

Promotio Iustitiae



Reflection

A BODY FOR THE MISSION OF FAITH AND JUSTICE

Daniel Izuzquiza SJ

Debate

José M. Castillo SJ

Urbano Valero SJ

Experiences

Donald J. Moore SJ

Amaury Begasse de Dhaem SJ

Documents

**VI Latin America Encounter
of Pastoral and Solidarity**

**Work with Indigenous
Peoples**

Open letter to

Dr. Néstor Kirchner

Tribute: †Fr. Juan Luis Moyano SJ (1946 – 2006)

Review: Peter Henriot SJ, *Opting for the poor*

Letters / Commentaries



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EDITORIAL

One way of keeping up the interest of people in a sporting event like the Olympics or the World Football Cup is to start the countdown to the opening ceremony. The countdown for the next General Congregation (GC) has already started with the commencement, soon to start all over the world, of the Provincial Congregations which will elect the members of GC 35. We are gradually realising the significance of a Congregation that will elect a new Superior General who will lead the Society further into the 21st century.

At the Social Justice Secretariat (SJS) we have been aware that the countdown has started. Preparations, however, began some time ago. In collaboration with the group of Assistant Coordinators for the Social Apostolate, SJS has made a humble attempt to help Jesuits in this sector reflect on the apostolic challenges facing us, on the situation of the institutional structure (Study on the Social Centres), and on the opportunities and threats that the phenomena of globalisation and marginalisation pose to the social apostolate and the whole Society of Jesus.

It is in this context of promoting and facilitating reflection on the issues that confront us that *Promotio* has been publishing various debates and articles dealing with various aspects of the Faith-Justice mission. This issue takes this reflection further and raises some 'controversial' themes.

Before I proceed let me say a word about the meaning I attach to the word 'controversial'. One of the characteristics of our age is the emergence of strong polarisations in our societies. Parliamentary elections lead almost everywhere to victories with very small margins. Political divisions between right, and left, liberal and conservative, to mention just a few, have become irreconcilable and their followers seem to be separated by deep chasms. Some may argue that these unbridgeable divisions are not new and that they have tragically marked human history. This may be true, and yet what seems to be new today is the rightful place accorded to plurality, the ease with which we talk about 'multicultural' societies, and the pugnacity with which issues of identity continue to occupy centre stage.

It is not strange, therefore, to find notable differences of opinion among Jesuits. While we need to welcome 'difference' as a positive aspect of human life, as a richness to be cherished rather than an obstacle to be overcome, we also need to find Ignatian ways to transcend difference and

help the body of the Society make clear and decisive apostolic choices. I look at 'controversy', therefore, as a way of allowing differences to emerge and as a call to the body of the Society to find communal ways of discerning our way ahead. In short, the purpose of offering these debates in past and present issues is not related to any desire to underscore individual opinions, but rather to open up and make clear the options before us so that our choices as a community have a better chance of being not our own but God's will. Our individual opinions are important and must be heard but they are stepping-stones to communal options.

Having dealt with the issue of controversy let me move on to present some of the main contributions of this issue of *Promotio*. During the first sitting of the Commission on Justice appointed by Fr. General to review Decree 3 of GC 34, there was a general consensus that the next General Congregation needs to concentrate less on making new decrees than in examining our implementation pedagogy, that is, the way we succeed as a body in implementing what has been legislated. This, in a nutshell, is the main message of Daniel Izuzquiza's article which opens this issue of *Promotio*. His symbolic use of language is appropriate and suggestive: we are in search of a 'Body' capable of implementing the mission of faith and justice. The emphasis is on the quasi-physical character of the Society's unity and on the necessary changes to be effected in the articulation of this body so that it acts and moves effectively as one. He outlines eight traits that, if attended to, may restore both unity and efficaciousness to that body.

One of the conditions for the Society to become a Body capable of implementing our mission, as pointed out by Daniel Izuzquiza, is the call to become a body of poor people. We are reminded of Ignatius' insistence on the apostolic uniqueness and significance of poverty, and of the recent appeals of Fr. General. This is not something we are not aware of... Many Jesuits have 'known' daily in their own flesh and hearts the prophetic value of living like the poor and to befriend them so as to follow Christ (GC 34, D 2, n. 9). The trouble lies in the tensions we experience between a personal code and our institutional obligations; between personal sanctity and apostolic efficacy; between interior calls and external pressures. In theory, poverty for monastic orders seems easier to understand, codify and follow.

It is on this sensitive and yet important issue of institutional and apostolic poverty that we need to understand the contributions of Jose Maria Castillo and Urbano Valero. The former takes up again a theme that he had advanced in an earlier issue of *Promotio* and challenges us to confront the reality of the institutional linkages we have established with financial capital to make our special funds produce some returns. We

believe the issue is complex, and one to which many Jesuits have dedicated many hours of prayer, reflection and hard work towards finding a resolution. We hope that both contributions help us to find God's will for us.

We are happy to share with all our readers the document prepared by those Jesuits and their companions gathered in Tiraque, Bolivia, to celebrate and reflect on the present political situation of indigenous people in Latin America. The style of the document evokes the distinct richness of their cultures, and its content touches plainly their political needs. The recent success of indigenous political movements in Latin America adds an important contextual reference for our reflection. The open letter we have published is also a testimony of the commitment of many, Jesuits included, to the opportunities for a better life for all in Argentina. Reading both documents I feel that utopias and dreams have not entirely disappeared from our Jesuit discourse.

By the time this issue of *Promotio* reaches you there will be 17 months left to the opening Mass of GC 35. The date may still appear quite distant and we may need yet another reminder that the number of months is slowly dwindling to the point when it may be more meaningful to count the number of days left. By following this custom so loved by the media, I wish, not to imitate a commercial strategy, but to nurture the flame of interest and hope of Jesuits, other members of the Ignatian family and lay companions all over the world. January 2008 will definitely mark the beginning of a new era in the Society!

Fernando Franco SJ

REFLECTION

A BODY FOR THE MISSION OF FAITH AND JUSTICE Daniel Izuzquiza SJ

Just on the eve of the 32nd General Congregation, Dominique Bertrand published his commentary on the Constitution of the Society of Jesus, entitled "A Body for the Spirit". His choice of words caught on and has left its mark in numbers 62-69 of the famous 4th decree. I believe that, with GC 35 close at hand, we can take this intuition further and explore the need to strengthen this body-for-mission, for *this* mission of faith and justice.

I have divided this article into three parts. First, I shall point out that it is time to turn words into actions and stress that practice is a fundamental part of being faithful to the mission. Secondly, I would like to speak about the historic juncture at which we, the Society, now find ourselves in internalising our mission and going to its very depths. In the third part, which will be longer and more concrete, I shall argue that, above all, we need corporate coherence in our mission to a faith that does justice. I also make some suggestions as to how this might be put into practice.

1. Saying and doing (or the importance of everyday engagement)

We have all heard, considered and prayed many times over the phrase "love must be put into practice more than in words" (EE. 230). In this regard, my first response to the question: "How do you think the Society should understand the charisma of faith and justice?" is quite simple. I do not think we need to reformulate what we have already discussed but to put into practice what has already been said. Thanks to General Congregations 32 and 34 we now have some excellent guidelines, strong and clear, which have been adopted at the highest level. "The service of faith and the promotion of justice constitute one and the same mission of the Society" (NC 4 § 2). "In this mission, its aim (the service of the faith) and its integrating principle (faith directed towards the justice of the Kingdom) are dynamically related to the inculturated proclamation of the Gospel and to dialogue with other religious traditions, as integral dimensions of evangelization" (NC 245 § 3).

We know this and say it but we do not often live by it with the same vigour. The warning of Father General is clear, serious and pertinent "The social apostolate runs the risk of losing its vigour and impulse, its direction and impact Such a process of erosion will inevitably reduce Our Mission Today (GC 32) and Our Mission and Justice (GC 34) to a few obligatory but rhetorical words in our language, and our option for the poor and the promotion of justice will remain hollow" (Letter from Fr Kolvenbach on the Social Apostolate, 24 January, 2000). In other words, we run the risk of finding

ourselves with beautiful guidelines increasingly refined, but ultimately empty and without real content. It is for this reason that I insist that the emphasis should be placed on everyday practice.

2. Assimilating and Deepening (or the swing of Time's pendulum)

Now, when I say that we must *not* focus on the mission as such but on the body that makes this mission incarnate, I may seem to be retreating to a solipsistic, conservative or even intimist position. This is not what I propose, although it is perhaps worth clarifying this point with help from sociology, social psychology and history to demonstrate how the dynamics of Christian faith demand that the spirit incarnate itself in something tangible.

2.1. Sociology tells us that it usually takes at least one generation for real, profound change to begin to take place, assimilating and embedding itself in attitudes, habits and everyday structures of people's lives, communities and institutions. I think we are still at this stage with regard to GC 32.

2.2. The dynamics of human groups seem to require a balance between an external and internal pole. Social psychology tells us that the healthiest people are those who have a strong sense of identity, a sense of self, and at the same time a strong disposition for outward task/mission-oriented work. It is not about just attending to the mission, nor is it about focusing on the body as such; rather it is about strengthening a body for mission.

2.3. If we look at our recent history, we can see that GC 31 laid the foundations for a renewal of the Society of Jesus, while GC 32 stressed a new understanding of our mission. While GC 33 focused on the election of a new Father General and the task of calming unsettled spirits within the Society, GC 34 once again coined brilliant expressions describing our present mission. It is possible that CG 35 may have to insist on certain "internal" issues, taking into account the five recommendations approved by the Major Superiors in Loyola 2005 (government, collaboration with lay people, community life, formation and identity), all of which refer to the 'interior sphere'. It is important to realize that the internal and external spheres are not in opposition but need and reinforce each other.

It is for this reason that I believe that the most important task we have at hand is not to reformulate our mission, but articulate a body for the mission, which truly reflects its needs and demands. It does not seem to me a priority to list the concrete aspects of this mission (alter-globalisation, human rights,

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indigenous people, active non-violence, the ecological question, immigrant and refugees, etc). GC 33 and 34 did precisely this. Nor do I see the need to search for a brilliant and brand-new formula to articulate this mission. This job was well done by GC 32 and 34.

3. Doing and being (or corporate coherence)

Having said this, the emphasis must clearly be placed on looking at ways to embody and make operative the mission of faith-justice that gives us our identity. However, we still need to clarify another point: when we speak of a body that is to put in practice our mission of faith and justice - What is the most decisive element? Although I have already indicated the importance of the practical dimension ("doing"), I do not feel that we can limit ourselves to just that. I agree with many other observers that religious life is not a call to do things, but rather, a call to be. The Spanish theologian José María Castillo SJ states that as religious we are called to "create an alternative way of being" to the dominant system.¹ Castillo warns us that we need to realise that "the prophetic attitude does not consist in saying particular things (denouncing, protesting, etc.) but in living in such a way that our own lives become a form of protest and denunciation."² In other words, it is not a case of fine-tuning or invigorating our mission, but rather of embodying faith and justice until it seeps from our pores at a personal, communal and institutional level.

Consequently, the fundamental question that we must grapple with is "How can we live our lives so as to make faith and justice transparent? How can we carefully prepare a Body for **this** mission?" I will try and answer these questions in terms of eight basic characteristics.

The most important task is not to reformulate our mission, but articulate a body for the mission

3.1. The mystical body

First of all, the body for the mission of faith and justice must be a mystical body. The road travelled during the past decades has made us more aware of the need to ground our commitment for justice in our personal relation with the Lord of the Kingdom. One might talk therefore of mysticism and justice. This is clear in our everyday lives; nevertheless it is worth reiterating.

Body for the mission of faith and justice must be a mystical body

The mission, as Fr Kolvenbach likes to say, binds us to God who sends us forth. It would be misplaced to believe that the body's cohesion is achieved through ideas or projects. As we well know, the only way to achieve radical and authentic cohesion is through Him who brings us and calls us together. This has important consequences for

our life in the Spirit, for example, in relation to apostolic prayer, communal discernment, 'evangelic planning', and the missionary implications of our Eucharist-based communal life or our radical immersion in the Body of the Church.

