answer. The risk of seeing and shaping the Church as a new or second synagogue could be eliminated.

Those who were known as the Gentile Christians were admitted directly to the Church. The Letter to the Romans clearly explained why this was so: "For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. (Indeed, when gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts....)" (*Rom* 2:12-16).

The spirit of God moves where it will. Indeed, the spirit of God cannot be controlled. It acts both in the Church and in the world. For God, the creator of all life, has made *all* life and is calling *all* back to Him. Jesus' project is open

²⁴ Cf. *DCE*: "...love for widows and orphans, prisoners, and the sick and needy of every kind, is as essential to [the Church] as the ministry of the sacraments and preaching of the gospel."

²⁵ "A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented. Conversely, as we shall have to consider in greater detail below, the 'commandment' of love is only possible because it is more than a requirement. Love can be 'commanded' because it has first been given."

²⁶ *Lumen gentium* 1,1: "Since the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race, ...".

to all. And working for the Kingdom of God is not limited to the work of the Church or of believers.²⁷

If this Pauline intervention is taken seriously and transferred to the essence and action of *caritas*, we arrive at a particular understanding of God's project of love of man, of the social welfare work of the Church and of Caritas as an organisation of the Church.

Pope Benedict XVI writes his pontificate into the Pauline tradition in very clear terms when he says in his first encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*: "I wish ...to call forth in the world renewed energy and commitment in the human response to God's love" (*DCE* 1).

When two people do the same thing, it is not the same

Back to Haiti and the humanitarian responses to the terrible earthquake of 12 January 2010. Houses are being put up everywhere, and they are being constructed by a wide range of organisations. From the outside, though, you can hardly spot any differences at all. A house is a house. The important thing is that people are being given meaningful help. Whether they are built and paid for by the Red Cross, Malteser International, the local parishes or an international Caritas organisation, makes no difference at all at first sight.

But on two levels at least, the various workers and organisations can be differentiated: the reasons for their involvement, in the sense of their *personal motivations* and the *weltanschauung*, or philosophy of life, that inspires them, differ just as widely as the *meaning they* attach to their action.

The believing and practising Christian will look to understand his commitment in Haiti from the perspective of his faith. He is personally following in the footsteps of Jesus and helping the poor. He does this with no ulterior motive, believing that standing by people in need is an obligation of his faith. Where he gives testimony to his actions, he is simultaneously witnessing to his faith. He is writing his actions into the history of God with man, and understands his work as building the Kingdom of God.

Where a Christian organisation is providing assistance in the field of social welfare, it is counting not only on the Christian motivation of its

²⁷ *Acts* 28:28: "Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the gentiles, and they will listen!"

staff, but also on its own guiding principles and sense of its own role. Its sense of its own role anchors it as an organisation in the religious life of the Church. As an organisation, it is bearing eloquent witness to the loving action of the Church. Through its action, as an *opus proprium* of the Church, the Church is itself being created anew. Pope Benedict XVI makes this explicit when he says: “The Church’s charitable organisations, on the other hand, constitute an *opus proprium*, a task agreeable to her, in which she does not cooperate collaterally, but acts as a subject with direct responsibility, doing what corresponds to her nature. The Church can never be exempted from practising charity as an organised activity of believers (...)” (*Deus Caritas Est* 29).

So is Caritas just one of many organisations doing good in the name of Jesus Christ and the Church, or does it have a particular calling and duty within the Church?

Some Caritas organisations covering a single area will be hard to differentiate from other Christian organisations, unless through their particular attachment to the Church hierarchy. Other Caritas organisations understand their role as that of generalists in emergency aid, wherever this is necessary. Yet others, in turn, have been established as associations for the Church’s social welfare work and accordingly see themselves as coordinating and interpreting structures. All three approaches are to be found in Caritas Internationalis. Their needs and demands are fundamentally different, but common to all is the fact that they are part of the international Caritas network and most use the name “Caritas” in their title or branding.

Although it is relatively easy to describe the distinguishing features that differentiate Caritas from other NGOs, it is significantly more difficult to identify the differentiating features between the Church actors working in the field of charitable commitment.

Unlike non-Christian organisations, Caritas sees its rationale as the belief in Jesus Christ. And in this respect it is no different to other Christian and church organisations. Depending on its own sense of organisation, within the Church it does not lay claim to further differentiation. It understands itself as one of many, but with a specific profile. Where a Caritas organisation has a coordination role within the Church, it may operate on a different level from those who provide immediate care themselves.

The specific charism of *caritas*

If one now attempts to understand *caritas* as a trademark for the Church's social welfare work, questions arise as to its specific charism. What distinguishes the essence of a Caritas action in comparison with other aid organisations in the Church's internal and external relations? The answer given by the "Pope of Caritas" is the "seeing heart". Anyone who does not recognise need as such and who does not feel personally challenged by this as a human being is failing to make God in man within himself and is going against his own kind and against God's plan. The specific feature of *caritas* in this original sense cannot and should not be monopolised or, to put it in the language of contemporary business-speak, "patented". Just as everyone should have a right to water and access to water, everyone has a right to practise *caritas*, whether believer or non-believer, strong or weak, righteous or sinner. Every organisation that provides emergency relief and aid is a charitable organisation realising the most fundamental mission of humanity and allowing itself to be guided by love, in the sense of *caritas*. Where this universally human *caritas* exists and is understood in the knowledge of, and in a relationship to God who is love, such actions are imbued with a depth of perspective that allows God's plan also to be in play. Where *caritas*, understood in this way, explicitly describes God's love, the Church comes into being, recognised and unrecognised, acknowledged and ignored.

The universal dimension of *caritas* actions must not become obscured by a possessive system and pattern of behaviour. *Caritas* is always above all an "open-source" enterprise, fundamentally open to all. Pope Benedict speaks of Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, as "love incarnate", becoming a true feast to his disciples in the communion of the Eucharist. "Union with Christ is also union with all those to whom he gives himself. I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, his own." (*Deus Caritas Est* 14) It becomes clear that there can be no setting of limits to love itself. It can always bridge any divide, anywhere. Only the meaning attached to this love in the spirit of *caritas* brings forth differences and makes the Christian responsible for his or her life as a Christian and member of the Church.

Before Pope Benedict XVI speaks in *Deus Caritas Est* about the specific profile and charism of the Church's charitable work, he directs his attention clearly "to

the overall situation of the struggle for justice and love in the world of today" (*Deus Caritas Est* 30). He repeats explicitly what the Second Vatican Council had emphasised in the decree concerning the lay apostolate, and confirms that "charitable activity can and should embrace all people and all needs" (*Deus Caritas Est* 30a). The numerous forms of collaboration across all organisational boundaries he characterises as "bearing fruit" (*Deus Caritas Est* 30b). In the ecumenical collaboration of charitable organisations he goes a step further, "since we all have the same fundamental motivation and look towards the same goal: a true humanism, which acknowledges that man is made in the image of God and wants to help him to live in a way consonant with that dignity" (*Deus Caritas Est* 30b).

And the introduction on the "distinctiveness of the Church's charitable activity" again makes clear that for all charitable organisations, the imperative of love of neighbour is ultimately "inscribed by the Creator in man's very nature" (*Deus Caritas Est* 31). In order to retain its full power of illumination, the Church's charitable activity should not simply merge into one option within general actions of social welfare.

The model of the Christian act of charity is and remains the parable of the Good Samaritan: the Christ-like starting point of need. The action must be "independent of parties and ideologies" (*Deus Caritas Est* 31b). Even as a planned and organised Christian act of charity undertaken in collaboration with other similar establishments, the Christian programme remains the "seeing heart". "This heart sees where love is needed and acts accordingly." The Pope is vehemently opposed to all attempts to abuse any concrete expression of the love of neighbour as a means to proselytise. "Love is free; it is not practised as a way of achieving other ends" (*Deus Caritas Est* 31c).

But how then does one bear witness? Christian and Church Caritas organisations must not be forbidden or even discouraged from bringing God and Christ into play. On the other hand, Christian and Caritas organisations should not be put under pressure to always bear witness under all circumstances, particularly if this witness could give rise to the impression that the freely-given nature of *caritas* was not guaranteed. "Those who practise charity in the Church's name will never seek to impose the Church's faith upon others" (*Deus Caritas Est* 31c). It could not be more apodictically formulated. And the Pope continues, addressing the Christian listener directly. He trusts his listener to be able to distinguish those times when it is sensible to talk about God and when it

is better “to say nothing and to let love alone speak. He knows that God is love (cf. *1 Jn* 4:8) and that God’s presence is felt at the very time when the only thing we do is to love” (*Deus Caritas Est* 31c). The best defence of God and of man lies in love. And it is precisely this awareness that charitable organisations should strengthen in their representatives, “so that by their activity, as well as their words, their silence, their example, they may be credible witnesses to Christ”.

In summary, the message regarding all attempts to put oneself forward and to differentiate oneself from others is as follows: “The personnel of every Catholic charitable organisation want to work with the Church and therefore with the Bishop, so that the love of God can spread throughout the world. By their sharing in the Church’s practice of love, they wish to be witnesses of God and of Christ, and they wish for this very reason freely to do good to all” (*Deus Caritas Est* 33).

The temptation of proud and arrogant differentiation, of setting oneself apart and emphasising the special nature of charitable actions, cannot be condoned or justified either through the words of the Scriptures or through the words of the Pope. *Caritas* is freely given and is therefore without distinction. The fact that one ought not to dissect love and play out one expression of it against another is a fundamental principle of *Deus Caritas Est*. “Fundamentally, ‘love’ is a single reality” (*Deus Caritas Est* 8), even if in each case one side or another can figure more prominently as a dimension of the same love.

The “authenticity” or “truth” of love is revealed in relationship. When charitable action becomes merely a technical delivery of aid and material products, empty of any relationship, it perishes and does no justice either to the person who is giving, or to the person who is receiving. Aid is reduced to commodities, and a trade develops which certainly has a price, but no longer any significant value. The true value of *caritas* cannot be measured by the volumes of aid items shifted. “I must give to others not only something that is my own, but my very self; I must be personally present in my gift” (*Deus Caritas Est* 34).

For the believer, the chain of the relationship closes with its being linked back to God. The believer is responding to the love received directly and indirectly from God and passed on in the “living relationship with Christ” (see *Deus Caritas Est* 36). “We need this deep connection with God in our daily life. How can we obtain it?” asks Mother Teresa of Calcutta in her letter for Lent 1996. The answer recorded in *Deus Caritas Est* by Pope Benedict XVI is as slick and simple as it is compelling: “By prayer!”.

The specific charism of *caritas* in the Christian and pastoral sense therefore clearly lies not in the action of helping itself, but in its conscious and faithful linking back to the originator of love Himself. This is a task for the whole Church and for the community of believers. Just as the community of believers cannot delegate its mission for social welfare entirely to *Caritas*, however it may be organised, neither can a “*caritas* anchored in the Church” likewise delegate the prayer entirely to the parish community or individual workers. It is about preserving and maintaining the cycle of love in prayer.

“Charity (*caritas*) is love received and given,” says Pope Benedict XVI in his later encyclical addressing social issues, *Caritas in Veritate*. “It is ‘grace’ (*châris*). Its source is the wellspring of the Father’s love for the Son, in the Holy Spirit. Love comes down to us from the Son. It is creative love, through which we have our being; it is redemptive love, through which we are recreated. Love is revealed and made present by Christ (cf. *Jn* 13:1) and ‘poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit’ (*Rom* 5:5). 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” (*Caritas in Veritate* 5).

In continuing these thoughts, the Pope writes: “Charity always manifests God’s love in human relationships as well, it gives theological and salvific value to all commitment for justice in the world” (*Caritas in Veritate* 6). Here the Pope rules out a misinterpretation that some have taken from *Deus Caritas Est* (29). It concerns the determination of the relationship between “justice” and “love”. Here there can be no separation or division of tasks, nor can there be a subordination of love for whatever reason to the (conditions of) justice. “Justice is inseparable from charity, and intrinsic to it. Justice is the primary way of charity or, in Paul VI’s words, ‘the minimum measure’ of it, an integral part of the love ‘in deed and in truth’ (*1 Jn* 3:18), to which St John exhorts us” (*Caritas in Veritate* 6).

The deliberate linking of love and justice is the essence of the image of the “seeing heart” that unleashes vision and provides the impetus for action. If the spur of justice is absent from charitable activity, it rapidly becomes restricted to mere acts of emergency assistance, ignoring the fact that need, where it can be prevented, is also always a scandal.

What we learn from Holy Scripture and tradition about the specific charism of *caritas* may be surprising, but it strikes at the heart of the matter: *caritas*

does not need to, and ought not to, distinguish itself from other loving acts of charity within and outside the Church when dealing with those in need. Here *Humanum* and *Christianum* coincide.

If there is competition between the operations, initiatives and projects of *caritas* and other Church and non-Church acts of love, this should be conducted with regard to quality. Here competition between providers may even contribute to greater quality, and thus benefit the concerns of those dependent on aid.

Maintaining charism internally

Internally, that is to say within the Church and Caritas Internationalis, the challenge will be to support and assist the people and organisations acting in the service of social welfare work from all sides. Pope Benedict XVI has set new standards in recognising this form of being Church with his pontificate.

For the various Caritas organisations, the challenge is always to create space internally for prayer, reflection and interpretation. The Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* demonstrates a sound path in organising retreats for those responsible for *caritas*, in the sense of all Christian acts of charity. Such meetings offer the opportunity for horizontal and vertical communication across all borders. Caritas Internationalis has added a theological preamble and a theological post-script to its revised Statutes. These make clear that constitutions serve a higher purpose. The fact that the Statutes require Caritas Internationalis to establish a “Theological Commission” is a sign and incentive for all national Caritas organisations to promote and support theology in their actions.

Many parishes and dioceses are opening up to people in need, and through that process are also themselves becoming a place of lived faith, thereby giving witness to God’s love. Within this, the charitable organisations can play a key role as ambassadors of the poor, by preparing and supporting encounters between both sides.

In this way, the Church as a whole and as *caritas* can live out its own vocation and become the sacrament of love in the world. As a sign and tool for the innermost unification with God and for the unity of the whole of humanity, it is at all levels part of the duty of the entire Church to remove the limits to *caritas* and thus to universalise it. As Church, *caritas* stands as a trademark for the incarnation and discipleship of Jesus, who died for everyone and was resurrected for everyone.

On this path of perfection there are many steps and stages. None is too small or too insignificant to be recognised and acknowledged. None is so far advanced that it cannot and ought not to be further developed. Again and again, Caritas, as an organisation and as individuals in action, needs to become strengthened in faith.

Caritas and the sacramental nature of Christian life

By Dr. Maria Clara Bingemer and Prof. Dr. Klaus Baumann

The roots

In describing the Mystery of the Church, the Dogmatic Constitution of Vatican II characterises Her as a sacrament, using the term in a broad sense, as did the patristic theologians: “the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race” (*Lumen Gentium* 1). These words concisely encapsulate the Church’s understanding of “its own inner nature and universal mission” (*ibid*).