3.2. An integrated body

Gone are the days of tension when positions regarding faith and justice appeared to divide and segregate the body of the Society. Now we must move on and make our option operational within a real body for the mission of faith and justice. It is time to move from a dispersed, segregated body to one that is called together around our mission. This means moving from the 'I' to the 'we', from being men 'for' others to being men 'with' others, to become apostles constituting real apostolic communities of solidarity.

The experience of these past decades, and the Congress of Naples (1997), the document *Characteristics of the Social Apostolate of the Society of Jesus* and Fr General's letter (2000) insist on the need for a vigorous social sector precisely to ensure that the social dimension does not remain an illusion. The option for faith and justice cannot be the preserve of a few isolated Jesuits. It requires an authentic corporate commitment. Only by integrating the body around the mission received, only through corporate commitment at different levels (life, action and reflection) and the apostolic sector which supports faith and justice can we hope to achieve, and be faithful to, our mission.

3.3. A global body

The most important apostolic challenges of our time are by nature global and in order to respond to them the subject (body) must also be global. It is for this reason that the last General Congregations indicated the special responsibility that we have, as an international body, to promote a more just global order. GC 34 specifically called for the creation of global and specialized networks that would make our work for faith and justice more effective. In the last ten years we have witnessed changes in this area but I still experience a certain uneasiness. Are we doing enough? Are we taking advantage of all the opportunities that arise? Do we realize the dangers of superimposing works and bureaucracies on top of what we do? Are we too absorbed in 'virtual networks' instead of real communities of solidarity, an apostolic body in mission *ad dispersionem*? And finally, are we responding vigorously to the challenge of globalisation?

The Provincials have put together their recommendations regarding new forms of government and logically they do so from their own perspective. If,

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however, we take a look at this same issue from the perspective of the specific challenges it poses to the fight for global and local justice, we may identify other issues. I am fully aware of the complexity of these issues, but at this time I would just like to point out three areas for reflection.

First, perhaps it is time to create supra-provincial teams capable of responding to global issues. Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen the role and resources of the Secretariat for Social Justice, as well as the thematic networks already in existence or to be established. Third, this must be done in such a way that it is articulated fluidly within the government of the Society. Is it possible to envisage a mixed system that combines, at the same level, geographical and thematic Assistants?

3.4. A body that can serve better

The issue of governance structures introduces the theme of power, one which we are reluctant to discuss. First of all, I think we need to de-mystify the notion of “power”. In order to do this I think it helps to think of power as a verb, as in empower (be able to, *can* help, love, serve, accomplish the mission), rather than as a noun (we have “power”). From this perspective, it becomes clear that we have to rethink the power of the Body, and we must ask ourselves: What can we do as a body in the service of faith and justice? Are we doing all we can?

The Society’s way of governing concentrates all the power in the General so that he can delegate and give all the necessary power to the local level. The key is to “empower” the local. More than 450 years after Ignatius, this wisdom gains greater strength and, if you will permit me the expression, opens powerful opportunities. Again, are we doing all we can? What are the central structures that empower the humble and simple power of the periphery? How can we incarnate, as a body, daily practices, which can in turn generate alternatives in favour of faith and justice? And following this principle of ‘subsidiarity’, which are the levels of central “power” required to empower the local? How do we articulate power within the Society in such a way as to respond effectively to the challenges of globalisation?

The ministry of the word, as described by the *Formula*, opens up the possibility of re-reading it in terms of faith-justice

For these reasons, I believe that the issue is not one of coordinating work at a Provincial level (bureaucratic perspective) but creating structures which enable us to respond to real global challenges (apostolic perspective).

3.5. A body engaged in works of mercy

On several occasions, Fr Kolvenbach has indicated the importance of combining the option for the poor with the struggle for justice in such a way that we do not fall prey to the error of engaging in 'assistential' (charity) work or to the temptation of dealing in abstract ideologies. This point leads me to re-read the *Formula* of the Institute. Some authors have wished to interpret the two objectives of the Society expressed in the *Formula* (ministry of the word and works of mercy) as the two poles of faith and justice; others argue that we already find the foundations of our mission of faith and justice in the first element, the ministry of the word. Personally, I believe that this second interpretation is the most appropriate, having far-reaching consequences. The ministry of the word, as described by the *Formula*, opens up the possibility of re-reading it in terms of the faith-justice theme.

The works of mercy specify the way and social setting in which the ministry of the word is accomplished. In our terminology, this means that the option for the poor determines the way and the position from which we fight for faith and justice. In other words, corporal works of mercy acknowledge that our option for justice is not a mere idea but a concrete living force. And, when not done individually, these "corporate" works of mercy acquire an unavoidable public dimension. A body which incarnates active mercy in its commitment to justice proclaims through its way of life what it attempts to say through its programmes and projects, which are also necessary. We are called to be a body which undertakes merciful works, a body that articulates itself everyday in the option for the poor.

3.6. A body of poor people

If we are honest with ourselves and with reality, the option for the poor will turn us into a body of poor people. We already know that "our poverty is the condition of our apostolic credibility" (NC 160). We also know that we must continue to promote communities that "promote a more demanding practice of poverty or prefer to live among the poor, dedicated to their service and sharing their lives" (NC 180). It is only in this way that we can live and say to our closest companions that "from experience we have learned that a life removed as far as possible from all infection of avarice and as near as possible to evangelical poverty is more gratifying, more undefiled, and more suitable for the edification of our neighbours."³

Living like the poor however is not an ideal or spiritual motion. It is a reality which needs to be incarnated. To this end it would be very useful to take the option for the poor to the centre of our "communal body" in the everyday corners of our life: our eyes, our ears, our feet, our hands, our heart. At communitarian and institutional levels, we might ask ourselves: What are we

eating? How are we dressed? What are we reading? Which voices do we listen to? Where do we take our walks? Whom do we embrace? By whom are we moved? And other similar questions. In other words, do we live in a body of poor people the way our mission requires?

3.7. A plural body: partnership between Jesuits and lay people

It seems that the issue of partnership with the laity will be one of the main preoccupations of the next General Congregation. This follows the general trend of the past few decades and the ever-stronger conviction that the Church of the future will be the Church of the laity. Some have even talked about establishing a new common apostolic subject (organisation), made up of Jesuits and lay people, although this is far from being quietly accepted. Obviously, I do not intend to go in depth into this issue and its multiple dimensions. Simply, I would like to acknowledge the situation and shed some light on one key aspect which seldom receives the attention it requires. It is however an aspect that has important consequences for the strengthening of a complex body at the service of our faith-justice mission.

I refer to the importance of serving the laity in *their* mission. It is clear that the Society accomplishes its service of faith and justice according to our religious and priestly identity,⁴ an identity that is different from, yet complementary to, that of the laity. These lay people, according to the Second Vatican Council, fulfil their specific vocation by building the secular city. Have we sufficiently explored the profound consequences which this has for our mission of faith and justice? Do we support the laity in *their* mission of working for faith and justice in the political and cultural spheres and within the media of social communication? Or do we limit ourselves to seeing them as collaborators in “our” works? What would be the consequences if we were to turn our work towards strengthening the mission of the laity in secular structures, specifically from a faith-justice point of view? In my opinion, we have a lot to learn in this respect. The result might be one of opening new ways for collaboration within the ecclesiastical body – complex, plural and complementary, all oriented towards the mission of faith and justice.

3.8. A body formed with communities of solidarity

This complex body may be described by the expression of GC 34 as “communities of solidarity in search of justice.”⁵ These communities could be promoted in all our apostolic fields and, as Patxi Alvarez has argued,⁶ they should cultivate, simultaneously and in a complementary fashion, different areas in various social spheres, such as everyday experience, the economy and the markets, political action and reflection. All these activities are carried out through a maze of interconnected institutions that render possible the creation of an effective network of solidarity communities.

If we are able to articulate this web of networks, or a global body of communities of solidarity, we may perhaps demonstrate not only that another world is possible but that another world is tangible and that it exists (because we live it and embody it...though in a fragile manner). This "other world" is not merely a generic ideal, but rather a tangible reality. It may not be a global alternative to the dominant system but it may be able to offer alternatives that help us walk in that direction. We are called, as a Body, to embody this reality.

4. Conclusion

It is time to conclude. In these pages I have tried first of all to argue that reflection on our mission cannot be focused on new procedures or guidelines (fine-tuned, broader, more precise), nor can it make more explicit the fields or challenges which we may encounter. While these aspects might be important, and I would not wish to dismiss them entirely, I believe that there is truly a much more urgent and profound need to look for new practical ways through which we might strengthen a body for this mission. Secondly, I have attempted to trace some of the aspects which I believe are essential to achieve corporate cohesion with regard to our mission in the service of faith and justice. More concretely, I have suggested that we need to empower an integrated body, an effectively global body, a body which is able to adjust its power structures in order to serve better, a body which undertakes its works of mercy in a corporate way, a body of persons in our everyday lives, a complex body in which Jesuits collaborate with the laity, a body which articulates itself as a web of real communities of solidarity, focused on its mission in the service of faith and in search of justice.

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¹Castillo, Jose Maria. *The future of religious life: From the origins to the current crisis*. Madrid, Trotta 2004, p.172.

²*Ibid.* p.90.

³*Form. Inst.*, 7.

⁴GC 32, D 4, n. 12 and n. 24.

⁵Decree 3, n. 19.

⁶Alvarez, Patxi. *Comunidades de solidaridad*, Bilbao: Mensajero 2002, pp. 181-212.

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS AND THE MISSION FAITH-JUSTICE

José M. Castillo SJ

In number 82, 2004/1 of *Promotio Iustitiae*, I published a brief reflection in which I said “sufficient indicators exist to affirm, objectivity being guaranteed, that **the Society of Jesus is not being faithful to the mission** to which GC 32 committed itself and which was later ratified by GC 33 and 34.”¹ A few months ago, Patxi Alvarez expressed disagreement with this, saying: “As far as I am concerned, this is an affirmation which I do not share, just as many other Jesuits companions do not.”² Because of both, the personal reference and the seriousness of the matter under discussion, I believe that I have to speak out on this subject with all the clarity and sincerity of which I am capable. And I confess that I could not do it earlier because I did not have Patxi Alvarez’s text. Certainly, I respect his point of view; as I know that he respects mine. But since the matter is so serious, we need to speak about it seriously. I do not mean to insinuate that the article of Patxi Alvarez is not serious. It is, it certainly is. What has happened here is that I, in the first place, as well as he, later on, expressed “points of view,” “ways of seeing,” “opinions.” Logically, this is important. But its importance has the value of a *personal witness*. In any case, it is evident that more important than the witnessing or personal convictions of either, are the *facts* which anybody can verify. And it is precisely of this that I wish to speak here. I am going to refer to three aspects that are decisive for the one who takes the commitment to justice in the world seriously. The three relevant aspects of the one who truly wants to defend justice are the following:

- 1) *what does he live on ?*
- 2) *to what does he dedicate himself?*
- 3) *which real links determine his freedom?*

1. The goods of the Jesuits

When a person or institution intends to commit himself/itself to the defence of justice in the world, the first thing to do is to ask whether the goods which he administers, off which he lives and which make his work possible, are compatible or incompatible with the task, or better still the commitment, which he wants to carry out. If the life-style of the person or institution necessitates keeping the goods that support him and the institution concealed, or as far as possible masked, there will surely be problems, and, for unavoidable, perhaps unacknowledged reasons, both that person and

institution will be limited in their commitment to justice. Now it is a fact that the Provinces of the Society of Jesus are financially maintained, in great part, thanks to the investments and values which the Jesuits, through "specialized professional services,"³ handle in the Stock Market of practically the entire world. This is the reason why the legislation of the Society gives precise, concrete norms for the "formation of a good Securities Portfolio."⁴ This means that, of the different modalities of capital (productive, commercial and financial), financial capital, is the one that gets greatest attention from the Administration of the Society. Investments in immovable goods are more inconvenient because it "is not always possible to liquidate - or convert them into cash - at the desired moment; and its low profitability does not always compensate the revaluation of the sale."⁵ Certainly, the Society is conscious that in the handling of the financial capital, there are licit and illicit investments.⁶ Besides, as religious, financial business is prohibited for us.⁷ There must be a reason (and this is an assumption) why the ecclesiastical law (cannons 286, 675) and the law of the Society prohibit, in principle, this type of business. This is why it is laid down that such business cannot be done "without the permission of the legitimate ecclesiastical authority."⁸ That is to say, it is affirmed that the authority of the Church can grant permission to undertake businesses which, in principle, are prohibited by this same authority.

Now, apart from this data (in itself significant) of our internal legislation, one thing is clear: the financial markets, like many other factors of the economy and of life in general, have been *globalised*. That is, for these markets there are no barriers, no frontiers, no international laws which control them; the governing norm directs them to go "toward where they can generate greater profit."⁹ That is, it is a question of markets, which, because of their structure and rules, are organized to function in a way in which **their only interest is the greatest possible profit or gain**. This is precisely the way in which they have been conceptualized. And from here comes their efficacy. But there are also economic and ethic dangers involved here. George Soros is right when he says that the "markets are amoral: they allow people to act according to their own interests... This is one of the reasons why they are so efficient."¹⁰ But it happens that this economic efficiency unavoidably involves a very high cost; "very frequently, in the fact that enterprises find greater expectations for profit through simple financial operations than through investments which broaden their productive capacity."¹¹ This means that the financial markets concentrate huge sums of capital with the sole fundamental purpose of gain, that capital is accumulated in the hands of a few, which is detrimental to productivity. It is impossible to calculate the harm that the efficacy (for investors, who are the rich, since the poor cannot invest) of that economic system is causing precisely to the poorest people in the world. In any case, and beyond all economic theories, there is no doubt that "the arguments which permit one to explain

how a great part of the financial capitals, the international flow of which certainly reaches colossal or gigantic amounts and a surprising speed in transactions, do nothing more than just *virtually rotate on themselves* (currency, credits, title deeds, products) and only a very limited part of these exceeds that pan-financial universe and is related with the world of goods and *real* goods and services."¹² That is, it is a question of unbelievable amounts of money, which do not produce goods or services for anybody and, **in fact, are dedicated solely** (whatever the intentions of the investor may be) **to accumulate gains or profit for those who are able to use their capital in that business which is so characteristic of the capitalistic system.**

Besides, we should never forget that, "when it is a question of financial operations of transnational reach, the agents who intervene in them place themselves at the margin of any national legislation, and evade in this way the control and inspection of governments."¹³ And logically, if they evade *fiscal control of governments*, all the more easily will they elude the ethical judgment of the *moral doctrines* that religions dictate. And this leads one to think that the *amoral* markets of which Soros speaks are in reality *immoral* markets. A judgment which, certainly, the great majority of the population does not share.

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Neither do many of the moralists of different confessions, including the Catholic. One reason for not disapproving is the understanding that investments in the Stock Exchange may be destined by the investor exclusively for ethical, ecological and solidarity funds.¹⁴ And there are some very concrete instances in which that surely is the case. But every economist knows perfectly well that, if the intention is to get "a good portfolio of values," the finances need to be handed over to "professional administrators" who control the result of investments.¹⁵ Let us not be naïve in such an important affair such as this. Perhaps, with the exception of very rare cases, in general, the Bursars or Treasurers of our Provinces do not, and cannot, control where the financial goods which permit us to live as we live, are invested. What this means is that in many cases, we Jesuits do not know that, possibly, shady, not quite clean, even, perhaps highly immoral businesses, are among those which permit us to live as we do and to maintain not a few of our works. Not to mention those countries in which the Jesuits invest in state bonds or state financial instruments, which offer a higher rate of interest than the banks. This in effect means that our funds benefit by large amounts of money that the State should use for such basic social services such as education or health. What is even worse, this usually takes place in poor countries. In all probability, these dark and not very edifying aspects of the Society's investments explain the zealous silence with which this matter is treated, above all when it is a question (as is our case) of religious investors.

If the Provinces of the Society invest important sums of capital in order to obtain the greatest possible gains in the financial markets, they do so not out of greed for gain, but because, as the recent *Instruction on the Administration of Goods* says, investments in immovable goods are somewhat inconvenient, rendering as they do “a low return;” and besides, when one wants to sell them, the sale “is not always compensated for by a capital gain.”¹⁶ That is, there are certain important economic reasons to justify financial investments. One simple reason is that the return obtained from such investments is needed to sustain the standard of living which we Jesuits have decided to have and to maintain in today’s society. And also to financially support many of our apostolic works, which have a deficit. Nevertheless, reasonable as all this may seem, my brief explanation tells us something that makes us stop and think: **the Society of Jesus is an institution which lives integrated in the dominant economic system, and besides, it obtains important advantages precisely from one of the mechanisms of gain which causes greatest harm to the poor,** that is, to those whom we say we wish to defend. And this means that the Society is an institution which lives, of course without intending it, in a *contradiction*. On the one hand, it denounces the perversion of the capitalist system, but at the same time, it stands to gain substantially from at least one of those perversions. Thus, the inner resistance (no doubt unconscious) which we Jesuits have had, and continue to have, to the commitments which the Society contracted in the GC 32.

The Society is an institution which lives integrated in the dominant economic system

It has always struck me that in the numerous documents on the Social Apostolate of the Society of Jesus published in the last 30 years, there has never been any reference to the goods possessed by the Society, to the origin of those goods and to the administration of those goods. I am sure that some Jesuits will, if they read what I write here, be surprised and above all, uncomfortable concerning this whole question. Such discomfort is completely understandable. The fact is that it is not only a question of dignity. What is at stake in the case of some Provinces, of many communities, perhaps of many works, is possibly survival, and also, no doubt, the issue of maintaining a living standard which (and this is my impression) we are not ready to renounce or give up. Be that as it may, what is certain is that the Jesuits who wrote the documents of GC 32 were not aware of the consequences that would eventually derive from the new orientation which they wanted to give to the Society. This is why I insist that there was a great lacuna in GC 32 – no principal guidelines were given of the *spirituality* that we Jesuits need if we are to assume seriously the *mission* assigned to us by Decree 4 of the GC 32. But since this was not done, at least, when we meditate or explain the meditations on the two banners or the third degree of humility, we must do it knowing what we say, and with the great sincerity and honesty of

one who gauges well the ideas he presents or the words he uses. Otherwise, if we are not aware of what we do, we deceive ourselves and possibly induce others to live also in deceit, or, at the very least, in a form of naïve conscience which leads nowhere.

2. The works of the Jesuits

The Society of Jesus has, in different parts of the world, important educational works, especially prestigious universities, where thousands of young people are educated and where they obtain degrees of a high quality. Precisely because they have been educated by the Jesuits, they soon find jobs in well established efficient enterprises in very important spheres such as the economy, politics, business administration, and scientific or industrial research.

The problem which some of these works present lies precisely in their efficacy, in their excellent organization and in their acknowledged prestige even at international levels. And I say “problem” because, as is well known, thousands of young people undertake their studies in many of our universities, and precisely because of the excellent formation they receive, they are highly regarded by the most representative enterprises of the economic and political system imposed upon us. This is most evident in the case of the study of economics and of business enterprises. It is also true that in the areas of political science, law or technical education, we form competent professionals who then work, for example, in weapons manufacturing factories, or in highly efficient companies in the financial world. For example, according to a list published by the *Wall Street Journal* (22.8.05) based on the opinions of 3,267 graduates with MBA degrees, a degree from ESADE (directed by the Jesuits of Barcelona of the Tarraconense Province) was highly valued as it is the second best business school in the world. The first on the list is the Swiss IMD, the International Institute for Management Development.

In saying these things, I am not inventing anything. Neither am I exaggerating anything. I limit myself to verifying a very well known fact. That fact is one of the most eloquent and clear expressions of the contradiction in which we Jesuits live. On the one hand, we are educating the best, most highly esteemed administrators of enterprises which in various forms perpetuate injustice, or who collaborate effectively with those responsible for violence, inequality, hunger and misery on the planet Earth. Let us not forget that frequently it is a question of enterprises that support the system and thereby reproduce the violence which this system generates in large sections of the world’s population.

On the other hand, we should not forget that our works and our activities unavoidably exercise an important social influence. Whether we realize it or

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not, whether we want it or not, the activities of the Jesuits have a certain force as exemplars for many people. And this means that if people see that Jesuits educate financial administrators or politicians who later on obtain influential posts in governments which practice violence and even state terrorism, they may think this to be ethically correct. And thus we enforce an unjust system which oppresses millions of human beings, that very system against which we say that we want to struggle. We affirm in our documents that the struggle for justice is a central component of our mission in the world.

3. The real links or bonds determining our freedom

In all fairness we must acknowledge – and acknowledge it with gratitude to God Our Lord – that in the course of the last decades numerous Jesuits have distinguished themselves because of their commitment to defend justice in the world, in some cases, to the point of giving their lives. Not to keep this in mind as a starting point would be an enormous injustice and a patent falsification.

Nevertheless, for those who know the Society of Jesus well, the question is unavoidable: How is it possible that a group of men so generously dedicated to their vocation have not done enough, and do not do more, to defend justice in the world? If our struggle on behalf of justice were more committed and effective, it is certain that we would be more persecuted than we are, less esteemed and in greater difficulties. In fact, the Jesuits who have taken seriously the commitment to defend justice in the world with all its consequences, have paid a very high price – exile, imprisonment, even death. While that is true, it is still a fact that the Society of Jesus, as a body, is an institution which, in general, enjoys esteem and is valued and appreciated in the spheres of knowledge, of possessions and of power. If we think with the criteria given by the Gospel, such esteem and appreciation should be a cause of concern and worry to the Jesuits. If the powers of the world appreciate us and value us, it means that such powers do not feel challenged or questioned by us. The powers of this world know very well whom they value and why they value them. If we are highly valued, that should cause us concern. Why?

The answer is that such appreciation indicates that there are deep links between the powers of this world and the Society (sometimes unconsciously forged), which surely are bonds that tie us down. And if they are bonds that tie us, they set limitations to our freedom. If that is the case, then here lies the most serious problem which the Society of Jesus has to face today. It is a fact that the Society's real and concrete freedom to think, to say what it thinks and to act in consequence, is limited, perhaps more limited than many Jesuits suspect. That limitation to our freedom has its cause and its explanation, above

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all, in the link or bond *with the capital which supports us*, the bond which *integrates us in the established system (economic and political)*. More binding than the capital or the goods that we possess, more determining than the amount or the greatness of this capital, are all the links, relationships and the harmony which capital and goods produce. If we keep good relationships and are in agreement with the Stock Exchange and its benefits, we cannot keep the same relationships and be in that same harmony with the poor of the earth who are harmed by the gains of the Stock Exchange and are hurt in a more serious way than we suspect. Let us not forget that when we speak of the “promotion of justice,” we do not simply refer to the promotion of works of welfare, or to a more or less generous social apostolate. It is a question of transforming the unjust world in which we live into “another world” in which justice and equality of rights are guaranteed to all citizens, a world in which such guarantees are an effective and evident reality. But it is evident that such a change can only be brought about by persons and institutions in tune with the aspirations and yearning of the victims, not with the aspirations and projects of those who cause the suffering of those victims.

Now the Society finds itself in a situation in which it will not be easy to attain that harmony and that freedom. And this for an understandable reason. GC 32 was celebrated thirty years ago. These past three decades have been difficult for the Society: a profound crisis of vocations in many Provinces, a large number of Jesuits who have abandoned religious life, and the inevitable ageing of those of us who continue in the Society. All this has shaken many things in the Society. The total number of Jesuits has diminished to a degree that causes concern. And this may lead – in fact has led – a number of Jesuits to ask themselves if the new mission, which the Society assumed in GC 32, has served to give us new life, or, on the contrary, seriously diminished the vitality, the strength and the future of our Order. It is possible that this question, which has not been properly addressed, explains (at least in part) why, in many of our young Jesuits, there seems to be greater interest and concern for promoting *spirituality* than for defending *justice*.

Conclusion

I said that the Society has not been faithful to the commitment taken in GC 32. Certainly, the Society has distinguished itself in the defence of justice even at the cost of its fame, its prestige, its good name, and even at the cost of the lives of some of its members. But when it comes to other things, it is evident that the Society today is not the same as that of thirty years ago. It is not because the society and the culture of our time are no longer the culture and the society of three decades ago. It is to the Society’s credit that it has kept pace with the accelerated rhythm of the changes taking place in our globalised world. But

the problem does not lie in these things. The problem lies in the way in which the economy, politics, justice and information are organized in the globalised world; if the Society had taken seriously, with all its consequences, the commitment in favour of justice, it certainly would have been persecuted, suffered calumny, and been expelled from many countries. Some of this has

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happened, but what has happened tells us that we are only halfway there. That is, we live in ambiguity and without defining ourselves. In this sense, I continue to maintain that we are not faithful to the mission to which we have committed ourselves.