Imbued by the effusion of the Holy Spirit and empowered by His *dynamis* (energy) as fruit of Christ’s passion and resurrection, the Church is called to serve as a sacrament, as a sign and an effective instrument for spreading God’s love throughout the world (*Deus Caritas Est* 33). In concluding his first encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, Pope Benedict XVI emphasises the mission of the Church in the service of *caritas/agape*/love (*Deus Caritas Est* 42). This mission, referring to the expression of *Lumen Gentium*, aims at an intimate union with God and at uniting the whole of humankind into a single family in Christ. Living Christ’s commandment to love as He loved, is therefore sharing in this sacramental reality of the Church, both on the personal and communitarian levels. Clearly, not only liturgy and preaching the gospel, but also all the activities of personal and organised *caritas* play an essential role in realising this sacramental essence of the Church. As the Holy Father succinctly puts it: “love for widows and orphans, prisoners and the sick and needy of every kind, is as essential to Her as the ministry of the sacraments and preaching of the gospel. The Church cannot neglect the service of charity any more than she can neglect the Sacraments and the Word” (*Deus Caritas Est* 22). In fact, serving a neighbour in need is connecting to him or her and at the same time connecting with God in Christ, who

identified Himself with the suffering and who Himself served humankind like the “Good Samaritan” in his self-giving.

As a community, the Church therefore must practise the love of attending to the sufferings of neighbours and to their needs – including material ones – in an organised way. This is a responsibility “for the entire ecclesial community at every level: from the local community to the particular church and to the Church universal in its entirety” (*Deus Caritas Est* 20), who are called to become “increasingly the image and instrument of the love which flows from Christ” (*Deus Caritas Est* 33). Organisations of *caritas* have been an essential, indispensable part of the Church and Her fundamental structures from earliest times. The “social service which they were meant to provide was absolutely concrete, yet at the same time it was also a spiritual service; theirs was a truly spiritual office which carried out an essential responsibility of the Church, namely a well-ordered love of neighbour” (*Deus Caritas Est* 21).

These basic reflections on the Church’s nature make evident that *caritas*, including the Church’s *caritas* organisations at every level, is part of the indispensable sacramental dimension and service of the Church. It is nourished by the sacramental life of the Church, in a narrower sense which ought to foster the Church’s and every Christian’s calling in the service of love.

Baptism: the source

Baptism is without any doubt the sacrament about which the New Testament speaks the most. It is the sacrament of Christian initiation, the door through which Jews and gentiles have access to the community of those who believe and follow Jesus Christ for life, until death.

It is also what defines the Christian within the Church and what is common to all believers, ordained or not: the ecclesiological fact of being baptised. That means, the fact of being together with everybody else within the community introduced by Baptism to a new way of existing: Christian existence, assimilated to Christ Himself, who was incarnated, died and arose in His paschal mystery.

Baptism, then, is our response to God’s call to us to share his life, and to be caught up in the mystery of the Revelation of God in Jesus Christ. All other Christian vocations are subsequent ways of responding to this call. First of all, there is the fact that “we have all been baptised in Christ Jesus...buried with Him in His death so that, as Christ was risen from death for the glory of the Father, then we too can live a new life” (*Rom* 6:3-4).

There is, therefore, this sense of existence that every Christian possesses, regardless of their option, vocation or state of life: consecrated by Baptism, called to search out the will of God, in the path of Jesus Christ, moved by the Holy Spirit. This innovation implies, first of all, a radical separation from the past and its old covenants, secret compromises with iniquity, accommodations and half-truths.

Thanks to this separation, the baptised person is made similar to Christ. We might dare to say that he or she becomes “another” Christ by a similar death... in order that, through a resurrection, also similar to His, they will no longer serve sin, but live for God (*Rom 6:5-11*). It is from this paschal mystery of Baptism, and the new way of being that it inaugurates, that any reflection about laity and connected topics, such as ministries in the Church, must flow.

And this perspective places reflection on the laity within the context of their identity as the baptised people of God, rather than in a context defined by their relation to other lay, as opposed to clerical or religious, people; it evokes an understanding of the Church in which we are all seen to be fully members of the people of God, and where the Holy Spirit, in sovereign freedom, awakens charisms in each of us that flow into ministries performed for the benefit of the whole people of God.

So, the sacrament of Baptism makes each Christian a sacrament of Christ. Just as Christ is a sacrament of the Father and the Church is a sacrament of Christ. Through Baptism, every Christian is called to be a sacrament of Christ, a loving presence of *caritas* and action in the world.

Eucharist: passing over into the concrete practice of love

In every Eucharist, the Church celebrates and receives the enduring presence of Christ’s love and self-giving for us and our salvation “to the end” (*Jn 13:1*) in his death on the cross and his resurrection. At the Last Supper, Christ wanted to institute a lasting and effective sign of the new eternal covenant which both communicates His love and calls us to imitate His love in living the new commandment. The Eucharist is, above all, the sacrament of God’s love/*agape/caritas*, which in Christ unites us with God and creates union and communion in Christ among all participants who are open and ready to receive this nourishment of spiritual energy: “the Eucharist draws us into Jesus’ act of self-oblation. More than just statically receiving the incarnate *Logos*, we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving” (*Deus Caritas Est 13*).

Sharing in the Eucharist is not solitary, but *social* in character and implies a *social mysticism*: the communicants become one in Christ. As Pope Benedict XVI puts it: “I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, his own. Communion draws me out of myself towards him, and thus also towards unity with all Christians.” And he adds: “Only by keeping in mind this Christological and sacramental basis can we correctly understand Jesus’ teaching on love. ... ‘Worship’ itself, Eucharistic communion, includes the reality both of being loved and of loving others in turn. A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented” (*Deus Caritas Est* 14).

In fact, every Eucharist makes us witnesses of God’s compassion towards humankind and all creation. We can recognise God’s beloved image in every human person, son or daughter, for whom Christ gave his life, loving us “to the end” (*Jn* 13:1). Receiving the “broken bread” is a call to become broken bread for others likewise and “to work for the building of a more just and fraternal world” (*Sacramentum Caritatis* 88).

It is necessary to be explicit about the intrinsic link between the Eucharistic sacrament and social commitment, which in turn is or becomes – in the broader sense of *Lumen Gentium* – (1) sacramental in nature. Drawing on the Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis* (89): “In the memorial of his sacrifice, the Lord strengthens our fraternal communion and, in a particular way, urges those in conflict to hasten their reconciliation by opening themselves to dialogue and a commitment to justice. Certainly, the restoration of justice, reconciliation and forgiveness are the conditions for building true peace. The recognition of this fact leads to a determination to transform unjust structures and to restore respect for the dignity of all men and women, created in God’s image and likeness. Through the concrete fulfilment of this responsibility, the Eucharist becomes in life what it signifies in its celebration.”

The Eucharist is also a mystery of liberation that constantly and insistently challenges us and calls us – including the Church’s organisations of *caritas* – to be true promoters of peace and justice; correspondingly, the Fathers of the Synod on the Eucharist affirm: “All who partake of the Eucharist must commit themselves to peace-making in our world scarred by violence and war, and today in particular, by terrorism, economic corruption and sexual exploitation” (*ibid*). Pope Benedict continues: “Precisely because of the mystery we celebrate, we must denounce situations contrary to human dignity, since Christ shed his

blood for all, and at the same time affirm the inestimable value of each individual person" (*ibid.*).

These affirmations underline the necessary connection between celebrating the Eucharistic mystery of God's love and living the sacrament of *caritas* amid need and suffering and amid injustice and violence. This implies a social commitment to human dignity, love, justice and peace. It is "liturgy after liturgy", as it is beautifully expressed in orthodox theology; it is translating the Eucharistic mystery into life.

It therefore follows that socio-political advocacy, especially in line with the preferential option for the poor and oppressed of any kind (*Gaudium et Spes* 1), is part of the sacramental mission of the Church in the service of love (*Deus Caritas Est* 42). This is carried out not only by the individual faithful but also necessarily by the Church's organisations of *caritas*, which are committed to putting the Social Doctrine of the Church into practice. Again, such commitment is nourished by the Eucharist as the sacrament of *caritas par excellence* and enables us, by the energy of the Holy Spirit, to transcend the logic of selfishness and hate, which tend to destroy the earthly city. In contrast, as Pope Benedict XVI states, 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. *Caritas* always manifests God's love in human relationships as well, it gives theological and salvific value to all commitment for justice in the world" (*Caritas in Veritate* 6). It is sacramental in serving union with God and His will and fostering the unity of all humankind.

The poor and oppressed: sacramental presence of the suffering Christ

Caring and loving service to the poor lies at the heart of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who says: "Blessed are the poor" (*Lk* 6:20). It is on this basis that we are judged: whether we gave bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty and clothes to the naked.

The suffering of the other, the poor, the widow, the orphan and the foreigner must be the main concern of every disciple of Jesus Christ. As the religious philosopher Nikolai Alexandrovich Berdyaev said, "When I am hungry, it is a biological problem. When my brother is hungry, it is a spiritual problem."

For Christians, it is not a case of idealising poverty or the poor, but rather of addressing it as the evil that it is, protesting against it and struggling to eradi-

cate it. The poor are not sentimentalised or idealised figures, but those who are marginalised by society, exploited and oppressed, so that they cannot live a full life, with dignity and hope. God identifies Himself with such men and women, in the person of the Incarnate Son, who took on our vulnerable flesh and submitted Himself to the suffering that human beings endure. In serving the poor, Christians and non-Christians are serving their Lord, who is present in them as a sacrament: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." (Mt 25:40)

The rationale for exercising a preferential option for the poor is therefore God Himself, not an ideology, a theory, or the result of some analysis of reality. God identifies in a very special way with the poor. God is with those who suffer any kind of poverty or injustice, living in them, suffering in them, making Himself, Herself visible through them. That makes them, men and women who suffer discrimination, oppression or violence, God's sacrament in history and society. And that includes not only those who are economically or materially poor, but also the "poor in spirit." The biblical concept of "the poor" refers to the oppressed, to victims of a world order that is unjust and fails to correspond to the justice desired by God. The option for the poor should include therefore victims of racism, gender discrimination and cultural marginalisation.

In this commitment, Christians may work with brothers and sisters of other religious traditions or even with non-believers. All of them will be practicing *caritas* when they practice these works of justice and mercy. Here we see, in the ordinary practice of love, signs of God's gracious presence among us. For Jesus has always gone before us (Mk 16:7), present even among those who do not yet know his name. So they too are an integral part of the coming of the Kingdom of God, when they love and serve the least of their brothers and sisters. For in doing this, they serve the unity of humankind and the union with God. Then God's glory is proclaimed and the Kingdom grows.

“Not to be served but to serve”: leadership in Caritas as part of the Church’s mission in the service of love

By Dr. Lesley-Anne Knight and Prof. Dr. Klaus Baumann

If leadership is often defined as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal”²⁸, it is evident that Jesus Christ sought to influence and model his followers through the ages, especially by His own example and teaching, assisted by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and also with regard to the use and positions of power. This primarily applies to leadership in the Church generally and especially in its Caritas organisations which are “an indispensable expression of her very being” (*Deus Caritas Est* 25).

The leadership model of the gospel

When the ten other apostles heard that James and John, the sons of Zebedee, had asked for special honours and positions in the Lord’s glory, they were indignant. They were indignant because they felt betrayed by the aspirations of their two colleagues. But they themselves seemed to harbour the same ambitions. Jesus made use of this opportunity to teach them his own point of view on leadership, which he hoped his followers would in turn adopt: “You know that among the gentiles those they call their rulers lord it over them, and their great men make their authority felt. Among you this is not to happen. No; anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be slave to all. For the Son of Man himself came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (*Mk* 10:42-45).

²⁸ Northouse, Peter G., *Leadership. Theory and Practice*, 5th ed., Los Angeles: Sage Publications 2009, 3.

With regard to leadership, this teaching is a version of Christ's new commandment: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (*Jn* 13:34-35). The love of another, shaped by Christ's love, is the *common goal*, as well as making one visible to others as a follower of Christ.

Similarly, the kind of leadership exercised in the Church and in Her *caritas* organisations ought to demonstrate to people that these leaders are Christ's disciples; they are leaders whose influence favours the Christ-like love of one another. Christ wanted his disciples to experience such leadership literally, on their skin, when He washed their feet during the last supper and explained his action to them: "You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (*Jn* 13:13-17).

This teaching is so central to what Christ wanted to transmit to his disciples and his Church that it is connected with the first of only two beatitudes in the Gospel according to St. John: "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."²⁹

The gospels provide another inspiring model of leadership in the service of Christ in John the Baptist. He first puts into practice what Christ applies to his followers. John the Baptist is drawn as literally a first leader and a first servant in the mission of Jesus Christ. He is not restrained by a concern for losing power but shows others, probably his own followers too, the way to Jesus. John the Baptist knows that he and his power must diminish so that Jesus and his influence can grow. "I baptise with water; but there stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap..." John said: "Look, there is the Lamb of God... this is the one I spoke of..." (*Jn* 1:26-30).

John the Baptist is not *dependent* on the gratifications provided by his leadership position, on fashionable rewards or short-term returns derived from power

²⁹ In *Jn* 20:29 you can read the other one: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

or prestige in his charismatic role. He is rooted in his sense of conviction and transcendent mission, and derives a different, deep kind of security, satisfaction and consolation from witnessing the arrival of the Messiah. He is interested in the growth and development of his followers even at the cost of “losing” them as followers. Their progress to Christ is not threatened or even blocked by envy aroused in the Baptist.

His character and moral integrity point to the importance of leaders’ attributes beyond their indispensable professional skills, competencies and assets. Without doubt, the “formation of the heart” is an indispensable process for every person joining the mission of our Caritas organisations to serve the poor and oppressed of any kind (*Gaudium et Spes* 1), in addition to his or her necessary professional skills and competencies (*Deus Caritas Est* 31a).

This is especially true for *the leaders* of Caritas organisations: at every leadership level of the organisation and with special regard to the women and men they are called to lead and serve. They are, after all, human beings, and as Pope Benedict XVI puts it: “human beings always need something more than technically proper care. They need humanity. They need heartfelt concern. Those who work for the Church’s charitable organisations must be distinguished by the fact that they do not merely meet the needs of the moment, but they dedicate themselves to others with heartfelt concern, enabling them to experience the richness of their humanity” (*ibid*).

Without doubt, the gospels witness the special leadership position of St Peter among the college of the apostles in the primitive church. But at the same time, the Acts of the Apostles and other documents of the primitive church also show strong elements of prayerful collegial decision-making and exercise of leadership, especially in moments of conflict, such as when they proposed to select seven men for waiting at the tables (*Acts* 6:1-6) or when St Peter justified his behaviour towards pagans among the brethren in Jerusalem (*Acts* 11:1-18) or at the assembly of Jerusalem (the so-called Council of Apostles) which discussed St Paul’s preaching of salvation by Christ alone, free from obligations of the Jewish law (*Acts* 15:1-32). Similarly, in local communities of the primitive Church, there were colleges of bishops and of elders (e.g. *Acts* 20:17). Leadership was already exercised collegially in the primitive church, seeking to be one in Christ in Spirit, in intention and action.