Definitively, it is a question of keeping in mind something which is as simple to say as it is difficult to carry out, and it is this: *when the economic system of an institution, on which it supports itself, is modified, that institution ceases to be what it was and begins to be something else.* What has happened is that the Society has pretended to be different while maintaining the same economic system which it had lived in before GC 32, and from which it has continued to live and which makes possible its presence in society and the activities to which the majority of its members dedicate themselves. In other words, this means, that the “*from where one acts in life*” conditions and decidedly determines the “*for what it acts and works.*” If we Jesuits live well integrated in the dominating economic system of the world, we cannot seriously pretend to dedicate our lives to denouncing, questioning and modifying that system, since that is the one that feeds us, makes possible the security which we enjoy (for formation, for work and for old age), which pays for our studies and careers, the public image which we enjoy, the esteem and even the fame which accompanies us in our life. Let us not be naïve. As long as we are not ready to question all this, we will continue having our good desires, good words, our usual spirituality and our apostolic works. But let us be sure that our real and effective effort to improve the unjust conditions of this world and the real suffering of the poor is going to be very limited, very scarce. This world will continue to journey and we together with it. In the last instance, no matter how much we complain about things being very bad for us, the truth is that the Jesuits who are convinced that things are well with us in what concerns our economy and administration of goods are numerous. But it happens that those who think in such a way are surely not aware of the grave consequences which the present situation holds for the faithful fulfilment of our mission.

For the rest, it is understandable that the fact of stating this problem precisely only a few months after the new *Statutes of Poverty and the Instruction on the Administration of Goods*, was published will be seen by some as inappropriate. The matter nevertheless is so serious that, despite running the

risk of inopportune timing, it seems necessary to help others reflect on a question that is central to our vocation. And even more, it would be good if those who feel concerned about this statement start contributing possible solutions to this state of affairs. And in this sense, I ask: Has the time not come for us Jesuits in the more developed countries to live off the proceeds of our work, off the economic income from our work, and the pensions that we receive in case of illness or retirement, exactly as citizens of modest means live in advanced societies? It would seem reasonable to think that if we have the audacity to face this question seriously and honestly, we will be taking a decisive step for a profound renewal, not only of the Society, but also of religious life in general.

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¹*Promotio Iustitiae* 82 (2004/1), page 18.

²*Promotio Iustitiae* 86 (2005/5), page 12.

³*Instruction on the administration of goods*, Rome, General Curia of the Society of Jesus, 2005, [38], page 142.

⁴*Op cit* [393], p. 136.

⁵*Op cit* [388.2], p. 135.

⁶*Op cit* [396-398], pp 137-8.

⁷*Op cit.*[399], p. 138.

⁸L.c., which refers to canons 286 and 675 of the Code of Canon Law in force now.

⁹J. Sigitz, *The ill feeling in Globalization*, Madrid, Taurus, 2003, 150.

¹⁰G. Soros, *Globalization*, Barcelona, Planeta, 2002, 25.

¹¹E. Palazuelos, *Financial Globalization*, Madrid, Síntesis, 1998, 207.

¹²E. Palazuelos, *Op cit*, 13-14.

¹³E. Palazuelos, *Op cit*. 113.

¹⁴For example this is defended by the "Escuela de Finanzas Aplicadas" (The School of Applied Finances) in its small manual, *Ethical, Ecological and Solidarity Funds*, Madrid, Escuela de Finanzas Aplicadas, 2001.

¹⁵Cf. A. Torrero, *Internacionalización de las bolsas y de las finanzas (Internationalization of Stock Exchange and of Finances)* Madrid, Pirámide, 2001, 55-60.

¹⁶*Instruction....*, [388.2], page 144.

“WHAT DOES THE SOCIETY LIVE ON?”

Urbano Valero SJ

Under the title “Debate: a Faith that does Justice,”¹ an exchange of ideas was initiated between Jesuit theologians on the relationship between faith and justice in the light of theological development following GC 34. In the same issue José M. Castillo stated²: “There are sufficient grounds for affirming, with complete objectivity, that **the Society of Jesus is not being faithful to the mission** to which it committed itself in GC 32 and which was then confirmed in GC 33 and 34.” José Maria tried honestly to base his affirmation within the narrow limits of what afterwards he would call “a brief reflection.” But in reality, this reflection, based on facts or what seem like facts, does not very easily fit into an open debate that sought to discover “new theological perspectives” and “new viewpoints” in a “healthy theological development which attempts to understand the existing link between the two components (faith and justice) of our charism.”

Shortly before the publication of that issue of *PJ* in which Castillo’s article appeared, Patxi (F. Javier) Álvarez de los Mozos, towards the end of 2004, addressing a group³ of Fomento Social in Madrid on the 27th of November, stated clearly (outside the context of this debate): “This is a position (that is, Castillo’s) that I do not share, nor do many other Jesuit companions.” Castillo himself had foreseen that “this general judgement on the Society’s record will seem too categorical and even unacceptable to some.” This then was the situation and the expectation was that it would not remain unchanged.

This same issue of *PJ* carries a much longer and more consistent article by J. M. Castillo, *The Society of Jesus and its Faith-justice mission*, in which he responds to Patxi, saying: “because of both, the personal reference and the seriousness of the matter at stake, I believe that I have to speak out on this subject with all the clarity and sincerity of which I am capable.” To do this he offers the following initial approach: “I am going to refer to three facts which, as you will see in a moment, are decisive for the one who takes the commitment to justice in the world seriously. The three relevant aspects of the one who truly wants to defend justice are the following:

- 1) *what does he live on ?*
- 2) *to what does he dedicate himself?*
- 3) *which real links determine his freedom?”*

Taking for granted that this approach is valid (an approach implicit in his first paper), he tries, in the rest of the article, to reply to these three questions to defend his original thesis.

My participation—strictly speaking, it is not quite participation— in this debate among theologians is at the personal invitation of the Editor of

Promotio. I am not a theologian and cannot therefore take part in it as a theologian. In this note I shall limit myself to offering some information with respect to the first of the three questions posed by J. M. Castillo. Only this much. I do not offer a reply or examine his own reply. I simply provide information; each one can then work out his own reply. To do this, allow me to rephrase the question as follows: *What does the Society live on? A Society truly wanting to promote justice as something inseparable linked to the proclamation of faith?*

**In this note I
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information**

1. From the very first days of the Society, even before it was formally approved, St Ignatius gave much importance to the matter of its relationship to material goods (what he and we call "poverty"). This is evident not only from original words used by Ignatius (the best known is the one recorded in the Spiritual Diary, but there are others), but also from other indications. These range from considering it as a "strong wall" (*Constitutions* [553]) and "bulwark" (*ibid.* [816]) of the Society, and consequently imposing on the professed the obligation under vow not to weaken it (*ibid.* [553, 554]) to some redactional mannerisms which force him to hasten and even rush to explain the nature of poverty.⁴ It seems that right from the beginning he took seriously the question of "what is the Society going to live on?"

2. He told us clearly and promptly that since the *formed Society*, that is, the Society constituted by the Professed and formed Coadjutors who have made their final vows in it,⁵ would not be able to ask for or receive any compensation for services given⁶ nor support itself from fixed revenues of any type coming from stable productive goods,⁷ the possession of which is forbidden,⁸ it would *have to live on alms*, those alms which eventually might come her way⁹--and not come in a fixed or assured way.¹⁰ The *Scholastics* who are preparing to join the Society and the formed Jesuits who serve her in the Colleges "can live from fixed revenues annuities or possessions,"¹¹ but care should be taken to ensure that "the professed Society is not able to convert them to its own uses."¹² In order that this may be so, none should live in the Colleges unless they are working there.¹³ Also, *old and sick Jesuits*, by virtue of an early papal concession (22 October 1552), can live in the Colleges and support themselves from their revenues. Thus formed Jesuits should live on alms, and scholastics, the old who can no longer work, and the sick can live from the revenues of the endowed possessions of the Colleges.

3. This scheme of the legitimate sources of income on which the Society had to live was formally in force up to General Congregation 31 (1965-66). This affirmation is correct in the form in which it is expressed; though it would need a more detailed explanation than allowed by the scope of this note.¹⁴

4. But very soon, as time passed, new facts and situations appeared which complicated the implementation of the original scheme. On the one hand, in St Ignatius's own lifetime, the emergence, especially the subsequent proliferation of Colleges, not just for the Society's scholastics but for non-Jesuit pupils, meant that too many formed Jesuits – it seems they were the majority¹⁵ – came to live in Colleges and lived off their revenues, and no longer exclusively from alms, and this was against what was originally foreseen and desired by St Ignatius. The General Congregations of the time tried to remedy this situation, slowing down the multiplication of Colleges and encouraging the creation of Residences for ministries, with a system of economic revenues similar to that in the professed houses that St Ignatius had considered. But already in the restored Society (1814), two facts came up to aggravate the situation: there were not enough alms to support the Jesuits fully, and the Colleges ceased to be supported by capital or founding possessions. Hence, if the Society was to continue she had to receive fees from the students in return for teaching imparted. The Jesuits tried to appease their consciences following a practice which was not in conformity with the letter of the original norms. They argued that these revenues were legitimate as substitutes for the revenues coming from the foundations the Colleges should have. They hoped that times would change and that these possessions would return.

As time passed, new facts and situations complicated the implementation of the original scheme

5. In this situation, shortly after the Society's restoration, dispensations from the Holy See were needed in the 1820s to receive stipends for Masses and other ministries, and payment (called *minervalia* in the old language) for teaching in the Colleges. The official policy was to restrict the use of this dispensation as much as possible, and Generals granted it solely in special cases of great need. But such cases grew in number.

6. It also happened that, apart from growth in the number of Colleges and the emergence of Universities requiring large sums of money to function, new apostolic activities came to the fore that were neither Colleges nor purely pastoral ministries, at least in the literal sense, like those foreseen in the Formula of the Institute and the Constitutions. Among such activities were houses for writers, retreat houses different from Residences, sodalities, social centres, and other similar works which were difficult to fit into the original framework without subtly introducing many balancing tricks.

7. The Society was never quite happy nor satisfied with this state of affairs; proof of this can be found in nn. 937-935 of the old *Epitome of the Institute*. The General Congregations of the 20th century, from the 28th to the 30th (1938 to 1957) increasingly gave voice to this uneasiness, even openly recognising that

one could not go on “fixing” special cases, but that what was at stake and urgently to be addressed was the manner in which the original principles governing sources of income for the Society’s life and apostolic work could be modified to meet historical circumstances (external and internal) so different from those of earlier times.

8. *General Congregations* 31 (1965-66) and 32 (1974-75) attempted to provide an answer to this question on the basis of painstaking historical, theological and juridical studies carried out over more than 20 years, with the participation of the best available experts on the Society’s Institute. (If one looks at this collection of studies, kept today in the Society’s Roman Archives [ARSI], one is astonished at the huge amount of work and the thoroughness with which it was done).

9. The replies, normative not theoretical, of these Congregations are contained in decree 18 of the 31st and decree 12 of the 32nd; for practical use they can be found in the *Complementary Norms of the Constitutions* (nn. 157-222) and, with even more practical application in *The Statutes on Poverty*, (nn. 37-81).

10. The fundamental guidelines of these replies are listed below without any attempt at justifying or explaining them in detail :

- (a) Jesuit communities dedicated to the apostolate will live exclusively from the income that comes from the work of its members, whether they work in institutions belonging to the Society or in others; but in the first case, they cannot benefit in any way from goods destined for apostolic institutions for their life and sustenance. They will live within the limits of an annual economic budget approved by the Provincial, and every year they will get rid of any surplus that may accrue. Every year has to be started from zero; only a modest quantity is permitted to be put aside for unforeseen emergencies, and this has to be approved by the Provincial. They cannot receive other incomes.
- (b) The houses of formation and infirmaries (and also the aged and sick in other houses) will live on the incomes coming from the Province Funds for Formation and Health (which I take up later).
- (c) The Society’s apostolic institutions (though clearly not all directed or managed by the Society belong to it) can possess, either as their own or permanently set aside for their use, goods, including productive goods and profit from their earnings in order to function -- to the extent the respective Provincials judge necessary.
- (d) The universal Society itself, as distinct from the Provinces and Regions, the Houses and Colleges, can possess goods, including productive goods, and use their incomes *only* for certain ends: to help needy Provinces and

Regions and promote apostolic activities of great importance and universal character. Note that the adverb *only* restricts the universal Society's juridical competence to those ends mentioned; it is not an unlimited and unconditional competence.

- (e) Provinces and Regions, even the dependent ones, can possess goods, including productive goods, and use their incomes *only* (note again the restrictive adverb) for the following ends:
 - i Attend to the expenses of those in formation and probation and those who are at their service (**Province Formation Fund**).
 - ii Attend to the expenses of the old who cannot work and of the sick and those who take care of them (**Province Health Fund**).
 - iii Help certain apostolic works which, of themselves, do not generate sufficient funds for their operation (**Province Fund for Apostolic Works**).
 - iv Provide living facilities for communities that are being set up, and provide for and adequately equip our own apostolic institutions (**Province Foundation Fund**).

11. In the light of this outline, the question "*what does the Society live on today?*", whether or not it has committed itself to promote justice, should be answered as follows:

- (a) Communities dedicated to the apostolate, from the income that comes from the work of its members, shared in common.
- (b) Communities of formation, from the goods and yields of the Province Formation Fund.
- (c) Communities of the aged or sick, and the aged or sick living in other communities, from goods destined for formation or also from the Province Health Fund.
- (d) Apostolic institutions from their own possessions or stable revenues belonging to them and from the help they might receive from the Province Fund for Apostolic Works when their own resources are insufficient.

12. With regard to the Funds mentioned, the obvious question arises: "*where do they come from?*" The answer is given in the *Statutes on Poverty*, n. 77, which tells the Provincial how to set them up. That is:

- (a) From alms begged for or donations offered.
- (b) From the eventual renunciations of goods by Jesuits on taking their final vows, or from donations and legacies left to the free disposition of the Provincial.
- (c) From community surpluses at the end of each financial year, according to the Provincial's disposition.

- (d) For the Formation and Emergency Funds, from contributions the Provincial can impose on apostolic communities, with moderation and in proportion to their resources.

13. With regard to these another and no less important question arises, and that is: *“how should they be saved and how made to increase?”* This question is answered in several paragraphs of the *Instruction on the Administration of Goods* of 6th January 2005. This document goes back a long way -we owe the first version to Fr Vincenzo Caraffa, General from 1646 to 1649 --and has been improved and brought up to date several times). The paragraphs referred to are mainly the following:

- (a) The starting point, in conformity with general canon law and, one might add, in conformity with good administration of capital anywhere is that the administrators should invest any money not immediately needed so as to benefit the juridical person whose goods they are administering (378).
- (b) They are warned that in the present circumstances this task requires constant attention, prudence, knowledge of legal prescriptions and, most especially, competence in financial matters. For this, it is recommended that qualified and completely trustworthy professional people be called to whom we have to explain our intentions and aims in investment and ensure that they comply with them (381).
- (c) Three objectives have to be taken into account in this matter of investments by those who administer the Society’s goods (or the goods of a Province or apostolic institution):
 - i. Security (the assets should not be at greater risk than those incurred in a sensible administration).
 - ii. Profitability (higher profitability usually carries greater risk).
 - iii. Easy liquidity (investments easily convertible into cash, when this is needed) (382).
- (d) Given the nature and aims of the goods possessed by the Society, security should take precedence, even at the cost of sacrificing greater profit (383).
- (e) Much attention must be paid to the ethical quality of the investments. One should avoid investing in companies which disregard social justice and ecological balance and invest only in companies where they are at least sufficiently respected (398).
- (f) In the administration of the Society’s investments, any type of speculative investment is forbidden (399-400).
- (g) From the above it follows that the Society’s investment policy is more in line with the model of a sensible and careful saver, with a genuine moral sense of his work, one who seeks only a reasonable profit to maintain the

value of the capital and produce a moderate return, rather than an aggressive and adventurous investor “who tries everything,” seeking maximum profit above all else and careless of the means. The professionals from whom we seek services must adjust to this policy; if not, we cannot entrust them with the Society’s investments.

14. *To whom do the Society’s goods really belong?* Obviously to herself (whether the universal Society, Provinces, communities or apostolic institutions), according to canon and civil law. But we cannot ignore certain significant statements from our sources which throw more light on the matter. St Ignatius, dealing with “the conservation of temporal goods,” says that “it will be good to have someone who is charged more particularly with caring for these goods, *as the property and possession of Christ our Lord*” (Const. [305]). And the *Instruction* already cited above takes up this statement in its n. 11, inspired by the previous phrase which comes from GC 8 (1645-46), D 15: “The Society’s temporal goods should be considered as goods belonging to Our Lord Jesus Christ and patrimony of his poor; on them depend to a large extent the spiritual goods and good standing of the Society, and without them it would be difficult to carry out our spiritual ministries.” Pious devotional metaphors with no practical meaning or effect? Or a serious call to a deep and important awareness that the Society’s goods have, because of this, the character of *property on trust*, that is, destined to be passed on, itself or its benefits, to others outside it, those who are “his poor”, those of Christ? Undoubtedly, the second. Because of this, the same *Instruction* says, “The financial administration of the Society ... [should] be animated by a sense of religious-apostolic service and by a spirit of solidarity and participation with those in greatest need, both inside and outside the Society.” (15)

15. This sense of *property on trust* with regard to its goods obliges the Society not to feel itself the *absolute and unconditional* owner of the goods, nor to behave as such, doing with them whatever it fancies, but rather to use them entirely in the interests of their beneficiaries “and not for any other benefit” (a typical Ignatian expression, see Const. [813]). Thereby the Society can help alleviate, in the minimal way in which this ‘minima’ Society can, some of the serious imbalances caused by the ‘dominant system’. However small and insignificant this contribution may be, it still matters.

16. This same interpretation has contributed strongly in the Society, particularly in recent decades, to the creation of a widespread and active movement in the *sharing of goods* within and outside the Society (Statutes, 65-70). It may not be generally known that these goods reach and benefit places and situations where need is most urgent (Const. [622]).

Postscript: At the end of his article J.M. Castillo asks the following question: "Hasn't the moment come for us Jesuits in the most developed countries to live on our work and on the pensions we get for illness or retirement, exactly as citizens of modest means live in advanced societies?" I cherish a certain hope that whoever has had the patience to read the preceding note might have found in it the elements with which to construct a personal reply.

Original Spanish
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¹*Promotio Iustitiae* 82 (2004/1), p.15.

²In his contribution 'The Faith that does Justice', *op. cit.* pp.17-18.

³Alvarez's talk in which this position was stated appeared in *PJ* 86 (2005/1), pp 12-19.

⁴*Formula of the Institute*, n.1; *Examen* [4].

⁵See *Const.* [511].

⁶*Formula Instituti (FI)* I, n. 1; *Ex* [4]; *Const.* [565].

⁷*FI*, 7; *Ex* [4]; *Const.* [555].

⁸*Ibid.* [561]

⁹*Const.* [557, 560].

¹⁰*Const.* [564].

¹¹*FI*, n. 8.

¹²*FI*, 8, *Const.* [557].

¹³*Const.* [557, 560].

¹⁴I have treated this matter more extensively in my article 'La nueva expresión de la pobreza religiosa de la Compañía de Jesús: génesis, valoración y perspectivas' (The new expression of religious poverty of the Society of Jesus: genesis, valuation and perspectives), *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* (IHSI), 71 (2002) 41-81.

¹⁵General Congregation 6 (1608) dealt with this issue; it considered it to be good since it was in agreement with a tradition coming from the times of Saint Ignatius. On this and related problems see the definitive work of Ladislaus Lukacs, *De origine Collegiorum externorum deque controversias circa forum paupertatem obortis*, in *AHSI*, 29 (1960) 189-205 and 30 (1961) 3-81.

DOCUMENTS

VI LATIN AMERICA ENCOUNTER OF PASTORAL AND SOLIDARITY WORK WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

*what we have heard...
what we have seen with our eyes..
what we have touched with our hands..*

*what we have seen and heard...
we announce it to you as well...
so that you can be in communion with us.*

and we write this to you so that our joy may be greater.

At the VI Latin American encounter of pastoral work and solidarity with indigenous people held at Tiraque in Bolivia from the 1st to the 5th of August 2005, indigenous brothers and sisters, lay people, religious, among them Jesuits from 12 Latin American countries, listened to "...Their Voice." Attentive and respectful, we heard in our hearts the profound, generous and wise voice of our peoples, the voice which had already been there from the beginning. That voice, those words - true words - were there before we came. And the word...became Quechua..., became Aymara..., became Guaraní..., and Mojeño; and the word also became Mapuche; and it became Sateré Mawé; and it became Tseltal and Quiché; and it became Ch'ol and Quekchí; and Nuhú; and Rar_muri; and Zoque; and Nahuatl; and all the languages there are... so it happened...and it pitched its tent among us.

And we... we only bore witness: what we have seen and heard, what we have touched with our hands. What we could not hide from burning hearts or from sympathetic and brotherly eyes is the fact that we share with you now – the fact that these our peoples are alive; that they continue living; that they want to be alive and continue to be the peoples they are because they carry in their hearts and hands the truth which has made them and has made them always true peoples. This means... that they have origins; they have a history; they have traditions; they have conviction; they have wisdom and identity; they have spirit and memory; they have among them one heart.

I. ...where do you live? - Come and see!... Towards a Diagnosis of the Situation

1. The Subject

The peoples that exist today are the peoples who were there from the beginning. They are those who know this beginning themselves, and know it

to be their beginning. They have been what they are today since that time, but they carry many years, many decades, many centuries of being dispossessed and pushed aside by those others who arrived one day and expelled them from their home. Since then there have been terrible massacres, virtual exterminations. They have been altered--through merchandise which is bought and sold; through profits which are grabbed; through competition which destroys the other; through treason, disloyalty, death. Their environment and their world have been transformed. Their forests, their caves, their springs and mountains have been subject to the dirty business deals of foreigners; their woods and animals have been destroyed, dismantled, sacked. Their treasures have been sullied; their holy places, their secret corners, their spirits, their gods, profaned, humiliated and destroyed; their memory, confined to the abyss of oblivion; their dignity, in permanent danger.

**And... yet they
are still alive,
and their life
is still life**

And... yet they are still alive, and their life is still life. And their life is not only simply *their* life, but life that is capable of saving the life of others, of those others who are not them, but who are also not completely 'other' living as they do in the bowels of our neo-liberal world, running the risk of being more "nobodies" along with these other "nobodies" swarming around the world without identity, future or memory.

Modern history has taken note of these peoples who are still what they are, of their survival and development since the 16th century conquests that almost exterminated them.

Latin American historians identify three great stages in the colonial conquests:

- (a) The colonial period characterized by the existence of Spanish and Indian republics. This colonial or neo-colonial system continued up to the republican era when the present frontiers of national states were drawn up. The exploitation and marginalization of the indigenous peoples worsened, giving rise to a period of big indigenous uprisings that usually ended in the shedding of much blood.
- (b) The 20th century or period of assimilation, a period in which so called "indigenous" programmes, which were not really indigenous at all, were developed in our countries, and social theories favoured a strong emphasis on the peasantry and a new *mestizo* national identity. With this, original indigenous identities were made to disappear.
- (c) New indigenous movements arose across the continent stemming from different causes:
 - The disillusionment of the original peoples with the inadequacy and breakdown of the assimilation model that offered no solution to marginalization and other age-old problems.

- The inclusion of recently incorporated peoples who give priority to their cultural identity.
- A new international situation: some international organisations and countries, especially from Europe, now support the “memory” of peoples; they regard their diversity no longer as an obstacle but as a potential source for greater opportunities.