This kind of leadership is not only a challenge for individual leaders, but also for modern organisations that have a team leadership structure – as is the

case with some Caritas organisations. The challenge is to follow this apostolic leadership model of communal discernment and exercising leadership together.

Responsibility and formation of leaders

There is rightly, according to human social nature and the instructions of Christ himself, leadership in the Church. It is part of Her *diakonia*: The New Testament use of the word *diakonia* applies to Christ as well as to His apostles and the men and women who served the primitive Christian communities. Exegetical studies reveal that “service” (*diakonia*) usually implies an official and important mandate or mission imparted by an authority. This service therefore creates a relationship between the divine or human (*ekklesial*) mandate giver, the mandate receiver and the persons to be reached by the mandated activity. The mandate receiver even as a leader does not possess autonomous power, but is subordinated and obligated to the mandate giver and the mandate entrusted to him or her. His or her authority is always a delegated one, tied to the correct execution of the mandate received. Caritas leaders are aware that ultimately it is the Church Herself who is the subject of all Caritas activities (*Deus Caritas Est* 32) having received Christ’s mission in the service of God’s love (*Deus Caritas Est* 42).

In professional and scientific terms, all definitions of leadership share the view that it involves the process of influence, in other words, of exercising power. To a large extent, power and influence can be used synonymously. “People have power when they have the ability to affect others’ beliefs, attitudes, and courses of action.”³⁰ Leading is influencing, leading is exercising power. The internalisation of Christ’s and His gospel’s teachings and example as formation of the heart implies a radical *transformation* in living communion with Christ and His example, not a *denial* of leadership, influence and power. On the other hand, it may become a defence against the temptations of power or position, which almost inevitably exert a regressive attraction for human beings.

Church leaders in general and the leaders of Her Caritas organisations are responsible for structures, procedures, climate and culture within their respective organisations and institutions. These must be consonant and consistent

³⁰ Northouse, Peter G., *Leadership. Theory and Practice*, 5th ed., Los Angeles: Sage Publications 2009, 7.

with the organisation’s mission to favour Christ-like love, to meet people’s needs and sufferings in a spirit of caring love. Caritas leaders are responsible for the development of the people who will devote their energy, skills and time to organised works of *caritas*, as an “*opus proprium*” of the Church (*Deus Caritas Est* 29.3). Therefore, they lead “with heartfelt concern” for the primary needs of the collaborators, employees and volunteers who are entrusted to their leadership. And this includes their need for an ongoing formation of the heart: “they need to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others” (*Deus Caritas Est* 31a).

When Robert K. Greenleaf coined the phrase “servant leader”, he may have been inspired not just by utilitarian motives of success, but by Christ’s model and teaching. He describes this kind of leader as one who is servant first and wants to serve first, in contrast to leaders who are leaders first and want to lead first. Obviously, this is a useful distinction and resonates with Christ’s words quoted above. Leaders who serve as Christ did, make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are met, in order to foster their growth and development as persons so that they in turn may become servants. This may imply first of all, that they respect and value every collaborator for his or her unique personality. Secondly, that they apply sound professional judgement and fairly safeguard agreed times of work and leisure. And thirdly, that they practice and encourage supervision that promotes personal and professional development and growth in a holistic manner.

Generally speaking, successful leaders have developed several competencies for their leadership roles (and these apply equally to Church and Caritas leaders):

- They are able to create a sense of mission;
- They can motivate others to join them on that mission and to collaborate towards common aligned goal(s) implied by the mission;
- They succeed in being flexible and creating an adaptive social and business architecture for their collaborators;
- They generate and maintain trust and confidence. They are ready to receive feedback, and they are able to give constructive timely feedback themselves;
- They seek advice and counsel;
- They inspire, coach and mentor others to develop in their professional and personal competencies and as leaders;

- They encourage decision-making and creative solution-focused thinking at all levels;
- They achieve goals they realistically set out for.³¹

And for Caritas leaders, we could add the following: They are humbly and thankfully aware that they are instruments in the hand of the Lord and freed from the presumption that they alone are responsible for building a better world (*Deus Caritas Est* 35-36).

Servant leaders in need of Christ and of learning

Servant leaders in need of Christ: In many respects, servant leaders are personally called to live the mission of Caritas organisations. They know that separated from Christ, the true vine, they can do nothing.

Because Caritas organisations have set out to serve and realise the Church's mission in the service of love (*Deus Caritas Est* 42), their servant leaders live in a profound union within the Church as hierarchical communion, and they serve Her sacramental mission, which is a sign and instrument of an intimate union with God and of the whole human race (*Lumen Gentium* 1). These leaders "want to work with the Church and therefore with the Bishop, so that the love of God can spread throughout the world. By their sharing in the Church's practice of love, they wish to be witnesses of God and of Christ, and they wish for this very reason freely to do good to all" (*Deus Caritas Est* 33).

On the one hand, they must be professionally trained for their leadership tasks, but they must also be spiritually enabled to critically discern, apply and transform secular leadership competencies and strategies in the spirit of Christ, of service and of self-giving love. To be a servant leader in Caritas depends more on *who you are* than on *what you do*. Becoming a real human being in the footsteps of Christ, acknowledging other human beings, is really the primary leadership issue of our time, and on a scale maybe never before required. Being a servant leader requires a shift from organisational hierarchies, with leaders at the top, to more distributed, shared communities of workers and networks. Hierarchical leadership based on position or formal authority alone is inherently inadequate.

A widespread temptation of leadership seems to be a strong focus on gaining and using power, driving change, influencing people and maintaining an ap-

³¹ Bennis, Warren, *The Challenges of Leadership in the Modern World*, in: *American Psychologist* 62 (2007) 2-5, here: 5.

pearance of control. In addition, according to Betty Sue Flowers³², “one of the roadblocks for groups moving forward now is thinking that they have to wait for leaders to emerge – someone who embodies the future path. But the future can emerge within the group itself, not embodied in a ‘hero’ or traditional ‘leader’. This is the key to going forward – that we have to nurture a new form of leadership that doesn’t depend on extraordinary individuals,” but, as we may add, on people being continuously shaped by the gospel.

Servant leaders, therefore, need to know who they are. Equally important, however, is for them to be aware of who they are called to become. St Paul in his letter to the Corinthians reminds us that “Now we see only reflections in a mirror, mere riddles, but then we shall be seeing face to face. Now I can know only imperfectly; but then I shall know just as fully as I am myself known” (*1 Cor* 13:12). This also holds true for the shared communities of Caritas workers and networks: “For those networks to work with real awareness, many people will need to be deeply committed to cultivating their capacity to serve what’s seeking to emerge” (Betty Sue Flowers).

Servant leaders in need of learning: The Greek word for disciple or follower, *mathetes*, literally means pupil or student, one who is learning. In fact, we can learn much from secular leadership theories, which have been well analysed over many decades (theories, for example, of trait, skills, style, situational and psychodynamic approaches, contingency, path-goal and leader-member exchange theories, transformational, authentic and team leadership models, as well as leadership ethics).³³

Valid leadership theories unanimously point to the fact that others will not be guided and achieve common goals based solely on the behaviour of their leader. If organisational behaviour and leadership could be reduced to two dimensions, task and people, with orientations varying between two ends of a single continuum, decision-making for an organisation would be relatively uncomplicated. However, things are different. Leadership is a process of manifold dynamic social and systemic interactions, notwithstanding the

³² Cf. Senge, Peter, Schamer, C. Otto, Jaworski, Joseph and Flowers, Betty Sue, *Presence – An Exploration of Profound Change in People, Organisations, and Society*, London: Brealey 2005.

³³ Cf. Northouse, Peter G., *Leadership. Theory and Practice*, 5th ed., Los Angeles: Sage Publications 2009. Field, R. George, A test of the Vroom-Yetton Normative Model of Leadership, *Journal of Applied Psychology* 67 (1982) 523-532.

positive role played in the process by leaders' favourable character traits and moral integrity.

Today's leaders must have a broad systemic understanding of how things fit together: the relationship among individuals and groups inside and outside the organisation, be that a Caritas organisation or broader Church. They need a good business sense and the understanding of the interplay among various elements of the Church's, communities' and Caritas organisations' operations. In addition, managing human performance and needs in a values-based organisation and business environment fraught with uncertainty and unknown influences calls for a *compassionate, adaptive and considerate* approach. Caritas leaders uncover the potential for growth of the other, and enable the individual and the team to see the horizon ahead. This dissolves the boundaries between *seer and seen*, which leads not only to a deep sense of connection, but also to change and transformation.

As influence due to power of "position" erodes, leaders will not be appointed because they know everything and can make every decision. They need personal power, too: they need to be seen by their followers as likeable and knowledgeable, acting in ways that are important to their collaborators. They will be appointed because they can bring together the collective knowledge that is available and then create the prerequisites for the work and mission to be fulfilled. Servant leaders serve their teams and staff by creating the systems and the environment that enable them to delegate responsibility for day-to-day operations.

There is empirical evidence that leaders are more likely to use participation and collaboration when: a) the quality of the decision is important; b) when it is important that others accept that decision (and we know it is unlikely they will do so unless they are allowed to take part in it); and c) when others can be trusted to pay attention to the goals of the group rather than simply their own preferences.

Servant leadership does not mean that the leader abdicates responsibility for hard decisions. On the contrary, that can be an inevitable part of the service itself. It does not mean either that it relates to a leader "singular". The leadership can relate to a team within an organisation, a community or the broader Church. But it does mean that the leaders put themselves in an empathetic position: following the example of Jesus washing his followers' feet or John the Baptist giving power away when he shows others the way to Jesus.

There is also a symbolic function to leadership. Leaders’ actions result in tangible operational and organisational values, and reinforce the importance of these values. The vision of leaders is communicated to others through verbal and non-verbal channels. Without doubt, *visibility* is an important part of the process. Coherent visibility affects the attitudes, values, and beliefs of others. The reason for this is that many stakeholders, employers or communities may have limited access to the leaders themselves. There are many examples where contact between executive leadership and employees, collaborators or volunteers has been regarded as a “moment of truth” in the understanding and interpretation of the leaders’ vision. These “moments of truth”³⁴ convey a great deal of information to others concerning top management’s commitment to the vision and thus serve a highly symbolic function. Visible role modelling is thus a potent vehicle through which the symbolic nature of leadership influences employee and community perceptions, values, attitudes and behaviour.

In summary

Servant leaders are called to live their vocation to *caritas* and to become credible and encouraging motivators, so that their collaborators can receive God’s love in encounters with Christ, in prayerful listening to His word, in the sacraments, and in their service to the poor and needy. In this sense, they are called to allow themselves to be transformed by the love poured into their hearts by the Holy Spirit (*Rom 5:5*). They must internalise St Paul’s hymn to charity or *agape* (*1 Cor 13*), which teaches that all the work of Caritas organisations is always called to be more than activity alone: “If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, I gain nothing” (v.3). Servant leaders can make this hymn “the *Magna Carta* of all ecclesial service... Practical activity will always be insufficient, unless it visibly expresses a love for man, a love nourished by an encounter with Christ” (*Deus Caritas Est 34*).

This is what Caritas is all about. We are servant leaders for our constituents, the poor, the marginalised, excluded and disenfranchised. The global mission of Caritas Internationalis is to serve the one human family. As servant leaders we must sense what is going on, observe what is happening globally, nationally and locally, be the seer and the seen. But we must also be sensitive to the formation, growth and cultivation of individuals and their rights to choose and participate.

³⁴ Carlzon, Jan, *Moments of Truth*, New York: Harper Collins Publ., 1989.

Caritas and project work. “You are the salt of the earth... the light of the world.”

By Mons. Josef Sayer

A biblical foundation

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus shows us the way. The parables of the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world” reflect the essence of what Caritas does as it follows in the footsteps of Christ. Being like salt and being like light, are two elementary images taken from people’s everyday lives. Without light, human life, indeed life of any kind, is not possible. Without salt, life loses its relish and its taste, and becomes dull and unappetising.

These statements about following Christ as His disciple also draw their poignancy from the fact that they are made in the Gospel according to St Matthew immediately following the beatitudes. Jesus Christ pronounced as blessed the *poor in spirit*, those who *mourn*, those who are *persecuted* and *reviled*, and the *mEEK*. He also identifies as blessed those who *hunger and thirst for righteousness* and the *peacemakers*, as well as the *merciful* and those who are *pure in heart*, who open themselves up to God completely. In other words, people are declared blessed whose lives are “arduous and burdensome”, who hunger and thirst for God’s justice and decent lives in the spirit of the children of God. Clearly, in the world we live in, there are obstacles along this path. Persecutions of all kinds threaten those who place all their trust in God and resist the temptation to resort to violence.

All of this is echoed in the parables of the salt of the earth and light of the world. Jesus says what He means apodictically: “*You are* the salt of the earth”, “*You are* the light of the world”. He does not say for instance, “*Try* to be the salt of the earth” or “*Strive* to be the light of the world”. No. He says quite succinctly “*You are*”. For we who are followers of Jesus today, this is bound to take our breath away. Are we capable of doing that? Is it not asking too much of us? Questions and doubts of this kind are of no interest to Jesus. When He

elaborates on the two images He just wipes away all doubts: "...if salt has lost its taste...", "a lamp is put on a stand". The images are as clear as the light of day. It is not possible to be a *little bit* salty, or to try and be so. Being a light is incompatible with being concealed or standing in the shade. It is a matter of either/or. Jesus calls on the disciples to make a decision. He expects them to take that decisive step. Jesus Christ, who formulates demands like this entirely from within the presence of God, is not satisfied with doing things by halves. He is talking about the gospel, which He is bringing into the *world* from God, and He is talking about God's plan for the *Earth*. He Himself – Jesus Christ – is the message of salvation for the *entire Earth*, the *whole world*. And as He brings salvation to the world, He does not leave His disciples, who "are the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world", to perform their service alone. He is "with them always, to the close of the age".

This tells us that God is someone who embraces everything and everyone, and loves each and every one of us. This is precisely what the disciples of Jesus must bear witness to through their behaviour and actions, by being the salt and the light. As individuals and left to our own devices, we might be gripped by dependency in the face of the task before us. But *as members of the Church* we are part of the community sustained by the Holy Spirit. This community has a *global* mission. The Church is not just an end in Herself. The Church cannot and must not just be about Herself. She must not just constantly revolve around herself and Her internal difficulties. This is because She has a *mission to serve the whole world*, because Jesus Christ is the Anointed One and Saviour for the *whole Earth*. The Second Vatican Council says this right at the beginning of the pronouncement on the Church: Jesus Christ is the *Lumen Gentium*, the *Light of nations*. And since Christ is the light of nations, He has called His Church to serve, to be like a sacrament – "a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all human beings" (*Lumen Gentium* 1).

Maintaining a presence in most countries of the world through its numerous organisations, staff members and volunteers, Caritas today must see itself as an instrument of the Church serving this aim of uniting all humankind. Joined with Christ, and through Him with all members of the Church, the Caritas family must follow Jesus and give itself entirely to being salt and light for the "earth" and the "world". Jesus Christ calls His followers to serve others and make this commitment, take this risk of losing themselves. This service brings

forth *good works* (Mt 5:16) in the countless Caritas projects. These shine a light on the union with Jesus Christ and His saving power for the whole world. And when they see these "good works", people will come to *give glory to the Father who is in Heaven*. Thus the essential aim of the actions of the disciples, of Caritas and of the Church as a whole will be achieved: all people giving glory to God.