Nevertheless, in spite of this new stirring and openness, there are also serious contradictions. The new constitutional and legal documents of different countries grant greater recognition to indigenous peoples, but it all remains on paper, on beautiful pages fit only to be exhibited in a showcase. In other words, the promises are not carried out. At the same time many governments think there is something like good ethnology and dysfunctional ethnology. There has been a slow and gradual progression from ‘prohibited Indians’ to ‘permitted Indians’; that is, some are allowed to exist, but only those who make cultural demands. The others, those who also insist on their political and economic rights or on the joint and sustainable management of natural resources, continue to be forbidden or marginalized. Adjustments and cosmetic changes to the dominant model are acceptable; but if the indigenous peoples, together with other social groups, seek to change the structures of the neo-liberal model, they are seen as criminals and described as radicals, dangerous or even terrorist.

There has been a slow and gradual progression from ‘prohibited Indians’ to ‘permitted Indians’

On the international scene of big changes and social movements, 1992 has become a symbolic date. Indigenous peoples came alive as subjects in society, with their own identity, their own history, their own demands, needs and rights. They are now subjects to whom Latin American states owe an undeniable historic debt---the recognition of their rights, their lands, their world outlook, and their own ways of social, economic, political and cultural organization.

We are speaking of a collective subject whose size varies, according to different criteria, between 40 and 70 million indigenous people in groups, spread out not only on the American continent but also in some other countries of the world. This indigenous-peoples-subject can be found today in a wide variety of situations reflecting different attitudes:

- (a) As cultural minorities or majorities settled in national states or separated by artificial geopolitical frontiers.
- (b) As peoples living on their ancestral lands but under constant threat of being invaded or expelled by others more powerful, for example, the multinational corporations that eye their resources.

- (c) As peoples snatched away from their lands by necessity, work or violence, that is, as migrants who move either within or across frontiers to:
- urban centres, often unknown.
 - rural areas in the interior of their own countries of origin.
 - cities in the United States of North America or Europe.

2. Their requests

According to the diversity of their situations, their history, the degree of oppression and marginalization experienced, the greater or lesser deterioration or preservation of their organizational structures, and the greater or lesser degree of awareness of their cultural or racial identity, the indigenous people of Latin America have a number of requests to make to the three types of nations in which they live:

- (a) The right to be equal. This is the basic right recognised by the United Nations and other specialist organisations such as the ILO, which condemn and warn against any type of discrimination based on racial or cultural prejudice. "We are all equal before the law and have the same individual and collective, economic and environmental, political, social and cultural rights because all of us are part of humanity."
- (b) The right to be "equal but different." This is the right to be respected according to one's own way of being, thinking and living. It is the right to free determination, which can be exercised under specific forms of autonomy and special forms of social, economic, political and cultural organisation. It is the right to own and keep a territory which is enjoyed - not exploited - in the light of a different world view, and which considers the earth "mother" of those alive and all its resources as a gift to be kept and shared with all, and not as one more product to be used quickly to enrich a few.
- (c) The right to participate socially and politically in the development of the country. It is the right to be considered as full citizens, with full rights and with the capacity to share in the leadership of the nation. Different situations of social and political change, some more audacious, some more timid, some that have stalled, have arisen through indigenous movements in Mexico and Guatemala; in Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile; in Brazil, Paraguay and Venezuela.

3. Their relation to the world

To the extent that indigenous peoples' awareness of their identity and participation in the life and social and political development of the countries where they live have grown, to that extent other tensions and other perspectives on reality have arisen around them. Indigenous peoples and organisations in each region and country formulate their objectives, goals, policies for cooperation, short and long-term strategies in different ways. They

express differently their vision and their political views and action, their relation with that other world to which, willy-nilly, they belong and which also belongs to them.

Two great tensions also appear in the political arena:

The first is between those indigenous peoples, sectors and organizations which think their world should be built solely of indigenous peoples and solely for them, without any reference to non-indigenous peoples and those who believe that to survive they must enter the “other world” and adjust to it, using all its means, ideas and resources. In the middle of these two positions, lies a wide range of combinations and experiences, always incomplete and always changing.

The other great political tension is between those who see in the political parties the only viable means of changing the state and society, and those who, by contrast, maintain that the only solution for the future is to build society without these parties. Experience over the years has taught them this.

Behind these and other tensions there are also various political aspirations and paths. There is the dream of living in peace according to one’s own way of life, of achieving more local or more general objectives, of proposing a different world for all, of claiming power for Indians, of operating in a different sphere altogether – away from these struggles for power.

The relationship of indigenous peoples to governments, churches and to public or private institutions also unfolds in the light of these same tensions. They can be seen as possible allies, as enemies or opportunists, or as instruments from which to try and derive some profit.

In all these cases this accumulation of good and bad experiences points to a common search: how to learn to live among different peoples and how to build a society which supports all, each person and each people with a distinct way of life.

II. “He called them so that they could be with Him...” Our Ambitions

What we have seen and heard, what we have touched with our hands and our hearts, and by this we mean the pain and death of our indigenous brothers, impinges strongly on our conscience. At the same time, what we have seen and heard shows new paths for hope and the future. We have witnessed these too and we ask: “Lord...to whom shall we go...?” The indigenous brothers and sisters, lay people, religious, Jesuits among them, gathered in Tiraque, Bolivia, at the VI Latin American encounter of pastoral work and solidarity with indigenous people. We have listened to the voice of our peoples, we have thus understood our scenario and our

***What we have
seen and heard
shows new paths
for hope and the
future***

ambitions... and we have considered them as our challenges. They call on us.

To collaborate in strengthening their identities according to their own way of being, thinking and feeling; according to their own vision of the world, of nature and reality. From their own strengthened identity they can also open themselves to other different identities.

To collaborate in strengthening their organisations according to their own forms of social, economic, political, religious and cultural government, supporting them in their demands, requests, their struggles and their dreams.

To collaborate in strengthening the spirituality of the indigenous peoples, according to their own forms of relating to God and expressing their faith.

To collaborate in recovering their Historic Memory, in accordance with their own view of history and their own idea of memory.

To collaborate in the education and training they need and want so that, from their roots, they can assume the social and political tasks required for their own reconstruction as a people, and build links with the non-indigenous cultures around them. At the same time, they ask us to collaborate in achieving official recognition of their collective rights where this is possible and needed.

To collaborate in setting up networks of exchange between different peoples, cultures and social groups, indigenous and non-indigenous, in which they can find strength, be nourished, get recognition and mutual support for their identities, and share and reflect on issues of common interest. They want us to contribute to the process of identifying and supporting the most promising groupings.

To collaborate in the self-evaluation of persons and a deeper understanding of important themes and issues affecting them, such as migration, the role of women, the situation of youth, cultural rights, the relation between Christianity and other religions.

To collaborate in and promote interdisciplinary and inter-institutional work and commitment in favour of indigenous peoples through an approach which considers the person we serve rather than the supporting structure, and which simultaneously promotes supra-regional projects beyond national frontiers where possible.

To take on our commitment to indigenous peoples on the clear understanding that this is going to be a long-term process.

III. "...they were united heart and soul" Our Style - our Jesuit Options

In Tiraque, Bolivia, those present (indigenous brothers and sisters, lay people, religious including Jesuits) we asked ourselves these questions: How are we? What should we do to serve our peoples better? What should be our style and our commitment if we are to come closer our horizons ?

This is our word:

We want to be, and we should be, companions rather than protagonists.

We want to build, and we should build, bridges for dialogue and understanding between peoples.

We want and should cultivate an attitude of listening: always learning from them and consulting them about our own plans and projects.

We want and should live a spirituality based on the culture of the indigenous peoples.

***We want to be,
and we should be,
companions
rather than
protagonists***

We want and we should have greater coordination:

- **Within** our teams between indigenous people, the laity, Jesuits and others. We need a horizontal style of dialogue, open and respectful of differences, and at the same time able to build a consensus regarding the principles, values and commitments which shape all our work.
- **Between** our teams. Different approaches and styles can and should be complementary and not opposed to each other. By different approaches and styles we mean insertion, mobile teams, work in education and the university system, communications media, research, social works and institutions, parishes, accompaniment of witness and influence on structures. We especially want to promote exchange, mutual support and better coordination in the three regions where we are present: the Andes, the Amazon and Central America.

We want and should take action against such disordered affections as make us look at the indigenous person as the other, with pity, doubt, suspicion, still with a certain fear and mistrust. These feelings are no more than subtle variations of the racism that we too, however unconsciously, carry within us.

We want and should foster, favour and beg the grace of well-ordered affections, those which we need to look at our indigenous brothers only as their brothers, a perspective that recognises their dignity and offers respect in solidarity.

We also discussed three challenges more specific to the Society of Jesus:

- We are urged to share what we have heard and shared with our brothers in different fields because indigenous peoples and their alternative views have much to contribute to common tasks such as spirituality and theological reflection, social promotion, dialogue between cultures and religions. This is also true of our search for alternatives to neo-liberalism, a priority task that comes from the Conference of Latin American Provincials (CPAL). As minorities in Latin America as a whole, indigenous peoples occupy a privileged position for the Society since they are poor, to be preferred, and for their unique prophetic voice.

- Together with our coordination at a Latin American level, we must also promote exchange, mutual support and better coordination between each of the three regions where we are present: Central America, the Andes, the tropical Amazon region which includes the lowlands of the Andean countries. We are called upon to strengthen shared commitments and links with the members of the same indigenous groups spread across state frontiers and Jesuit provinces.

- The next General Congregation could be a moment of grace, an opportunity for the whole Society from which we must not be absent. To reflect better on what could be our specific contribution to this time of prayer and deliberation, we have agreed that our next Latin American meeting should be in the second half of 2006 at the latest. Given the possibilities of time and place, we propose that it take place in Guamote, Ecuador at the end of August and the beginning of September 2006.

***We must also
promote better
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America, the
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Amazon***

In agreement with the VI Latin American encounter of pastoral work and solidarity with indigenous people, we declare this to be the theme which has been given to us; these are our ambitions; this is our style of living together; these are our most pressing commitments.

May the God of all peoples, shown to us in his Son Jesus Christ, keep us humbly in his presence.

Tiraque, Bolivia, August of 2005.

Original Spanish
Translation by Michael Campbell-Johnston SJ

OPEN LETTER¹

Mr President of the Nation, Dr Néstor Kirchner,
Legislators elected on October 23rd
Civil Servants of the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary

We are happy that our country continues year by year to strengthen its democracy, and that people holding a great variety of political opinions were able to participate in the elections. We, who are all religious with different views, proposals and criteria, voted for different candidates from the ruling party and the opposition. And we are glad that next December, on the 10th to be exact, our institutions will embark on a new phase. Called by Jesus to “to announce the Good News to the poor,” we wish to point to ways in which we believe the “bad news” of the present can become “good news for our people.” Precisely as Christians, we also wish to express our opinion to the different political agents as they assume their mandates as elected representatives. This letter arises out of our daily accompaniment of ordinary people, has no hidden motives, and nothing to do with those who are full of accusations and believe that nothing needs to change. It pains us when, in the heart of our own church, many take the side of the powerful, the exploiters, the privileged. We are pained by a lack of self-criticism with regard to our role in the history of our people. From this position we wish to share our sincere feeling, “with one ear tuned to the Gospel and the other to the people.”

1. We are often in agreement with what the President says about the role of the multinational credit agencies, especially in the 90s. And we are glad this represents the true feeling of the government and is not mere “political rhetoric.” The founder of “Justicialismo” (Peronismo) used to say “Doing is better than saying and putting into effect better than promising.” Precisely because of this we are not happy about the fact that we speak out against the International Monetary Fund and other international credit organisations but continue regularly paying them for a debt which we do not recognise, and which - to be legitimate - should be approved by the National Congress. It seems to us an ethical imperative to carry out an audit of the debt as several legislators have suggested and as a result of the lawsuit presented by Alejandro Olmos in the federal courts. We remember the encouraging words spoken by our President on taking office: “We cannot continue to pay the debt at the price of hunger, the exclusion of Argentinians, greater poverty and increasing social conflict.” We cannot see why a debt that has not been previously audited should be paid, more so when it has not been established

***It seems to us an
ethical
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what and how, in all fairness and justice, it should be paid. It is always the people who have to make sacrifices that never bring them any immediate benefit.