However, we should not interpret "giving glory to the Father who is in Heaven" to mean that God is dependent on our praise, or that He would be somehow lacking if we Christians or everyone on Earth were not to praise Him or give Him glory. God is not dependent on our praise. Praising God rather means that we human beings see ourselves as His creatures. By doing this we fulfil the will of God, who wants to bestow His love on each and every one of us. As recipients of His love we also *respond* to it. We do so by bearing witness to our fellow human beings and God's Creation by allowing the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ to *shine through in our love of our fellows* and in our *good works*. This is the precise meaning of "giving glory to the Father who is in Heaven". Our love of God is inseparable from our love of our fellow human beings. God's love can be experienced and recognised in this love of our fellows. And by allowing this love to shine through in the service it performs in its projects, Caritas achieves its goal: praising God by practising brotherly and sisterly love. In the sermon he delivered when he visited Munich, Pope Benedict XVI expressed this by pointing out that Christian charity, which is first and foremost a thirst for justice, is the touchstone of faith and love of God. The two form a single whole.

This is also the basic orientation of Caritas, that is *diakonia* as a fundamental service of the Church. By being the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world", and by caring for the needy and the afflicted, and working for justice and decent lives in numerous projects, the Church's Caritas organisations in over 200 countries are today translating the Sermon on the Mount into actual reality.

We will now look at some selected areas in which Caritas projects operate, projects that exemplify the commitment of countless Christians. This might encourage the many individuals in numerous Caritas projects around the globe who strive tirelessly for a more charitable, just and loving world to reflect on the fact that they, too, are the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world". They might come to understand the underlying spirituality of their actions in projects as one of giving glory to the Father in Heaven. Sharing with others on

this at Caritas conferences and meetings can help us overcome difficulties and despondency, follow in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ, risk our lives and place our lives in the balance, so that God's love for all and for His Creation can be seen and experienced.

Examples of areas in which Caritas projects operate

Serving the sick

The Church's healing service for the poor goes back to the beginnings of the Church, which were based on Jesus' teaching and praxis. Jesus sent the Twelve Apostles and 72 disciples out to proclaim the gospel and to *heal the sick*. So right from the start, the Church's basic apostolic service included caring for the sick. The Church Father Clement of Alexandria describes Christ as *the* healer. He refers to Him as the "*medicus mundi*", the "healer of the world", not only because of His miraculous acts of healing, but also because of the healing effects of His preaching about reconciliation, charity and solidarity.

The Church not only proclaimed Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God. As well as their basilicas, the first bishops also erected health posts and hospices to provide active care for the sick and the needy. This practice was continued by the monasteries. When the Roman Empire fell, they rescued the knowledge embodied in ancient medical science and carried it on into the early Middle Ages, devoting themselves to the care of the sick. This practice continues to have an impact to this day. In China, for instance, we also find health posts close to church buildings. This is how the gospel's "being the light of the world" is translated into reality. Until the French Revolution, the universities that later emerged together with their medical schools were usually run by the Church. Yet even after that, when Church and State separated, serving the sick remained a specific task of Church institutions, ranging from religious communities to Caritas organisations. Christians have endeavoured and continue to endeavour to see in each sick person Christ, of whom the Good Friday liturgy, following the prophet Isaiah, says, "Ours were the sufferings He was bearing, ours the sorrows He was carrying" (*Is* 53:4).

In this tradition that stretches continuously from the beginnings of the Church to the present, Caritas organisations today devote themselves to the sick in numerous projects of many kinds. This is of crucial importance, particularly in developing countries. And it is a shining example of Christian charity, that is *caritas*: "You are the light of the world".

Serving the disabled

We should, though, give a special mention to the wonderful work performed by Caritas with the disabled. In many countries of the world, and among many peoples and ethnic groups, disabled people suffer the effects of culturally determined practices and prejudices. Their human dignity is disrespected, and as a result they are neglected. This may even go as far as making them disappear or leaving them to die, often during infancy. In today's world, Caritas organisations and their staff play a leading role in raising awareness about disability. Caritas projects become lamps in the spirit of Matthew 5:14, giving light to a more humane world.

And this is more necessary than ever. According to World Health Organisation estimates, in the year 2000 there were some 335 million people with moderately severe to severe disabilities worldwide. Seventy percent of them were living in developing countries. What compounds the difficulties faced by persons with disabilities is the fact that they quite often also face poverty. The World Bank estimates that twenty percent of the poorest people are handicapped. Poverty and severe disability are directly linked. It is therefore especially important that Caritas and Church-based development cooperation organisations, such as those that are members of CIDSE, work together worldwide. In many countries MISEREOR, for instance, promotes the work performed by Caritas on behalf of the bishops' conferences to reduce poverty, which is a key factor that leads to disability and exacerbates the fate of the disabled. The poverty factor is also manifested by the fact that twenty million people worldwide who need a wheelchair do not get one. Being the salt of the earth and the light of the world for our disabled brothers and sisters, is and remains a core task for Caritas, notwithstanding the usually formulaic repetition of the Declaration of Human Rights.

Against female genital mutilation

The efforts of Caritas organisations to promote people's physical health and emotional well-being are highly regarded by all kinds of governments around the world, whether they be democratic, centralistic or emphatically non-Christian. Local Churches support the establishment of Caritas structures in this field. However, we need to draw attention to female genital mutilation, which remains a dreadful fact. And for far too long it was neglected by Caritas organi-

sations. Currently, though, this is gradually changing. I have therefore selected it as an example to encourage closer engagement in this area, and at the same time to suggest that Caritas might get involved in areas where civil rights and economic, social and cultural human rights are being violated.

Female circumcision and genital mutilation are widespread among many ethnic communities, above all in Africa. In Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan and Djibouti, for instance, many women are affected. In other countries only members of certain ethnic communities are circumcised, for example in Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal and Kenya. Female genital mutilation also occurs on the Arabian Peninsula (for example in the United Arab Emirates and Yemen) and in parts of Asia.

It is estimated that between 100 and 157 million women and girls worldwide are affected by female circumcision or genital mutilation. A further two million girls are added to this figure every year. This means that about 6,000 girls are circumcised every day. Circumcision has far-reaching negative impacts on the physical and emotional health of girls and women.

Although arguments based on religious and cultural traditions are put forward to justify female circumcision, the real motivation for it should be seen in the patriarchal social structures that in practice do not recognise the equal dignity of women.

Female genital mutilation is a violation of human rights of the worst kind. Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights accords everyone “the right to life, liberty and security of person”. Moreover, Article 5 demands that “No one shall be subjected to [...] cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment”. The practice of genital mutilation jeopardises and violates the liberty, security of person and human development of girls and young women.

Where human dignity and human rights are concerned, the witness of Christian faith becomes conspicuous. For God has bestowed an inalienable dignity on all human beings. Providing physical and emotional support to girls and women who are affected or threatened by genital mutilation, a violation of their human rights, is therefore an especially important pastoral task. Caritas is now addressing this worldwide, and setting an example to others in the process.

One specific example is a project in Alexandria where the legal holder of the project is Caritas Egypt Alexandria. It is important to know that the practice of female genital mutilation in its various forms is widespread in Egypt. Recent studies estimate that over ninety percent of all married women in Egypt are circumcised.

The situation is especially pronounced in Upper Egypt, where female circumcision is practised by Muslims and Christians alike. While it is true that the practice is legally prohibited in Egypt, efforts to enforce this ban by the authorities have had barely any success to date. Caritas Alexandria is therefore focusing its efforts increasingly at the local level. The aim here is to draw on existing resources: male and female change agents who have put up opposition even in the traditional context of female circumcision. These include, for instance, women who have not had their daughters circumcised, and clergy of the two Christian Churches and the Muslim religion who reject female circumcision.

What Caritas is achieving here in terms of equal dignity for women and girls by acting as the light of the world and the salt of the earth cannot be rated highly enough. Information and counselling centres on female circumcision have been set up. Regular house calls are made on girls at risk of genital mutilation and their parents. A league has been founded of women and men who have already resisted female circumcision or spoken out against it. This is wonderful. The practice of female circumcision in Egypt is being slowly but persistently exposed as a practice that destroys women's human dignity. This is bringing about a key improvement in the lives of girls and women.

Supporting female domestic workers

This touches on a challenge for Caritas that, as markets have globalised, has become common in many countries. Women are particularly hard hit by the negative impact of globalisation, and their fundamental rights are being violated. Pope Paul VI gave the Church the following admonition: "The emphasis on justice and rights leads us to recognise clearly that women's rights have become a prime concern. Women's rights are closely tied up with the rights of the poor, because poor women make a special contribution to carrying the overwhelming burden of ensuring the survival of the family. (...) Involving the women affected in addressing this sad reality is not only valuable, it is an absolute necessity."³⁵

Caritas' support for female domestic workers, who are usually employed without a contract of employment and frequently abused by their employers, has increasingly become an essential task of our age. We know that for this group of women only very few countries have a legal framework in place,

³⁵ This quotation was translated by Caritas.

which means that the women are usually unable to claim legal protection. Women from Sri Lanka or the Philippines, for instance, are recruited through agencies (which are often not recognised by the State), enticed by the offer of going to another country where they can earn money to send home to their poor families by working as domestics. For women in desperate situations of poverty, offers like this appear to be a beacon of hope. With a contract that at first glance appears to be in order, these women then arrive in a strange country, only to discover that the contract is invalid. Some of them go underground, where they live in fear as “illegal immigrants” and fall victim to exploitation. Others are given a new contract, which is often not written in the language that they understand. Many women have their passports taken from them. This leaves them at the absolute mercy of their employer.

Given the international nature of this exploitation of women, it is important that Caritas organisations in various countries cooperate. Caritas in the Polish city of Grudziadz and the Caritas association of the Archdiocese of Paderborn, for instance, counsel and support women from Poland who intend to work as domestic workers in Germany. This counselling encompasses legal, emotional, pastoral and spiritual support.

The problem of the exploitation of domestic workers also affects women *within their own countries*. In particular, women who belong to ethnic minorities from remote rural regions are exploited by city dwellers as cheap labour, and are often subjected to degrading treatment. This phenomenon occurs on all continents. Laws forbidding it, where they exist at all, are circumvented. Caritas Internationalis sees itself as providing a voice for this vulnerable group, and is therefore currently engaged in an international campaign calling upon governments and employers to provide these women with effective protection. The campaign, in which Caritas Internationalis is calling upon its member organisations throughout the world to lobby their governments, was launched in April 2010. Policymakers are now being asked to put legal arrangements in place guaranteeing fair working conditions for domestic workers and ensuring the equal dignity of women.

Caritas projects and humanitarian disaster relief

Today, there are countless Caritas projects around the world engaged in humanitarian disaster relief. The disasters involved have included catastrophes such as the tsunami that followed the earthquake in the Indian Ocean in 2004,

as well as the earthquake that hit Haiti and the flooding that struck Pakistan in 2010. The fact that these disasters also became "global media events" meant that they each generated a virtually unprecedented wave of solidarity in which Caritas organisations in many countries were involved. What was gladdening was that in Haiti, for instance, it was not only the Caritas organisations in the various rich industrialised countries that provided humanitarian relief. Aid also came from other developing countries. Poor people were acting in solidarity and fraternity with the poor.

Where Pakistan was concerned, it was good to note how very clear it became around the world that humanitarian assistance delivered in a Christian spirit is meant for *all* those who are suffering. Religious affiliation is of no relevance here. According to the Christian understanding of God and the human person, all people are created by God. He gave *all of them* a life with an inalienable dignity, and His love is there for *all*. For us as Christians, it goes without saying that we help Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and people of all faiths who are in need.

Yet Caritas organisations do not confine their humanitarian assistance to those disasters that achieve a high media profile. Caritas is also called upon to help in the many silent disasters that are forgotten by the public, because Jesus never walked past anyone who was suffering, and His love is there for those who are forgotten and who are pushed to the margins of society. Just as His mission was not only for the people of Israel, but for everyone, and just as He is the "light of the world", so it is with the Caritas organisations and their members as they follow Him.

Caritas projects and climate change

In the face of global climate change, a commitment to the stewardship of creation has without a doubt become one of the most important new tasks in the work of Caritas now and in the future. This is because climate change is exacerbating the predicament of many poor people whose life situation is already precarious. The new challenges can be illustrated with reference to an example involving Caritas Bangladesh. One important aim of the work of this project is to raise awareness of the impacts of climate change, and develop strategies to reduce its negative effects on the population of Bangladesh.

Let us say just this much about the background to this situation: the industrialised countries have been developing their economic capacities for more than

100 years. During that time they have used the atmosphere free of charge, and polluted it with CO₂ and other greenhouse gases, which has impacted negatively on the climate. Over the last 100 years average temperatures have risen by 0.7°C, and unless we change course quickly, they will rise by up to four degrees by the end of the 21st century. The consequences, especially for poor countries, would be horrifying. Although the poor have had barely any hand in the production of CO₂ emissions, they are already the hardest hit. People in Bangladesh are already experiencing declining crop yields caused by elevated temperatures and changed patterns of precipitation. In the long-term we must expect water supply problems.

Climate change will cause sea levels to rise, affecting many millions of people in Bangladesh. As in other parts of the world, extreme weather events with disastrous consequences are already becoming more frequent.

Climate change is jeopardising ecosystems, with severe consequences for food security. It is causing the spread of diseases that affect the poor worst of all, because their healthcare situation is already extremely fragile. Reports of these and similar impacts are emerging from people in various countries in the Pacific region, in Latin America, in Africa and Asia. In some countries flooding is becoming more frequent, while in others dry areas are advancing. This is jeopardising vital resources, such as forests and agricultural resources. It is also threatening safe shelter and infrastructure.

The poor and poor countries will not be able to manage the measures needed for adaptation to the negative impacts of climate change on their own. They are dependent on external support.

If we are to keep the increase in average temperatures to below 2°C during the 21st century, then it is mainly the industrialised and emerging countries that will have to radically reduce their CO₂ emissions and adopt economic practices that are not based on fossil fuels. This will require new technologies that will also need to be made available to the poor countries.

Firstly, Caritas organisations in various countries will need to prepare for the problems faced by the poor in adapting to the impacts of climate change. They must make provision now for responding to the enormous suffering and deprivation that the poor will experience as a result of climate change. Secondly, Caritas must also carry out advocacy work to raise awareness in the rich countries and among the governments of the emerging and developing countries. The failure of the United Nations Climate Summit in Copenhagen in

2009 demonstrated that the governments of the rich countries and emerging countries are still by no means oriented toward the global common good.

Yet this very failure also demonstrates that the Church needs to muster all its forces. Caritas organisations alone are not sufficient. On this vital issue for humankind, the Church as a whole must raise its prophetic voice. The organisations of Caritas Internationalis and the Church-based development cooperation organisations that are members of CIDSE have already begun addressing the issue of climate change. They were represented at the UN General Assembly on climate change in 2009, in Copenhagen, and in 2010 in Cancun, together with delegations of bishops, experts and stakeholders. Cooperation of this kind needs to be stepped up. In particular, the responsible bishops and lay persons of all 165 Caritas members and the partner organisations of Church-based development cooperation organisations in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific region also need to be involved.