2. On taking power the President spoke of “rebuilding a national capitalism.” Nevertheless, we believe it is precisely this “neoliberal market capitalism” that is causing scandalous inequality at a global level. For this very reason, we cannot see that the present economic model is ideologically and structurally very different in essence from what we have earlier endured; in spite of the efforts to create employment, the leading voices continue to be those of the commanders of this so-called “capitalism.” These are the Banks, multinational groups, rural landowners who occupy the land, poison the soil and appropriate it from peasants and indigenous people whose voices are not heard. Add to these, price-setting monopolies- which have a notable effect on inflation - and pressures from outside organisations calling for more and more cuts, less obligations and more privileges, ignoring the mass of the poor and needy they themselves have created. The numbers of the poor may have diminished but not in the real life we daily experience.

3. It is true that the level of employment has risen and that other alarming indices such as infant mortality have fallen. We see that for some, new possibilities for work have opened up. But at the same time we clearly see the huge gap created by the unjust distribution of income. If it was said that “to govern is to give work,” and “there is only one class of men, those who work,” we also know that slave work is not “social justice.” And if the maxim that “where there is a need, there is also a right” is true, then we demand work that is just and worthy, wages that are just and worthy for all, recognition of the legitimate claims of the retired and for a Universal Family Living Wage for children. All this we stated at the end of our 2004 National Meeting.

4. We invite the President to fulfil his promise of “Telling all the people what it is about” when, from under the counter, he suffers pressures which affect his convictions. We have seen that he did this at the beginning of his mandate, faced by pressures from the “automatic majority” of the Court by speaking on national radio.

5. We are glad that just tributes are being paid to the great names of our Church, such as Enrique Angelelli, Jorge Novak, the Pallotine Fathers or Carlos Mugica, but we feel, in the interests of coherence, that the motive for their struggles and the sacrifice of their lives should not be left in the dark.

6. We agree that the banner of human rights should be raised and that truth and justice be demanded, but we are concerned that all the dreams and

utopias, struggles and banners inviting so many to seek for a just and supportive country seem to be hidden or have disappeared.

7. We view very positively the reform of the Supreme Court of Justice, a monument to the impunity and disgrace of so many successive governments; but we are concerned that this impunity still exists, that the prisons are full of the poor who are certainly not those who broke, drained, embezzled and ruined the country. We heard the President say in his inaugural speech: "Crime is crime whether it is a white-collar crime, a common one or from an organised mafia." We have not seen this put into practice. People in the streets are daily calling for justice against white-collar delinquents who enjoy an unjustified freedom.

8. We are glad that "politics" is again supposedly seen as a noble cause, but we resent it when we see practices of the so-called "old politics" continue unchecked, such as party exclusiveness, political cannibalism, "badly spent" subsidies in favour of privileged firms, or the apparent buying and selling of legal favours or banks.

At the outset of a new stage in our democratic life, as followers of the carpenter of Nazareth who invites us to see him in those who appear to count for little in history, as Christians, we wish to demand for those poor whose daily lives are threatened, justice and dignified work. We demand true economic freedom, political sovereignty and social justice so that, in dialogue with all, we can continue to work out how to build "a real country."

We end expressing two hopes: that the people will not discover once again that they have been swindled and their desires denied; and that what the President said at the feet of the Virgin of Luján where he proclaimed himself a Christian indicates a real commitment to the people and was not an empty piece of propaganda. This is our sincere desire.

Argentina, December 2005

A group of priests who have opted for the poor

Original Spanish

Translation by Michael Campbell-Johnston SJ

¹This letter was written by a group of priests and religious of the whole Argentina who are united in their perspective of reflecting and acting from their option for and with the poor. It was signed among others by Luis Moyano SJ (died on 4 April 2005), Marcos Alemán SJ, and Jose Meisegeier SJ.

EXPERIENCES

A VIEW FROM JERUSALEM

Donald J. Moore SJ

For much of the last seven years I have been living at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Jerusalem. This has been a unique grace, coming after forty years as professor of Theology at Fordham University (NY). It brings with it, however, a corresponding responsibility of trying to convey to others some of the problems and possibilities involved in working for peace, justice and understanding between the peoples of this land. This is a difficult challenge, because there is a vast discrepancy between what one learns from the “hands-on” experience of living in this land and what one learns from the media (especially the American media) about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But let me try.

I am not concerned primarily with the political aspects of the controversy, although they cannot and should not be avoided. I see no need to emphasize the violence and the destruction and the terror. Images of that have permeated the media, although often in only a one-sided coverage. I thought it more helpful to write about the people of the Holy Land, people I have come to know and love through personal encounters at conferences, symposia, discussions, and by travel to Gaza and the West Bank. Some I know only through their writings – mostly journalists. I am not interested in those who deny Israel’s right to exist and who seek to bring this about by killing innocent civilians, nor in those who want a greater Israel, including all of Judea and Samaria, free of any Palestinians and who seek to accomplish this by military occupation and settlements and all that this entails – checkpoints, house demolitions, closures, curfews and the like.

I begin with two preambles. One springs from a story in the New York Times (21 Nov, 2004) about an exhibition of Palestinian art planned for the Westchester (NY) County Center. In Houston, Texas, the exhibit had drawn 20,000 viewers and was well received. Yet in New York the County Center received some 1500 emails and phone calls demanding the exhibition be cancelled, mostly from people who had seen none of the works to be exhibited. (In February 2006 there was a similar expression of outrage insisting that the Palestinian film, *Paradise Now*, be withdrawn as an Oscar nomination for best foreign film, and again mostly from people who had never seen the film!) The art exhibition went ahead as scheduled and drew a larger than expected number of viewers. The controversy prompted one of the artists, Rajie Cook, whose parents were Palestinian, to remark: “I remember my dad – he died at the age of 94 – old and blind and sitting by the radio, saying he was waiting to hear something good on the radio about peace in the Middle East. I’m 74, and I don’t know if I

***I don’t want
to die at 94
still waiting
for peace***

will ever hear it either. I don't want to die at 94 still waiting for peace." Art shows are not going to bring peace to the Middle East, but the controversy points to the simple fact that *peace can never be achieved if Palestinians cannot be heard on their own terms*. Unfortunately, such a "hearing" is a rare commodity in Western countries.

A second preamble has its roots in a BBC retrospect on the life of Margaret Hassan, the head of CARE in Iraq, who was abducted, held hostage, and then executed in 2004. In the BBC's last interview with Ms. Hassan, made shortly before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, she expressed her own opinion about the oncoming violence: "No, no, no - war will only bring grief to the most vulnerable in society." Margaret Hassan did not know how tragically personal her forebodings about war would become. In responding to the problems of the Holy Land I would like to make my own her stand against war and violence, along with its many parallels in the thought of John Paul II. *In any war the most vulnerable are always its victims. War and violence are always a defeat for humankind*. There are many Jews and Palestinians who are adamant in seeking non-violent ways to resolve the problems that confront them, convinced that they can succeed, but their efforts for the most part go unnoticed in Western media.

One such group is the Bereaved Families' Forum, Israeli and Palestinian families who have lost loved ones in the violence and have come together to protest the continuing cycle of violence. My first contact with the Forum was in 2002 through George and Najwa Sa'ada, a Christian Palestinian couple in Bethlehem whose eleven year old daughter, Christine, had been killed by Israeli troops in a case of "mistaken identity" during an incursion of the IDF (Israeli army) into Bethlehem.

I first met the Sa'adas four months after Christine's death. It was an extraordinary visit. There was no hate, no rage, no call for revenge. They had accepted this family tragedy with the profound faith that ultimately God would bring good out of their pain. Najwa was almost crushed by her grief - she longed so much for her Christine. George had a total of nine bullets and shrapnel pieces removed from the upper part of his body. One would never guess that this was a man who had spent two months in an Israeli hospital, his life hanging in the balance. He seemed strong, resolute, determined to grow from this tragedy. They showed me their family album with photos of Christine from early childhood through her 11th birthday, two months before she was killed. In all of them she was bubbling over with joy and laughter. She must have been a great consolation to her parents, which underscores the tragedy and loss they have suffered.

They recalled the day of the shooting. After visiting grandparents they were driving through the centre of Bethlehem. Israeli troops had been warned of gunmen driving in a car that was the same model and colour as the Sa'ada car.

Christine saw the soldiers and cried "Daddy, they are going to shoot us." George had scarcely told her "Oh, Christine, there is no danger of that," when suddenly the firing began. George was hit in the side with six bullets. Christine fell to the floor of the car, a bullet behind her left ear. Her elder sister, Marianne, was hit twice in the leg and still carries a bullet in her right knee. As they retold the story, I listened for the anger, the rancour, the bitterness, especially since they had had four months to filter through all the

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horrible details of "mistaken identity." There was none. I was awed to be in their presence. If forgiveness is a necessary component of justice and peace, then justice and peace will again flourish in this land.

George and Najwa told me that earlier in the day they had met in nearby Beit Jala with two Israeli couples who had suffered similar losses. They found it helpful to know that they are not alone. The shared grief across the racial and religious divide was a way of strengthening their resolution and their hope. The suffering of these parents points to the absurdity of turning to violence to solve political problems or to protect "national security."

A few weeks after my meeting with them, I had supper with Rami Elhanan, an Israeli member of the Bereaved Families' Forum. He shared with me one of his lectures. As he explains it, "darkness descended" upon his family on September 4, 1997 at 2 PM when his 14-year old daughter, Smadar, "sparkling and full of life" and walking in the street with friends, was killed by a Palestinian suicide bomber who was "insane with rage from humiliation and the lack of hope." Even as a five year old, Smadar had begun protesting the Occupation. At the age of nine she wrote a letter to an Israeli paper expressing her hope that the leaders of Israel and of the Arab nations would sit down and come to an agreement for peace and a division of the land of Israel. And then she added: "I don't understand why just because we returned here after 2000 years we want once again to rule, and that this land will be the Land of Israel for Jews and not for anyone else (it's sort of like racism)... If Abraham loved Hagar who was the mother of the Muslim people, and that story is well known, how can it be that we don't live in peace with the Muslims?" [It should be noted that the letter was never published.]

Rami explains how the tragedy of his daughter's death placed him in a crisis. He could either "sink into the depths of hatred, depression, emptiness," or he could try to overcome the tragedy, to understand and help others to understand "that not only is it possible, but it is necessary, once and for all, to break this seemingly endless cycle of bloodshed." He then continues: "I am very distressed that two peoples are losing their sanity. Fired by hatred,

revenge, retaliation and retribution, they rush head over heels to mutual destruction.... I believe that we don't have to surrender to our basest instincts.... After all, we are human beings, not animals. We lost our children, not our reason. We must maintain the hope that there are other possibilities, that there is someone to talk to and something to talk about. Both sides must enter a dialogue in order to prevent more tragedies. Otherwise, after the tragedy happens there is nothing left."

In his comments Rami adds that one of the basic premises of the Forum is that "we are all human beings.... We suffer equally. For a Palestinian mother the pain of losing a son is neither less nor more than for an Israeli mother. The tears of an Israeli father are as bitter as those of any other father.... We have suffered an unbearable tragedy and it places upon us a responsibility to tell our truth, to do everything we can to prevent other families from suffering the same fate."

For a Palestinian mother the pain of losing a son is neither less nor more than for an Israeli mother

The influence of the Family Forum on the political process between Israel and the Palestinians is admittedly minimal. Rarely is it ever mentioned in the Western media. Yet if the bereaved can cry out against the absurdity of violence, it is one sign of hope for this Holy Land. There are others.