"Being the salt" and "being the light" today

It is in the setting of new global challenges such as climate change that projects involving Caritas and Church-based development cooperation organisations show just how well Christians today understand how to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world". And it is good to know that the Church leadership promotes and supports this pioneering and flagship work of Church-based organisations and institutions (performed entirely in the spirit of the subsidiarity principle, which is part of Catholic Social Teaching). Pope John Paul II, for instance, repeatedly spoke of the ecological responsibility of Christians. In his message for the World Day of Peace in 1990 he said, referring to the witness of St Francis of Assisi, that "when we are at peace with God we are better able to devote ourselves to building up that peace with all creation which is inseparable from peace among all peoples" (no. 16). And Pope Benedict XVI reaffirmed this in his message for the World Day of Peace in 2010, when he said: "If you want to cultivate peace, protect creation".

The example of climate change demonstrates how the Holy Father is drawing attention to the challenges of the present day more and more resolutely. He recognises the immense social consequences for the poor, for humankind as a whole and for coming generations that are associated with climate change. He is also enquiring more and more resolutely into the impacts of globalisation processes that are by no means unfolding for the good of all.

Caritas Internationalis is responding creatively to these impacts. The new challenges also entail cooperation with others, especially in developing countries. Caritas, and indeed the Church as a whole, are called by Jesus Christ, their Lord, to be the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world”. This call, this mission and this service need to be fulfilled today more than ever before: intelligently, creatively and cooperatively, making use of all our capacities, and above all through trust in the presence of the Holy Spirit in our age and our world today. God, who is love, wishes to give the gift of this love to all human beings and His creation.

Commitment to sustainable development: theological options for the foreign and domestic work of Caritas Germany

By Dr. Peter Neher

“The joys and the hopes, the grief and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the grief and anxieties of the followers of Christ.” These introductory words from *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World³⁶ from the Second Vatican Council, represent the self-understanding of the Church in our world. She understands Herself to be a Church that wants to be close to the people and to provide proof of the love of God and the love of neighbour. In his first encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*³⁷, Pope Benedict XVI says, “Love of God and love of neighbour are thus inseparable [...] But both live from the love of God who has loved us first” (DEC 18). The social work of the Church expresses itself essentially in the social motivation of religious communities, congregations, organisations and groups, both locally and globally.

“For the Church, charity is not a kind of welfare activity which could equally well be left to others” (*Deus Caritas Est* 25), says Pope Benedict XVI. For this reason, charity is the duty and calling of all Christians at all levels of the Church, parishes and associated charities.

Pope Benedict XVI describes the organised form of *caritas* in these words: “The Church’s charitable organisations [...] constitute an *opus proprium*, a task agreeable to her, in which she does not cooperate collaterally, but acts as a subject with direct responsibility, doing what corresponds to her nature” (*Deus*

³⁶ www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html (29.01.2011)

³⁷ Cf. www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html (29.01.2011)

Caritas Est 29). Charitable organisations, services, groups and associations are places for the presence of God and shared experiences of the gospel.

In this spirit, Caritas Germany, the social services organisation of the Catholic Church in Germany, operates both domestically and abroad. It is part of the international network of Caritas organisations and sees itself as an advocate for the poor, promoter of solidarity and service provider. Many people in the parishes and beyond support the work of Caritas, both domestically and abroad. As a symbol of solidarity, employees of Caritas Germany light candles at public places on a specific day in November as part of the “One Million Stars” programme to collect donations and talk with people about worldwide solidarity. Caritas organisations and their staff, both domestically and abroad, exchange information and learn from each other.

On the following pages, I present the theological motivations and criteria for the domestic and foreign efforts of Caritas. I describe the development of overseas operations and show how they are linked to domestic operations. And finally, I attempt to discuss the motivating factors behind Caritas’ foreign and domestic work for the development of the Church.

Theological motivations and ethical criteria

The message of the gospel and the calling of the Church for charity is the initial motivation for the work of the associated charities in Germany, as it is in other countries.³⁸ One challenge of charity work is to bring the theological foundation – and the ethical criteria that develop from it – to fruition and relate them to contemporary challenges. Both the theological foundation and the ethical criteria are always being refined and are not a fixed set of consistent truths that can simply be imparted. For example, in recent years, sustainability and capability justice have been added to the catalogue of criteria of theological ethics. Correspondingly, a core duty of Caritas is to continue to reflect and establish its positions, projects and concepts, both domestically and overseas, on the basis of theological and ethical perspectives. At the same time, the actual charity work itself represents a *locus theologicus*; a place for ethical and theological reflection and the development of theology itself.

³⁸ Cf. Sekretariat der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz (Ed.), *Berufen zur caritas*, (Die Deutschen Bischöfe; 91), Bonn 2009.

God is a friend of living

The biblical message identifies God as a God of Life who desires the salvation of all people. God's desire for humanity's salvation, and that of his Son who acts as His representative, are repeatedly illustrated in the biblical parables of sickness and healing. One such example is the healing of a man with a shrivelled hand (*Lk* 6:6-11). The man is healed in the synagogue on the Sabbath, which leads to a dispute between Jesus and the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, about the meaning of the Sabbath. The situation is characterised as an act in public, through the preaching of Jesus in the synagogue. The sick person is labelled as "a man". He has a shrivelled hand. This description indicates the abstract intent of the biblical author.³⁹ In the biblical sense, the right hand is a symbol of the capability of people to act and make decisions. Thus, this involves "man" as a biblical patient.

The teachers of the law watch to see if Jesus will heal on the Sabbath. Jesus is aware of the secretive thoughts of the teachers of the law, who are looking for a reason to reproach him. He requests the sick man to stand in front of everyone. Standing in front of everyone is the focal point of the treatment, and thus, has a demonstrative purpose. The issue is presented through the subsequent questioning of whether a sick person may be left to his fate on the Sabbath. Karl Löning, a New Testament theologian, explains, "The healing Jesus as 'social worker' is a Christian image, which is encountered in similar phrasings in *Acts* 10:38"⁴⁰. There, it is a short formula for the entire works of Jesus. "The subsequent treatment is characterised as a good deed on behalf of a sick person, who should not be lost, but rather must be saved" (see *Acts* 4:9)."⁴¹ For a person, this is visibly demonstrated in a situation of acute endangerment of life for all. The regeneration of the person is not an attack against God's Commandment for the Sabbath, but rather is qualified by the exclusivity of the Lord's monopoly on healing. The Son of God heals the man on the Sabbath because God is a God of Life.

³⁹ Cf. Kostka, Ulrike, *Der Mensch in Krankheit, Heilung und Gesundheit im Spiegel der modernen Medizin. Eine biblische und theologisch-ethische Reflexion*, Münster 2000, 47-49.

⁴⁰ Löning, Karl., *Das Geschichtswerk des Lukas, Bd. 1: Israels Hoffnung und Gottes Geheimnisse*, Stuttgart 1997, 203.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

In this parable, the behaviour of the sick man is contrasted against that of the teachers of the Torah. The sick man immediately expresses what Jesus has charged him with and is healed. Jesus and the sick man communicate, successfully. However, the teachers of the Torah react to Jesus' request of the sick man to stand before everyone, with silence and misunderstanding. They do not understand him and thus reject the saving knowledge of the message of Jesus. He commands the disciples to proclaim the gospel and to heal the sick. In the biblical sense, healing always means comprehensive healing: body and soul, societal and religious. The disciples are thus called upon to help people toward comprehensive healing and to save life in this spirit in the apostolic succession. For this reason, the service of the apostolic succession can never be reduced to spiritual events and witnesses, but rather must include care for body and soul as well as the societal relation of the individual, as the Second Vatican Council emphasises in *Gaudium et Spes*. The calling of the disciples to heal the sick is thus bound to a commitment to justice.

Three dimensions of justice

Injustice has many shapes and faces. It stretches from economic poverty, political disadvantage and educational poverty to ecological injustices such as the disproportionate suffering of poor countries from the negative consequences of environmental change. The Church's commitment to justice must take these various aspects of injustice into consideration and combat them. The social ethicist, Andreas Lienkamp, distinguishes between three strata of justice: personal justice (justice of virtue), societal justice and environmental justice.⁴² With regard to societal justice, he places special emphasis on intra- and inter-generational justice. Environmental justice is a significant dimension for him, without which modern justice can no longer be considered. "Obviously, justice cannot be realised without securing peace and the integrity of creation. Unimpeded climate change caused by human beings represents an urgent injustice in need of response. Targeting environmental protection is therefore a central concern of the realisation of justice."⁴³ Against this background, Caritas follows a policy of sustainable social assistance as part of the social work of the

⁴² Lienkamp, Andreas, *Klimawandel und Gerechtigkeit. Eine Ethik der Nachhaltigkeit in christlicher Perspektive*, Paderborn 2009, 285.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 265.

Catholic Church, both foreign and domestic, contributing to the empowerment and self-determination of humanity, without making it dependent on help; the message of the hour is to encourage self-help. The criterion of sustainability has become increasingly more important over the last few years. “Sustainable development” or “sustainability” are core guiding principles, even for the work of the United Nations.

Sustainability as a core guidance criterion

The biblical texts underscore the responsibility of humankind as custodians of creation (see *Gen 1*). They make clear that all of creation is one whole, and that people are bound to all creatures in one communal destiny. This community also affects coming generations. Development which satisfies “the needs of the present without risking that future generations cannot satisfy their needs”⁴⁴ is called sustainable and is thus appropriate for the environment and fit for the future. Sustainability was described in a Statement of the Evangelical Church in Germany and the German Bishops’ Conference on the Economic and Social Situation in Germany in 1997 in the following terms: “Christian social ethics must do more to raise awareness of the interconnectedness of social, economic and ecological problems than it has in the past. It must combine the basic idea of preserving the integrity of creation with that of shaping the world, thereby situating all social processes within the all-embracing network of nature. Only in this way can humanity be accountable to subsequent generations. This is what the key concept of sustainable development is about...”⁴⁵ Thus in social work, aspects of ecological sustainability should also be taken into consideration.

Caritas Germany’s “Energy Savings Check” project is one example of such work (www.stromspar-check.de). Energy costs have risen significantly over the last few years. This particularly affects low-income households and those that are dependent on social security payments. Energy debts, or even disconnections, are increasingly becoming the consequence. Energy costs in low-income

⁴⁴ Hauff, Volker (Ed.), *Unsere gemeinsame Zukunft. Der Brundtland-Bericht der Weltkommission für Umwelt und Entwicklung*, Greven 1987, 46.

⁴⁵ For a Future Founded on Solidarity and Justice. A Statement of the Evangelical Church in Germany and the German Bishops’ Conference on the Economic and Social Situation in Germany, 1997, No. 125.

households are often particularly high. Older electrical equipment with higher energy consumption is often used in such households. Furthermore, they often lack the financial means to invest in more efficient equipment and do not have knowledge about appropriate energy usage. Information campaigns targeting these households are especially effective in reducing energy costs and contributing to the protection of the environment. The core thinking behind the programme is that trained, long-term unemployed people will be able to speak at the same level with other low-income households. As part of a publicly sponsored employment initiative, they will provide information about energy and water saving and the installation of smaller energy-saving appliances. The message is free for the household and participation is voluntary. It enables environmentally responsible action and improves opportunities in the job market for those who have not been employed for some time. Simultaneously, it is an effective contribution to ecological justice.

Self-determined participation and empowerment

Two additional criteria for social work are self-determined participation and empowerment. Self-determined participation by people is based on human dignity, because human beings are autonomous beings that are capable of self-determination. Speaking theologically, freedom and responsibility are required of human beings by God. God accepts this unconditionally and gives a share in the Kingdom of God through the humanisation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Human beings can know themselves to be loved unconditionally and become capable of self-love and brotherhood. Participation in the love of God, however, refers to the dependence of the individual on a personalised relationship with God and with other human beings. No one person alone is sufficient; everyone requires interaction with others. Self-determined participation means a paradigm shift away from the term “welfare” towards the view that even disadvantaged people, for example, are citizens of the state and part of the local community. As such, they have rights and obligations. Even limitations such as being old, needing care or being disabled do not set this aside.

Participation means having access to social, cultural, economic and political options and making one’s own decisions about them. Self-determined participation is a decisive condition for this inclusion. How the individual conceives this participation is their decision to make. Limitations include the rights of

others and the welfare of the community. However, obligations on the individual such as responsibility for solidarity with others follow from the right of participation. Self-determined participation exists in a shifting relationship to the right of empowerment.

From the Christian point of view, freedom is required of human beings and they have the responsibility to formulate their own lives responsibly and in solidarity. However, so that they can accomplish this, certain conditions are required of them, which these human beings cannot determine for themselves. Adequate healthcare, capabilities for development and access to education are among these conditions. The right of empowerment thus means that a society is obliged to ensure the necessary framework for the humane life of its members. Material and structural prerequisites are not the only requirements included in this framework; non-material conditions such as the absence of discrimination, are also included. The extent to which a society can ensure these framework conditions depends upon its resources.

Work in foreign countries and its connection with domestic efforts

The work of Caritas Germany in foreign countries over the last few decades has been a reflection of global, societal and church developments. Even in 1958, Martin Vorgrimler, then Manager of the Foreign Aid Department of Caritas Germany, defined foreign aid in the following manner: “Voluntary assistance planned on behalf of foreign peoples for the benefit of German citizens through the agency of organised centres”⁴⁶. Today in comparison, the assistance provided throughout the world by the Caritas network is generally understood to be for the benefit of all people in need.

From the end of World War I to the end of World War II

The help provided to the German people by foreign welfare organisations was at its height during the years of starvation after both World Wars. As soon as the Treaty of Versailles was signed in November 1918, enormous foreign assistance was provided for the benefit of German people. Many local churches, communities and foreign groups donated on behalf of the German

⁴⁶ Vorgrimler, Martin: Auslandshilfe nach Zwei Weltkriegen. Der Wandel der Auslandshilfe 1919 und 1945, in: Jahrbuch der Caritaswissenschaft und Caritasarbeit 1958, 86-101.

people. The foreign aid did not only benefit German people within the borders of Germany as they existed at that time. It also included German-born people living abroad.

The necessity of organising help for people even in remote areas led Pope Benedict XV to develop the idea of giving charities, as welfare organisations of the Catholic Church, an international scope. The requirement for this *caritas* to be international in order to operate in association with the International Red Cross had also already motivated Fr. Lorenz Werthmann, the founder of Caritas Germany, during the last days of World War I. At an international Caritas conference in Feldkirch in June 1921, a few weeks after Werthmann's death, Joseph von Tongelen, Director of Caritas Vienna, presented a proposal to establish an international Caritas network with the approval of the Holy See. However, the first transnational consortium initiated by Kuno Joerger, General Secretary of Caritas Germany from 1921 to 1958, took place on the occasion of the international Eucharistic Congress in Amsterdam under the name *Unio Internationalis Catholica Operum Caritatis*, later shortened to Caritas Catholica. Located in Lucerne, Switzerland, the committee met annually on the occasion of the Basel Conference until 1936. After that date, the political situation in Germany did not permit further meetings.

The establishment of Caritas Internationalis and the beginning of overseas aid

With the collapse of the Third Reich and the end of World War II, foreign aid as emergency assistance for the German people renewed the primary duties of Caritas, in which many foreign aid agencies and national charitable organisations participated. The international Caritas Catholica located in Lucerne tried to re-establish and simultaneously re-structure itself from 1947. In the scope of an international week of study regarding charitable work, which took place during the Holy Year of 1950 in Rome, the establishment of an international Caritas confederation was proposed to replace the previous loosely-organised union. The official inaugural meeting took place in Rome from 12th to 14th December 1951. At the International Caritas Conference, which also took place in Rome, one year later in December 1952, the name Caritas Internationalis (CI) was adopted and an Emergency Aid Commission was established under the supervision of Caritas Germany.

A first test in disaster relief

The newly formed Emergency Aid Commission of Caritas Internationalis was soon put to the test following the Hungarian Revolution in November 1956, as was the foreign aid department of Caritas Germany, which had a guarantee fund of over 200,000 German Marks. At this same time, a revised mission statement was drawn up for the foreign aid activities of Caritas.

Caritas Germany played an important role in the international activities of Caritas Internationalis in disaster management, and not just through the defining personalities of Carlo Bayer and Fr. Georg Hüssler. In the 1960s and 1970s, India, Vietnam and Biafra were focal points for relief efforts, in which ecumenical action with global supervision was accomplished through joint Church aid. In the 1980s, activities centred on Africa, Asia and Latin America.

During the 1990s, emergencies of special note included the Rwandan civil war, the Somalia famine, Hurricane Mitch in Central America and the Kosovo conflict. Since 2000, relief efforts have included the Iraq war and the Asian tsunami of 2004, and more recently, the Haitian earthquake in January 2010 and the Pakistan floods in the summer of 2010.

Even though the 1962 guidelines for Caritas Germany assigned responsibility for domestic catastrophes to the Diocesan Caritas organisations, the organisational know-how gained by Caritas Germany in its overseas activities has been put to use during domestic disasters, such as the flooding of the Oder in 1997 and the Elbe in 2002.

Development efforts and social infrastructure assistance

During this time, a move towards welfare assistance, begun in the mid-1950s, was completed. Following its reconstruction, Germany, once again became a donor country, rather than a recipient of foreign aid. Germany primarily provided emergency and disaster relief, but also had a global mandate for development work, as the conscience of the Western World became open to the problems of poverty and underdevelopment in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Today, the focus of the foreign work of Caritas Germany is emergency and disaster relief, help for children, elderly and sick people and people with dis-

abilities. This last area is where Caritas Germany has most of its experience and expertise in domestic work, and it is able to make this immediately available to Caritas partners in other countries. The principle of partnership is always applied, with Caritas supporting the national charities and other local partner organisations of the Catholic Church in the field, working closely with the local church. Attempts are always made to contribute to social development, along with the emergency and disaster relief.

The tsunami aid in the affected coastal regions of India is one such example. As well as immediate aid, disaster prevention measures were implemented in order to provide better protection against future disasters and make livelihoods more resilient. Women's groups were established, and women and girls empowered to better stand up for their rights. For the first time, women could learn a profession through educational measures, and men developed new professional perspectives.

Home-based care projects in Eastern Europe are another example of social development undertaken by Caritas Germany. With the support of domestic welfare offices and members of the nursing profession, consultation and support have been provided in this field. Several states have accepted the financing of home-based care offices, integrated them into their welfare and health agencies, and continued their development.

Similarly, the International Drug Congress in January 2010 showed how fruitful it can be to combine expertise gained from local work with drug addicts with knowledge about the global struggle against drug abuse.

Experience gained from overseas work also influences domestic efforts. International work is heavily orientated towards social spaces. Governmental and institutional structures are often weak, over-burdened and do not take account of the needs of the poor. I personally experienced an example of this in Brazil. In a suburb of Recife, flooding had destroyed an entire section of the city where the poor were the most severely affected. Caritas helped to organise them, and supported them with educational measures and building materials. After three years, one could hear of women boldly demanding their rights from the local authorities and applying pressure on them to keep their promises. These women rediscovered their own self-worth and learned what they were capable of accomplishing.

Caritas used this approach as part of the relief efforts for the Oder Flood in eastern Germany in 2002. The challenge was to integrate experiences from

foreign and domestic efforts in the context of socio-spatial orientation, and to share learning. Dialogue and exchanges of expertise between Caritas Germany and other Caritas organisations has been encouraged.

Motivation for a globally open Church

The foreign and domestic work of Caritas is defined by the physical needs of people and is present where they live. All people are welcome in the projects and establishments, regardless of their origins or their religion. Caritas has a clear profile as a Catholic organisation that performs Church social work. It represents a Church that is present among the people, that accepts the hopes, fears and joys of those people and helps them to change their own situation. In so doing, the Church becomes more reachable as an institution that reinforces and changes life in a manner that is relevant to people's lives and their situation within society. The foreign and domestic work of Caritas is valued by many people, within and outside of the Church, because it does not invest solely in the short-term, but in long-term, sustainable development, both locally and globally.

Nationally and internationally, people know that Caritas is ultimately concerned with people and with justice. Caritas helps disadvantaged people and advises and accompanies them along their path. Through its work, it lives a theology that knows about failure and new beginnings. Caritas is truly a symbol of a global Church that is open to life and permits itself to be challenged by the Holy Spirit and the issues of our times, while seeking and travelling appropriate paths for the benefit of humanity.

Justice and Charity: the Apostolic diakonia and humanitarian service of the Caritas Internationalis confederation⁴⁷

By Jean-Paul Durand OP

On the occasion of its sixtieth anniversary, why does Caritas Internationalis evoke the canonical dimension of its confederation of Catholic social and charitable organisations?

The Caritas Internationalis confederation has first and foremost an ecclesial mission:⁴⁸ It exercises its responsibility for charitable,⁴⁹ social⁵⁰ and humanitarian work on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church as a whole. This responsibility is thus assumed with the support of and in partnership with several institutions of the Holy See,⁵¹ which is the entity that comprises the Pope and the Roman Curia. Among the institutions of the Holy See, the Caritas Internationalis confederation has its closest relations with the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*. Cooperation with other institutions of the Holy See involves the Secretariat of State, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, the Pontifical Council for the

⁴⁷ Abbreviated version. The references of the complete edition of the text will be posted on the author's bibliographical website: www.prjeanpauldurandop.fr

⁴⁸ Ghislain Lafont, 1994. *Histoire théologique de l'Eglise catholique. Itinéraire et formes de la théologie*. Cogitatio fidei collection 179. Paris, Cerf. 474 pp.

⁴⁹ Hugues Puel OP. 2010. Caritas in Veritate. Une lettre encyclique de Benoît XVI sur le développement humain intégral dans la charité et la vérité. *Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale* 258, pp 79–98.

⁵⁰ Puel, H. OP. 2010. *Une éthique pour l'économie. Ethos, crises, choix*. Recherches morales collection. Paris, Cerf. 310 pp.

⁵¹ Pope Jean Paul II. 2010. *During the Last Supper*. Pontifical Letter from Castel Gondolfo dated 16 September 2004 addressed to the President of Caritas Internationalis, H.E. Msgr Youhanna Fouad El-Hage, Maronite Archbishop of Tripoli, Lebanon, granting public canonical legal status to the Confederation. Available at: <http://caritas.org/fr/about/canonical-LegalStatus.html>

Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People and the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Health Care Workers. This list is not exhaustive: it indicates the inevitably ~~of~~ specialised and compartmentalised relations with the Holy See, which are assumed with a view to full communion within the Church⁵², which is to be lived through all its works.

In 2004, the time was ripe for further formalising and assurance of the close ties between Caritas Internationalis and the Pastors of the Roman Catholic Church and St Peter's Successor, who preside over the charity of the whole Roman Catholic Church in a specific way. Several relationships should be considered: i) those between each Caritas organisation and Caritas Internationalis; ii) those between each Caritas and the Catholic Church as a whole, from the local level to the Holy See; and iii) those between Caritas Internationalis and the Holy See itself. Ties have been established among these entities, and we are well aware that they are rich in theological, ethical and legal meanings. Among all Christian churches and among people and institutions of good will, the Roman Catholic Church lies at the heart of the relationship between justice and charity, which is a fundamental relationship for Christian faith.

The Holy See carries out its mission at the heart of this spiritual, ethical and institutional relationship. The material support of the sovereign international law of the Holy See, Vatican City,⁵³ which is also the headquarters of Caritas Internationalis, has a mission to serve this relationship between justice and charity.

Any Caritas organisation has, above all, a Church mission. From a canonical point of view, any Caritas undertaking at whatever level is a work authorised and supported by the ecclesial authority concerned.⁵⁴ On the basis of this Roman Catholic mission of justice and charity, each Caritas assumes its mission and the responsibility for works of general interest: in other words,

⁵² Pope Benedict XVI. 2010. *The Word of God*. Apostolic Exhortation dated 30 September 2010. Preface by Mgr Pierre-Marie Carré. Documents d'Église collection. Paris, co-published by Bayard-Cerf-Fleurus-Mame. 192 pp.

⁵³ Juan Ignacio Arrieta, 2006. *Codice di norme vaticane. Ordinamento giuridico della Città del Vaticano, Venice*.

⁵⁴ Henri Gleizes 2000. *Le secours catholique, les aspects institutionnels et juridiques*. Thesis on canon law. Paris, Faculty of Canon Law, Catholic Institute of Paris; Gleizes, H. 2000. L'exercice de la charité et le droit. L'exemple de deux institutions confessionnelles. In: *L'année canonique* (43)139–172.

each Caritas is a Catholic undertaking of general interest concerned with justice, beneficence, assistance and charity .

But Caritas Internationalis is more than this. Indeed, it inevitably has a wider mission. In its Statutes and Rules (2006), the confederation states that its mission is “... to stimulate and aid national Caritas organisations to participate, by means of active charity, in the assistance, advancement, and integral development of the most underprivileged, within an overall pastoral programme.” Therefore, the confederation must support each local and regional Caritas, and in particular must respect the competence of each local and regional Caritas. Caritas Internationalis must also respect the competence of each local and regional interlocutor of the Caritas concerned – the local and regional ecclesial authorities and bishops.

Caritas exercises its solicitude on the basis of its own universal ecclesial statutes. The confederation exercises its responsibility on behalf of the whole Catholic Church by virtue of its statutes, which were further formalised in 2004 as a public canon law entity established by the Holy See in accordance with the Code of Canon Law of 1983. Given that Caritas Internationalis is an undertaking that operates on behalf of the entire Roman Catholic Church at the universal level, the Caritas confederation’s solicitude is implemented with the authorisation and direct or close support of the Holy See. Nor is Caritas Internationalis merely an undertaking that promotes other Caritas organisations: it is also an international humanitarian and charitable undertaking that operates on the basis of its special bond with the Holy See on behalf of the entire Roman Catholic Church and the whole world. This entails subsidiary cooperation with each Caritas. Each Caritas has its own local or regional competence, and also has a wider, even international, reach. And because of this reach beyond the local or regional sphere, each Caritas contributes to the wider, worldwide solicitude for which Caritas Internationalis is accountable to the Holy See and responsible for the relevant local and international legal issues.

Why structure the charitable sharing of the Caritas Internationalis confederation by means of a legal organisation?

Any organisation with clear objectives which is capable of managing itself, enduring and gaining respect for its existence and activities needs legal organisation, even more so if it aims to achieve humanitarian, social and charitable objectives. Local and regional Caritas organisations and Caritas Internationalis

itself could not work without a professional apparatus of legal statutes, institutional organisation and procedural and ethical norms, partly on grounds of professionalism and ethics. Local and regional Caritas and Caritas Internationalis know that society has many aspects: they must address ethical, spiritual⁵⁵ and political concerns. The latter involves invoking law and justice to address issues of public order, health and liberty and to establish relationships between objective and subjective rights and general and individual interests.

Any undertaking, especially an altruistic one, should be beyond reproach *ad extra et ad intra* in order to respect partnerships, the poor and those engaged in Caritas work, whether as employees or volunteers. It means being faithful to the purpose of each Caritas and the organisations whose mission is to help Caritas Internationalis to achieve its aims, and fulfilling the relationship between justice and charity in accordance with the vocation of each Caritas and of Caritas Internationalis.

Justice is not merely a moral standard: justice also entails respect for commitments undertaken, which means respect for the institution involved. What does this mean in terms of statutes, contracts and procedure?

For example, forgiveness does not absolve one from the moral duty of justice nor from the legal obligation of responsibility for justice. Even the most reprehensible of misdemeanours cannot justify depriving suspects of the right to defend themselves or to hire lawyers. The right to defence is a symbolic or natural right, a canonical right, an internal regulatory right and a secular legal right that must be respected in any democratic rule of law; it is also a matter for philanthropic or humanistic philosophy. Lacordaire's famous, albeit paradoxical maxim, during a difficult debate on Catholic liberalism in the 19th century was: "Between the strong and the weak, it is liberty that oppresses and law that frees."

What is the general meaning and function of canon law?

Canon law is the law or regulations governing a religion, in this case the Christian Church. Each Church establishes its own law, canonical or regulatory, unless an external authority interferes and imposes its own normative code. The Roman Catholic Church has established its own canon law: all enactments

⁵⁵ Jacques Cazeaux, 2003. *Histoire, utopie, mystique. Ouvrir la bible comme un livre*. Paris, Cerf, Initiations Bibliques collection. 244 pp.

of Roman Catholic canon law reflect the degree of official engagement by the Roman Catholic Church, which entails evaluating its canonicity.

Theology is concerned with veridicality; canon law is concerned with efficiency. Canon law needs theology to gain a better understanding of the Church's foundation, truth, and religious and humanitarian being. Christian theological exegesis is concerned with the foundation and the apostolic and humanitarian mission⁵⁶ of a Christian Church or an ecclesial community.⁵⁷ Theology and canon law support the Church in its relationship with its own sources: the Word of God or Holy Scripture in the Old and New Testaments and the Church's living tradition, which includes the canonical tradition. Theology and canon law support the relationship that keeps the Church and its believers in touch with Christian revelation and the truths connected with it in an historical, logical way; they also support the relationship of the Church and its believers in terms of religious obedience to the authority of Pastors and the Magisterium regarding matters that are not infallible. Thus theology supports meaning and witness for the Church regarding truth, notably dogma, justice and charity. Theology and canon law support the meaning and conditions of the full communion of believers and communities with the Catholic Church. In this regard, Canon 205 of the 1983 Latin Code of Canon Law states: "Those baptised are fully in the communion of the Catholic Church on this Earth who are joined with Christ in its visible structure by the bonds of the profession of faith, the sacraments, and ecclesiastical governance." These theological and canonical conditions governing the communion experienced in the Church may be designated by the word ecclesiality.

But theology and Church governance by the apostolic ministry need to draw on precise knowledge of the degree of engagement of the Church's ecclesiality so that the Church may fulfil its responsibility for its triple task: i) teaching the good news of the Word of God accompanied by the Magisterium regarding faith and morals; ii) sanctification to make the connection between God and humanity; and iii) assumption of its authority for the common good in terms

⁵⁶ Pope Jean Paul II. 1991. *Centesimus Annus*. Encyclical of 1 May on the occasion of the centenary of the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* by Leo XIII. In: Laurent, P. SJ. 1991. *Pour une société digne de l'homme*. Paris, Le Centurion. 123 pp.

⁵⁷ Geneviève Comeau, Jean-François Zorn and Edith Bernard 2004. *Appel à témoins. Mutations sociales et avenir de la mission chrétienne*. Ecumenical French-Speaking Association for Missiology, Théologies collection. Paris, Cerf. 214 pp.

of ecclesial communion and reconciliation of the whole world with God. This presupposes ecclesial service and its works regarding justice and charity, which are connected with truth.

Theology, morality, canon law, the Church's ministry and the existence of each baptised person and each human being should all play a part, especially in addressing the mystery of evil,⁵⁸ personal sin and the structures of sin, and crises in Christian practice, devotion, faith and communion. In reacting to these challenges, theology cannot merely reaffirm the truth to which it must bear witness: it should also strive to provide appropriate assistance. Theology should shed its light on the Christian mystery and the mystery of the Church. Theology should be able to deepen the meaning and achievement of justice, forgiveness, compassion, mercy, solidarity, friendship, love and responsibility within the Church. Condemning abortion and the people involved in it, for example, does not go far enough: it is necessary to contribute towards humanising society, peoples, cultures, morality and spirituality, starting with the most disadvantaged. This entails seeking the means to give everyone fresh heart and even mend their ways with confidence.

Canon law should be able to support theology with a view to evaluating the degree of the Church's official and effective engagement and assessing the efficiency of the execution of this Church's apostolic and charitable mission. The function of canon law is to enhance the efficiency of its religious existence, spiritual mission and denominational identity. In particular, canon law has a partnership with practical theology, that is the theology and ethics of the social teaching of the Church, a doctrine that has been well known since the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 1891 by Pope Leo XIII, which spoke of Christian charity as a bounty experienced through the truth of the Catholic faith received from the Apostles.

How can loving be combined with evangelising? How can humanitarianism be combined with proselytising?

In order to practise charity, specific and appropriate institutional methods are needed. Sometimes this means acting in an emergency situation; on other occasions it entails taking the time to ensure that operations are scheduled in a

⁵⁸ Fontelle, 2010. *Le rituel latin de l'exorcisme. Thesis on canon law*. Paris, Catholic Institute of Paris and Jean Monnet Faculty of Law, University of Paris Sud-XI. 600 pp. To be published in *L'année canonique* 51.

methodical, realistic and responsible way to provide justice and charity. Charity requires the establishment of reliable long-term projects: sporadic acts of charity are indispensable, but they are not enough.

The charity of the Church⁵⁹ presupposes that the Church and its members participate in local and worldwide justice and charity according to context on the basis of goodwill. It entails proposing and providing support from charity undertakings established by the Church, especially in cases where such intervention is indispensable. Catholic projects inspired by Christianity with cooperation from ecumenical, inter-religious and partnership projects entail support from social, beneficent⁶⁰ and charitable undertakings.

And what about states?

In some cases, projects by the Catholic Church or other churches and religions may support state projects, but agreements setting out responsibilities in such partnerships are sometimes lacking. A state is unlikely to entertain requests to subsidise private projects, particularly denominational ones – but state, regional and local authorities may need the support of Catholic projects. Any such cooperative effort may run into difficulties, depending on the circumstances. A state, government or political party might consider an initiative such as a Catholic charitable project to be a private undertaking that might compete with an action undertaken by public authorities. In offering support, private denominational projects are sometimes accused of constituting – voluntarily or otherwise – an alternative to state action and of implying criticism that could damage political leaders' reputations for altruism in terms of justice and charity. The difficult relations experienced by NGOs spring to mind.

Let us return to religious institutions and distinctions between the Church and its work. What does this entail with respect to the Church's institutional

⁵⁹ Joseph De Almeida Monteiro (ed.) 2004. *Louis de Grenade. Traité de l'oraison, du jeûne et de l'aumône*. Sagesses chrétiennes collection. Paris, Cerf; Various authors 2003. *Aux sources de la charité, les spiritualités*. Preface by Mgr Jean Vilnet; presentation by Mgr Paul Huot-Pleuroux. Paris, Cerf; Joël Thoraval, J. 2004. *Charité à cœur ouvert*. Interviews with Jacqueline Dornic; preface by Roger Cardinal Etchegaray. Paris, L'histoire à vif collection; Jean-Claude Larchet, 2007. *Variations sur la charité*. Théologies collection. Paris, Cerf; Matthieu Bréjon de Lavergnée, 2008. *Ville et charité. Une sociologie des hommes d'œuvres au XIX^e siècle* (Paris, 1840–1870). *Revue d'histoire de l'Eglise de France* 94(232):63–104.

⁶⁰ Emmanuel Hirsch (ed.). 2009. *Pandémie grippale: l'ordre de mobilisation*. Tous solidaires. Preface by Alain Cordier. Recherches morales collection. Paris, Cerf. 389 pp.

mediations, especially the links to be developed between the Church and its work regardless of whether an undertaking is of general interest or relates to piety or religious devotion?

At the level of the Pope, the Holy See or the Catholic Church as a whole we understand that as Bishop of Rome and Head of the Roman Catholic Church, and for the Latin Church and the Eastern Rite Churches in communion with Rome, the Pope's vocation is to serve unity, faith and charity. Indeed, the Pope and any Church that calls itself Christian are responsible for sanctification (*munus sanctificandi*): in other words, their vocation is to serve reconciliation (*consecratio mundi*) between every human being, humanity as whole, and God, the Thrice Holy God, God the Merciful Creator.

As Pope of Rome, the Pontiff is not obliged to confine himself to a particular patriarchate:⁶¹ his vocation is universal. Nor should the universal vocation of the Pope undermine the integrity of the jurisdiction of each Christian Church and ecclesial community, not all of which are in full communion with Rome.⁶²

What is the degree of canonicity of the Roman Catholic Church with respect to the work of the Caritas Internationalis confederation?

Since the Pontificate of Pope Pius XII, Popes have increasingly engaged themselves with Caritas Internationalis as an expression of the charitable and humanitarian mission of the Church itself. Caritas Internationalis is unquestionably an eminent manifestation of the Holy See's mission of justice and charity. The Holy See – the Pope and the Roman Curia – is based on the material support of public international law; since 1929 it has been the Vatican City State. Caritas Internationalis has located its legal headquarters in this tiny territory in accordance with Vatican State law since 1976, and with public canon law since 2004.

⁶¹ Garuti, A. 1990. *Il papa patriarca d'Occidente? Studio storico dottrinale*. Bologna, Francescane; Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. 2006. Communiqué concernant la suppression du titre de Patriarche d'Occident dans l'annuaire pontifical 2006. *Istina* 51; 9–10.

⁶² Pope Benedict XVI. 2009. Address to a Delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople on the Closing of the Pauline Year. Available at: <http://www.zenit.org> ; Garuti, A. 2000. *Primo del vescovo di Roma e dialogo ecumenico*. Rome, Pontificium Thesaureum Antonianum, Edizione Antonianum.

What has being subject to canon law entailed for Caritas Internationalis?

In 1951, the international Catholic charity confederation was already a Catholic charity institution through recognition of its statutes in canon law by the Holy See. In 1976, Caritas Internationalis complemented its canonical status with the status of a legal entity of the Vatican City State, thereby indicating that the confederation was an international canonical institution and also an *a latere* institution with respect to the Holy See. The confederation's headquarters were deliberately – and symbolically – located near the See of St Peter in the setting of the institutions accommodated by the Vatican City State with the sovereign material support of the Holy See.

What innovation was introduced by the canonical measure of 2004 that established the confederation as a public canon law legal entity?

The Latin Code of Canon Law was promulgated by Pope John Paul II in 1983. It is designed to translate and adapt in codified form the Church norms that were investigated and enhanced by the Second Vatican Council of 1962–1965.

Together with reform of associational canon law, the 1983 Code also developed the canon law governing all other canonical legal entities that are non-associational. In this respect, the importance of the public canonical institution in the foundation of spiritual and material goods should be pointed out.

Associational public canon law legal entities – public canon law associations – should obviously be classified among public canon law legal entities. In general, association canonical legal entities that are private – private canon law associations – should also be considered.

Logically speaking, *de facto* private groups under canon law do not belong to the category of canon law legal entities. However, some private *de facto* groups have a civil law or administrative law personality in accordance with a secular legal arrangement. For a secular legal entity to become a *de facto* canon law group, secular civil or administrative statutes must be submitted to the competent ecclesial authority – the diocesan Bishop – the Bishops' Conference or the Holy See. A private group under canon law becomes a private associational canon law legal entity once the competent ecclesiastical authority has authorised the statutes and approved its establishment in writing.

A private associational canon law entity becomes a public associational canon law entity once the statutes have been approved by the competent ecclesiastical authority, and the latter has established its creation in writing. Such bodies become public non-associational canon law entities once the competent authorities have approved the statutes creating a public non-associational canon law entity. The goods of a public canon law entity, whether associational or non-associational, are classified as ecclesiastical goods regulated by Book V of the Code of Canon Law of 1983 for the Latin Rite Church.

Before 1983, Latin canon law and Eastern canon law did not recognise the concept of private associational canon law legal entities: for example between the application of the Latin Code of Canon Law of 1917 and that of 1983, all canon law legal entities were governed by public canon law. The Latin Code of Canon Law of 1983, however, needed to clarify the institutional requirements entrusted to associational and non-associational canon law legal entities on the basis of the meaning of public law, namely the canonicity of public law, which means that the Church is committed *in nomine Ecclesiae* by the acts established by each public canon law entity, whether associational or non-associational. Hence not all canon law entities are associations.

Canon law entities that are not associations include entities categorised as “hierarchical”, which means that they have a director who does not hold an associational contract but who is in place by virtue of a unilateral act issued by an authority holding apostolic power, which may be a president chosen by a diocesan Bishop, a Bishops’ Conference or the Holy See.

Since 2004, Caritas Internationalis has been recognised by the Holy See as a non-associational canon law legal entity, and therefore under hierarchical canon law. Under public canon law, Caritas Internationalis acts on behalf of the Church *in nomine Ecclesiae*. Under non-associational public canon law, Caritas Internationalis has a hierarchical canonical nature in the canonical sense of the word “hierarchical” as previously mentioned. The confederation is a canonical foundation of spiritual and material goods for justice and charity.

Since 2004, therefore, Caritas Internationalis has been recognised by the Holy See as a non-associational public canon law legal entity, in addition to its legal personality pursuant to the law of the Vatican City State in application of the Latin Code of 1983.

Hence Caritas Internationalis is no longer merely a Catholic charitable institution: the reformed 1983 Code specified more clearly that the canon law

entity had received the means to act on behalf of the Church. It is therefore a canon law entity described as public.

Like all canon law entities, private and public, its purpose is to strive for the common good of the Church, and the specific goal pursued does not in itself suffice. Access and non-access to such means and competences distinguish canonical legal entities that act on behalf of the Church from those that have not been granted competence.

Before 1983, legal entities – especially canonical associations – sometimes lacked institutional instruments to distinguish the conditions and the degree of authority with which the Church had engaged in the decisions of a legal personality.

Between 1951 and 2004, the group of international Catholic charitable institutions risked failing to meet the criteria for specifying the extent to which any decision taken by the group had the competence to engage the Church and the procedures used.

Since 2004, Caritas Internationalis has formally and more clearly received the means and procedures to acquire the competence to engage the Universal Church with regard to justice and peace. Again, it must be emphasised that this competence to act or speak on behalf of the Universal Church *in nomine Ecclesiae* bears witness to the link between Caritas Internationalis and the authority of the Apostolic See, as envisaged by Pope John Paul II.

The statutes of each local and regional Caritas need not be described in this section, but it should be noted that local and regional Caritas cannot exist unless they have been authorised by the relevant episcopacy. The confederation also plays a part supporting each local and regional Caritas on behalf of the Universal Church.

Before 1951 these Caritas were coordinated locally, as were the regional, national and international levels. In 1951 the Holy See granted canonical status to the international authority that was later called Caritas Internationalis. In 2004 the specific application of the instruments was provided for by the Latin Code of 1983 and by the Eastern Code of 1990 as required. On behalf of the Universal Church, the confederation promotes collaboration between Caritas organisations. This is a task of administration, coordination and representation that does not, as Pope John Paul II pointed out, take away the autonomy of national Caritas.

With regard to the confederation itself, any further amendment of its statutes and canonical rules had to be authorised by the Pope. And in the same

spirit of *a latere* implementation, any change in the location of the headquarters also had to be authorised by the Pope.

In 2004 Pope Jean Paul II continued to specify the institutional arrangements that enabled Caritas Internationalis to engage the Church through closer bonds between the confederation and the Holy See:

Due to the special bond between Caritas Internationalis and the Apostolic See, the list of candidates for the offices of President and Secretary General of the Confederation should be submitted for approval by the Pope, before being officially proposed for a final vote by the General Assembly. Furthermore, the Holy See, having obtained appropriate advice, shall appoint an Ecclesiastical Advisor who has the right to participate in the activities of the institutional bodies. Pursuant to the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus* (see art. 146§2), I hereby entrust responsibility for following and accompanying the activities of Caritas Internationalis, at both international and regional levels, to the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*. The Dicastery will thereby be duly informed of the Confederation's initiatives at various levels and shall have the right to participate in the meetings of its bodies, and meetings regarding coordination of the activities promoted by Caritas Internationalis. The said Pontifical Council will contribute to keeping alive the ecclesial spirit in the Confederation and, in particular, will make sure that the activities of its members, carried out under international coordination, are executed in collaboration with the local Churches concerned and their pastors. Finally, Caritas Internationalis shall submit the documents of orientation it intends to issue to the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* before their publication. Furthermore, regarding its activities at international level, especially those concerning international organisations and in parts of the world with particular problems, Caritas Internationalis shall refer to the Secretariat of State. Regarding specific matters, Caritas Internationalis shall also act in collaboration with other Dicasteries of the Roman Curia (...).

Each Caritas from the universal to the regional and local is linked to a bishop, a Latin diocesan or Eastern eparchial Church, which constitutes a bond of ecclesial communion with the College of Bishops and to the Holy See. Indeed, each Caritas manifests its theological, canonical and ecclesial status through its bond as a member of the confederation. This status provides that justice and

peace will be implemented on behalf of the Catholic Church at all levels and through all its constituent parts to be experienced on the basis of the Roman Catholic Church in communion with St Peter's Successor. As each Catholic bishop is in communion with St Peter's Successor, each local Caritas relies on the local episcopacy and Caritas Internationalis to experience full communion with St Peter's Successor.

Which institutional elements of Caritas Internationalis and each Caritas are deployed to serve the relationship between apostolate, justice and charity⁶³ for the Universal Church and the Holy See?

The apostolate of the Holy See and the different forms of apostolate in the Roman Catholic Church as a whole, are supported by Caritas organisations in accordance with their vocations and abilities. This involves universal support at the Holy See through the work of Christian charity and the Catholic humanitarian social action of the Caritas Internationalis confederation, and support through the work of Christian charity and the Catholic humanitarian social action of each member or associate member organisation, particularly on the basis of overall charitable and social pastoral care at the local, national,⁶⁴ regional and continental levels. Each episcopal dialogue, each bishops' conference and each patriarchal synod makes its contribution in accordance with the extent of their involvement.

It is legitimate – *ius nativum* – necessary and relevant⁶⁵ that the Roman Catholic Church be present to proclaim and experience the gospel,⁶⁶ and therefore

⁶³ Pope Benedict XVI. 2009. *Caritas in veritate*. Encyclical, 29 June. *La Documentation Catholique* 2429(2-16):753-793.

⁶⁴ Brigitte Basdevant-Gaudemet and Francis Messner, "Les établissements de santé et les institutions d'assistance confessionnels en France", in *Revue de droit canonique*, 52/1, 2002, pp. 187-214; Durand, J-P. 2007. Perpétuer des institutions sanitaires, sociales et médico-sociales fondées et transférées par des instituts religieux. *Studia canonica* 41(1):173-198.

⁶⁵ Laubach, T. 1999. Les récits des survivants de l'Holocauste. In Geneviève Médevielle (ed.) 1999. *L'acte de mémoire: un lieu théologique pour la morale (I)*. *Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale «Le Supplément»* 210:37-52.

⁶⁶ Louis Koutou, 2010. *Eglise-Famille-de-Dieu au Burkina Faso. Aspects canoniques d'une mise en œuvre de la communion organique locale. Solidarité familiale traditionnelle africaine et communion ecclésiale*. Thesis on canon law. Paris, Faculty of Canon Law of the Catholic Institute of Paris. 400 pp. To be published in L'année canonique 51 or 52.

also provide charity⁶⁷ in the Latin Church and in the Eastern Church in communion with Rome.⁶⁸ This theological conviction also sheds light on the guarantees and the means, or canonicity, for exercising apostolic,⁶⁹ humanitarian⁷⁰ and charitable ends.

Should Catholic works regarding justice and charity rely on sufficiently open conditions,⁷¹ free civic⁷² and ethical⁷³ establishment throughout the world, and in each of the territories and for each of the populations⁷⁴ and peoples⁷⁵ who manifest a legitimate humanitarian and social⁷⁶ need?⁷⁷

The Caritas Internationalis confederation is an international as well as a Catholic humanitarian and charitable organisation. It comprises institutional

⁶⁷ International Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission. 1994. *Eglise et justification. La compréhension de l'Eglise à la lumière de la doctrine de la justification*, 1993. *La Documentation Catholique* 2101:810–844.

⁶⁸ Olivier Riaudel, 2007. *Le monde comme histoire de Dieu. Foi et raison dans l'œuvre de Wolfhart Pannenberg*. Paris, Cerf, Cogitatio Fidei collection no. 256. 429 pp.

⁶⁹ Louis-Jean Frahier, L.-J. 1992. *Le jugement dernier. Implications éthiques pour le bonheur de l'homme*, Mt 25, 31-46. Preface by Mgr Pierre Eyt. Paris, Cerf, Recherches morales collection. 426 pp.; Pope Jean Paul II. 2000. *A tous les fidèles en marche vers le troisième millénaire, «incarnationis mysterium»*. Bull. of induction of the Great Jubilee. Invitation by Mgr Louis-Marie Billé. Documents d'Eglise collection. Paris, Centurion, Cerf and Fleurus-Mame. 50pp.; William Wakefield Cardinal Baum. *Guidelines on Indulgences*. Durand, J.-P. 1999. Editorial: si les chrétiens 'désembourbaient' les indulgences. *Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale «Le Supplément»* 211:3–4.

⁷⁰ Peter Kemp (ed.) 2004. *Le discours bioéthique*. Recherches morales collection. Paris, Cerf. 115 pp.

⁷¹ Pope Paul VI. 1976. *Populorum progressio*. Encyclical, 26 March. La Documentation catholique 1967.

⁷² Jean-Marc Ghitti, 2004. *L'Etat et les liens familiaux. Mécanisme de la domination.*, Recherches morales collection. Paris, Cerf. 153 pp.; Ghitti, J.-M. 2010. *Appel à une réforme de la justice familiale*. Recherches morales collection. Paris, Cerf. 394 pp.

⁷³ Marie-Jo Thiel & Xavier Thévenot, 1999. *Pratiquer l'analyse éthique*. Etudier un cas. Examiner un texte. Recherches morales collection. Paris, Cerf. 408 pp.

⁷⁴ Moreau, 2002. *La famille, enjeu citoyen.*, Recherches morales collection. Paris, Cerf. 210 pp.

⁷⁵ François de Muizon, 2008. *Homme et femme. L'altérité fondatrice*. Recherches morales collection. Paris, Cerf. 334 pp.

⁷⁶ Emmanuel Tawil, 2002. Le respect de la hiérarchie des normes. *Revue de droit canonique* 52(1):167–186; Philippe Toxé, 2002. La hiérarchie des normes canoniques latines ou la rationalité du droit canonique. *L'année canonique* 44:113–128.

⁷⁷ Pope Pius XII in 1958, quoted by Pope Jean Paul II in February 2005 in his letter to the French Bishops in La Croix.

entities that are binding on third parties,⁷⁸ particularly in private and public international law.⁷⁹ The whole Church has a vocation and mission to engage⁸⁰ in humanitarian action⁸¹ with wisdom⁸² in a manner distinguishable from a political party⁸³ and without allowing its proselytism⁸⁴ to be seen as an insufficiently explained motive for its humanitarian,⁸⁵ social⁸⁶ and cultural⁸⁷ commitments.

⁷⁸ Louis-Léon Christians, (ed.). 2007. *La déontologie des ministères ecclésiastiques*. Preface by Alphonse Borras. Droit canonique collection. Paris, Cerf. 211 pp.; Durand, J-P. 2010. Note sur le canon 127 §2,2° comme indice d'une gouvernance ecclésiastique par consensus. In: Alphonse Borras (ed.) 2010. *Délibérer en Eglise. Hommage à Raphaël Collinet*. La Part-Dieu collection. Brussels and Paris, Lessius (Cerf).; Philippe Dockwiler Ethique et dogmatique: aux frontières l'une de l'autre. *Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale* 262:37–56; Jean-Claude Lavigne 2010. Les jeux d'argent. *Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale* 262:9–36.

⁷⁹ Gilles Curien, 1983. *Indispensable vertu de force: profession de foi d'un diplomate*. Recherches morales collection. Paris, Cerf. 242 pp.

⁸⁰ Durand, J-P. 2009. L'apolitisation de l'action caritative, l'exemple congréganiste: suppléance, utilité sociale, charité, concurrence, prosélytismes. Poverty and Social Exclusion Conference, Doctoral School of the Catholic Institute of Paris, 16–17 March 2009. *Transversalités* 111:65–76; Mathias Nebel, 2006. *La catégorie morale de péché structurel. Essai de systématique*. Cogitatio fidei collection no. 252. Paris, Cerf.

⁸¹ Joseph Wresinski, 2007. *Refuser la misère. Une pensée politique née de l'action*. Recherches morales special edition. Paris, Cerf and Les éditions quart monde. 288 pp.

⁸² Pope Benedict XVI. 2010. *Lumière du monde, le pape, l'Eglise et les signes des temps, interviews with Peter Seewald*. Paris, Bayard.

⁸³ Mathias Nebel, 2006. *La catégorie morale de péché structurel. Essai de systématique*. Cogitatio fidei collection no. 252. Paris, Cerf. 596 pp.

⁸⁴ Marie & Patrice Meyer-Bisch (ed.). *Revue de droit canonique* 52(1):5–152.

⁸⁵ Hugues Puel, 1999. L'économie: qu'est-ce à dire? Le politique: qu'est-ce à dire? *Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale «Le Supplément»* 210:189–193; Puel, H. 1995. L'économie. *Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale «Le Supplément»* 195: 189–196.

⁸⁶ Claire Castellan 2002. Quels fondements au gouvernement de l'enfant par ses parents? L'apport du droit canonique positif. *L'année canonique* 44:101–112.

⁸⁷ Legrand, 2001. *L'apôtre des nations. Paulel la stratégie missionnaire des Eglises apostoliques*. Lectio divina collection no. 184. Paris, Cerf. 153 pp.; Régine Azria, 1994. Israël: de l'invention de la nation à l'examen de conscience; la morale à l'épreuve du politique. *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 88:23–32; Pope Jean Paul II. 1994. Call for Peace among Nations. Speech to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, 18 January. *Communio* XIX(2):9–15; Franc Rodé, 1993. Eglise, nations et démocratie, de la Slovénie au Vatican, Valeurs et politique 2. Politiques et chrétiens collection. Paris, Beauchesne. 139 pp.; Alain Lebeaupin, 1994. La notion de nation selon la 'conception' contemporaine du Saint-Siège. *L'année canonique* 37:145–152; Bray, 2002. *Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale «Le Supplément»* 226:7–160; Puza, R. & Durand, J-P. (ed.) 2004. Religions et nations. Conference in

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Klaus Baumann was born in 1963 in Oberkirch in Germany. After studying theology and seminary training in Freiburg and Rome, he was ordained a priest in 1989. He studied psychology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, where he also completed doctoral studies in Moral Theology in 1996. Continuously serving in parishes and as a psychotherapist, he was called to research and teach in Paderborn in 2002 and, from 2004, at Freiburg University, especially in the field of *caritas* science and Christian social work, a specialty of the Freiburg Faculty of Theology since 1925.



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Maria Clara Bingemer is a lay theologian, a mother and grandmother. She is Associate Professor at the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), where she has also been Director of the Centro Loyola de Fe e Cultura and Dean of the centre of Theology and Human Sciences. She is a member of the Editorial Board of *Concilium*. Her books have been published in Portuguese, Spanish, Italian and French. In English, her books include *Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Poor* with Ivone Gebara and *Christian Eschatology* with J. B. Libanio. www.users.rdc.puc-rio.br/agape



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Jean-Paul Durand OP, born in 1949 and educated by the Christian Brothers, joined the French Dominicans in 1975. He was a member of Jeunesse Etudiante Chrétienne from 1962 to 1971. He wrote doctoral theses on Canon and French law. These were published in one volume as *La liberté des congrégations religieuses en France*, Cerf, 1999, 3 vols. He was Dean of the Canon Law Faculty at the Catholic Institute of Paris (1992-2001; 2004-2007), Director of the *Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale* (1983-2004, Cerf), founder of "Droit canonique et culture" (1995) and of the Agence Internationale Diplomatie et Opinion Publique (2003) and Professor of Relationships between States and Religions (Catholic Institute of Paris). He writes under the alias Jean-Jacques Boildieu.



Prof. Dr Erny Gillen

Born in Luxembourg in 1960, Erny Gillen studied at the Catechetical Institute in Luxembourg. He obtained his theology degrees at the Katholische Hochschule Chur, Switzerland and at the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium. Since 1988, he has been Professor of Theological Ethics at the Seminary and the Catechetical Institute in Luxembourg. From 1989 to 2006, he was a member of the Luxembourg National Ethics Commission. Since 1992, he has been a member of Luxembourg's Justice and Peace Commission. He has been President of the Caritas Luxembourg confederation since 1996. In May 2006, he was elected President of Caritas Europa. In June 2007, he was elected Vice President of Caritas Internationalis.



Etienne Grieu SJ

Etienne Grieu SJ, teaches theology in Paris (Centre Sèvres, Facultés Jésuites de Paris). He originally studied geography and has kept up his interest in field investigation. For his doctoral thesis, he worked on the life stories of thirty Christians (*Nés de Dieu, Itinéraire de chrétiens engagés, essai de lecture théologique*, Cerf 2003). Over the past few years, he has worked on the theme of diakonia (*Un lien si fort, quand l'amour de Dieu se fait diaconie*, L'Atelier 2009).



Gustavo Gutiérrez OP

Gustavo Gutiérrez OP, born in Peru in 1928, has spent much of his life working with the poor in Lima. He founded the Bartolomé de Las Casas Institute in 1974. He was a Professor at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru. He has held the John Cardinal O'Hara Chair in Theology at Notre Dame University since 2001. His books include *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, Salvation* (1971), *Las Casas: In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ* (1993), *We Drink From Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of A People* (1984), *The Truth Shall Make You Free* (1990).



Dr. Lesley-Anne Knight

Born in Gweru, in what is now Zimbabwe, in 1955, Lesley-Anne Knight was educated by the Dominicans and obtained her degree in languages at the University of Cape Town. She completed her post-graduate studies in business management in Paris and London and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Humanities from St John's University, New York. Since 2007, she has been Secretary General of Caritas Internationalis, having previously worked as International Director for CAFOD (Caritas England and Wales), for HelpAge International as Humanitarian Director and in refugee relief programmes with Oxfam in Central America in the 1980s.



+Óscar Andrés Cardinal Rodríguez Maradiaga S.D.B.

Born in Tegucigalpa, Honduras in 1942, he entered the Salesian order in 1970. Eight years later he was appointed Titular Bishop of Pudenziana and Auxiliary Bishop of Tegucigalpa. In 1993 he was named Archbishop of Tegucigalpa, and in 2001 he became his country's first cardinal. He is multilingual, with degrees in philosophy and theology, and a diploma in clinical psychology. He was President of the Conference of Latin American Bishops (CELAM) from 1995 to 1999. Cardinal Rodríguez Maradiaga became the 11th President of Caritas Internationalis in 2007.



Dr. Peter Neher

Prelate Dr. Peter Neher, born in 1955 in Pfronten, Germany, became the President of Caritas Germany in 2003. He is a Catholic theologian and priest of the Diocese of Augsburg. From 2000 to 2003 he worked as the director of Caritas in the Diocese of Augsburg. Before that he worked as a hospital chaplain, parish priest and in the training of priests.



Timothy Radcliffe OP

Timothy Radcliffe OP, born in 1945 and educated by the Benedictines, joined the English Dominicans in 1965. He was a university chaplain in London, before teaching in Blackfriars, Oxford. He was President of the Conference of Major Religious Superiors before being elected Master of the Dominican Order in 1992. He now lives in Oxford, and is a preacher and lecturer. His books include *What is the point of being a Christian?* (2005), and *Why go to Church? The drama of the Eucharist* (2008).



Mons. Joseph Sayer

Josef Sayer, born in 1941 in Apatin in the former Yugoslavia, studied philosophy, theology and social science. From 1981 to 1988, he lived in Peru and worked as a priest of the Archdiocese of Cuzco, doing pastoral work with the Quechua farmers in the Andes and working together with the Social Commission of the Peruvian Bishops' Conference during the 'Dirty War'. Later, he was appointed Professor of Pastoral Theology at the University of Geneva's Faculty of Theology. He is the Director General and Chairman of Misereor, the German Catholic Bishops' Organisation for Development Cooperation.