Machsom Watch is a group of Israeli women who sit quietly by some 40 of the more than 600 Israeli checkpoints that tightly control all travel movements of Palestinians. Most of these checkpoints are located wholly within the Occupied Territories. They are among the most visible and disturbing reminders of the Israeli occupation. For Palestinians the checkpoints are a constant source of harassment and humiliation, of degrading and often brutal treatment. The Israeli soldiers at the checkpoints can prevent Palestinians from reaching work or school or medical assistance or families or their own orchards or their places of worship. The checkpoints have been condemned by human rights organizations, but often justified in the Western media as "necessary inconveniences" for Israel's security. By their presence the women of Machsom Watch hope to mitigate some of the more inhumane aspects of the mistreatment of Palestinians. I have met several of these extraordinary Israeli women and have come to admire their dedication and tenacity. Their monthly reports often read like a chronology of mindless brutality. For example in the report of March 2004 they write: "The phenomenon of the 'omnipotent soldier' has made the checkpoints sources of humiliation, maliciousness, arbitrariness and, moreover, sites that generate frustration, hatred and a strong sense of vengeance. So the checkpoints have become a major factor in the erosion of security. Anyone who is able joins in this 'jamboree' of making the Palestinians' lives miserable." On another occasion that same month, the Israeli women were called to a house in the village of

Huwwara which the Israeli army had seized. Five families, 17 people in all, including a 30-day old baby and an 80-year man, were crowded into one and a half rooms on the first floor while the army occupied the second floor. For four days no one could enter or leave the house; it was in a state of siege with the shutters closed and the phones cut off. "If we hadn't by chance met the villager who took us to the house, who knows how long those families would have remained trapped?" As it was, the women made many phone calls, alerted the media, and four hours after the story was reported on Israeli radio, the families were released. Then the report concludes ominously: "Who knows how many more houses have been seized by the army that we know nothing about?"

Their report of June 2005 is bitter and blunt as it strongly criticizes the actions of many of the soldiers assigned to the checkpoints: "These examples of sadistic behavior that we have been witnessing at Qalandiya [checkpoint north of Jerusalem] for some time should sound a warning light. *To what depths of behavior will they sink?* Who is guiding all this sadism? It's not enough to say 'The Occupation corrupts' - because even in the framework of an occupation, this degree of brutality and evil is unconscionable."

Month after month these women report their experiences not only with the hope of alleviating the treatment of the Palestinians but also because of their fear of what is happening to the young men and women who serve in Israel's army. One final example of their distress is taken from their report for January 2006. They point out that "the Palestinians' freedom of movement is inexorably being reduced to total paralysis. Cases of hardheartedness, humiliation and malevolence are multiplying. Dehumanizing and disregarding the humanity of others are fast becoming the norm, and a whole generation of soldiers is learning how to 'carry out orders' because 'there is no other choice.'" They conclude this report with the words of a Palestinian man who had just been treated at a checkpoint in a contemptuous and insensitive manner: "They should behave with more politeness - like human beings - we too are human beings." The experiences of these dedicated women receive occasional notice in Israeli media, and almost no notice outside of Israel. Yet Machsom Watch is another reason for hope in the Holy Land.

Liv Grinberg, a noted Israeli political sociologist, points to the reawakening of the voice of Jewish conscience as yet another reason for hope. It is a voice that "can link Jews, Christians and Muslims brought up on the sacred principle that all human beings are created in God's image." For Grinberg one of the clearest expressions of this voice is in those members of the military, past, present and future, who are expressing their refusal to serve.

In the fall of 2002 twenty-seven Israeli Air Force pilots signed a letter in which they refused to fly attack missions into civilian population centres. Rather than prosecuting them for their "disobedience" and giving their stand

more publicity, the government quietly dismissed them from service. A spokesman for the pilots, Yonatan Shapira, defended their action by insisting that Israel must abide by the values of Judaism and cannot continue on a path that violates the commandment "Love thy neighbour as thyself." Sending the army into the Occupied Territories and degrading millions Palestinians in order to protect Jewish settlers is undermining the soul of Israel.

In March 2005 some 250 high school seniors signed an open letter saying they will not serve in the Israel Defence Force. The signatories state their case clearly: "We call on all youths ahead of service in the IDF and all soldiers already in the Israeli army to reconsider ... taking part in a policy of oppression and destruction." They affirm their willingness to serve the country by alternative services "that do not include hurting other human beings." One of the organizers of the letter, Alex Kon, went to an IDF base in accord with a military order received in the mail, but he refused to enlist. "This is part of my duty as a human being. I was in the [occupied] territories and I saw the separation fence, and I can't stand on the sidelines," he said, explaining his refusal to serve in the army. The motivations of the signatories vary, according to one of them, Aviv Sela. Some are clearly pacifists, others refuse to enlist because of the Occupation, others will enlist but refuse to serve in Occupied Territories, while others who oppose the Occupation but wish to avoid a prison term "will try to lower their medical profile or try to evade service by some other means."

Writing in *The Nation* for March 15, 2005, a former member of the IDF, Shamai Leibowitz, reflects on his service in the Occupied Territories from 1986-1991. He was "shocked and disgusted" at the way he and his comrades were ordered to "brutalize" Palestinian civilians. He continued to serve only because he was persuaded by Israel's leaders that they were in the midst of a "peace process." So effective were the politicians "in their lectures on how Israel 'only wants peace' that we were blinded from seeing the reality of how the state is brutally oppressing, subjugating and dehumanizing the Palestinian people." And then he adds: "Many of us who live in Israel and visit or serve in the occupied territories recognize the truth: Israel is continuously intensifying its military rule in the West Bank while stealing more Palestinian land and building more illegal Jewish-only settlements." This is a truth that many Israelis and many peoples in the West simply do not wish to hear.

The enforcement of military rule comes at the cost of the erosion of those values which are essential to a Jewish state

To these voices could be added the many former IDF members who have banded together in a group called "Breaking the Silence." Its purpose is to give the former soldiers a venue to speak about the inhumanity of the actions they witnessed or were themselves ordered to perform. Their testimony may well

add credence to the charges of war crimes that have already been made, or are being prepared, against some Israeli generals. The founder of Breaking the Silence, Yehuda Shaul speaks of his breaking into Palestinian homes in the middle of the night and waking everybody up. "You do not treat Palestinians as equal human beings. It's like putting all your morality and all your education into a blender. After a minute there is nothing left." This is the fear which many have expressed previously, that the enforcement of military rule in the Occupied Territories comes at the cost of the erosion of those values which are essential to a Jewish state. There will be nothing left. Again the voices of these present and former IDF members speaking out against the Occupation are seldom heard or seen in the Western media.

There are many other groups and individuals, Israeli and Palestinian, who have been working diligently for peace, justice and reconciliation. Their nonviolent protests more often than not are met with harsh repression by the military, whether the protestors are Israeli or Palestinian or internationals. One final example of this repression comes from the Israeli activist, Gila Svirsky. She describes a peaceful protest by sixty women, Israelis, Palestinians, and internationals in April 2004. The IDF began firing tear gas and stun grenades. "Nonviolence is no longer protection against the brutality of the military.... No one should be assaulted for peacefully demonstrating, and yet that has become the norm." She makes an eloquent appeal: "Wake up, world! Hear O Israel, wake up!" Such appeals, however, rarely receive a public hearing.

The impoverishment and destruction and repression will continue. More homes will be demolished. More humiliations will be inflicted. Yet hope continues to be rooted in the many individuals and groups who seek to speak the truth and bring reconciliation to the peoples of this land such as Rabbis for Human Rights, Gush Shalom, B'tselem (Israeli Information Center for Human Rights), Sabeel (Palestinian Center for Liberation Theology), Palestinian Center for Rapprochement, Holy Land Trust. These are just some of the organizations that are devoted to bring about peace through nonviolent means. Their efforts will receive very little media attention, but their commitment and determination are clearly fixed. The violence and the injustice continue, but the voices of those seeking justice and peace in this Holy Land will not be silenced.

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**“THE SCHOOL OF THE VERY POOR”:
A CAREFREE SCHOOL
Amaury Begasse de Dhaem SJ**

It all emerged from a shared life,” said Fr. Joseph Wresinski. Out of this, one autumn day in 2003, was born the small interdisciplinary group “At the school of the very poor,” the result of a meeting between Michel Kamanzi, a Rwandan Jesuit, and myself, a Belgian Jesuit. We had known each other only by name and hearsay. Michel was coming from Rome, where he had taken part in a meeting at the Gregorian University of a group called “University and Misery.” He had worked in a “street library” which I had begun in 1999, near the end of my regency, at the foot of a building that housed more than 200 families living in great poverty, in an outer suburb of the Eternal City.

I was coming from Brussels, from the Institute of Theological Studies (IET), where I had attended another group called “Go to those outside.” Both these groups, born in Jesuit faculties, gathered students from different programmes who wished to share their reflections and experiences among the poorest people, and to integrate these reflections into their studies, for the most part philosophy or theology. And some of them had chosen to take inspiration from Fr. Joseph Wresinski (1917-1988), much as one would select a guide to hike in the high mountains, a speleologist to explore caves, or a boatman to cross to the other shore.

Why that man, that priest? Father Joseph, as he was called by the very poor families, came from the other shore. He was born, grew up, and let his heart and soul be fashioned by his personal experience of misery, and by the life and thought of very poor people. He never ceased to seek out and to join those whom he called “his people.” Around 1968, he gave them a name of honour which made them pass from shame to pride: the Fourth World. By this term, which evoked the *Fourth Estate* or *Fourth Order* – those excluded from the French Revolution – he meant not only to designate the poorest sectors of the populations in the First, Second or Third Worlds; he wished above all to proclaim their desire to participate as equals and as a people in the construction of a common society. In the seminary he learned the language of our shore before returning to his own shore, bringing his own people and others with him. In the Noisy-le-Grand camp in France, and other places in Europe, in the Americas, in Africa and Asia, he joined them in their depths to reveal to us their peaks. Driven by a passion to bring forth their thought, their knowledge and their spirituality so that they might make our own more fertile and build together a new

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civilisation, he seemed the perfect person to lead a row of mountaineers bound by ropes one to another.

Michel and I met providentially in Paris, and we wanted to carry forward the experience of Rome and of Brussels. Thus, two and a half years ago, a group was born which took the name "At the school of the very poor." Very quickly it comprised mainly Jesuits in different stages of their formation, happily accompanied by a few non-Jesuits. Suddenly it was just like the Centre Sèvres in the image of the poor: without borders. The arrival of Anne brought Asia with her; now only Oceania is missing.

That first year, through the "Failure and Misery" conference at the Sorbonne, we wanted to face head-on the thorny problem of "intersecting of minds." How, and at what cost, can the thought of the very poor nourish our thought and transform us in the encounter? In the second year, with "The poor are the Church," we asked how this could become a reality in the diverse areas of ecclesiastical, cultural, political, economic or social life. Finally, this year, with "The poor: encounter with the true God," we entered more directly into the school of the very poor and were introduced to faith, hope and charity through the Beauchamp, Martin and Armand families, and through meditation with our weariest brothers in "the Holy Week of the very poor," the Easter Triduum.

The group meets once a month in a room of the Centre Sèvres where we have a frugal picnic. Then, linking our studies with our diverse personal experiences in the light of our homes and our travels, we exchange our sharing of life with the very poor through the lens and the stimulation of our common reading. One of us takes on the task of secretary for the day, gathering all the crumbs that are exchanged so as to make a nourishing, daily bread.

Once a year we share our discoveries more broadly with the aid of a public conference. First of all it was a concert in three voices, about the meeting of minds. An activist of the Fourth-World (someone who had lived in misery), a university professor, and a permanent volunteer of the ATD Movement came to report on a two-year project, in which activists, university students and a few volunteers had worked together to formulate in five themes a reflection covering knowledge gained from the university, from action, and from life or experience. From this came a book written in common and titled *The Meeting of Minds: When the Fourth World and the University Think Together*.

In the second year, Colette and Michel Collard-Gambiez, a couple who had chosen for ten years to share night and day the life of men and women who live on the streets, sleeping, living and getting the necessities of life as they did, came to speak to us about their second book, the fruit of their experience entitled *And if the Poor Humanised Us...* That year, Eugene and Marie-Jeanne

Notermans, a permanent-volunteer couple in the ATD Fourth-World Movement, came forward to present Marie-Jeanne's recent book *The World Seen from Below*, where she recounts a life shared with the very poor over a thirty-year commitment. Among other things Marie-Jeanne and Eugene hosted meetings with very poor people in different regions, and in the course of these meetings the Word of God, in particular the Book of Job, was read and discussed together.

"It all emerged from a shared life": with the poorest people, each one in their own way, openly or in secret; among ourselves; with others. The school of the very poor is a school of thought, of faith, of fraternity - in a word, of humanity. It is an open-air school in the sense where "roads and lanes" (Luke 14:23), the bush is burning without being consumed, and where it is enough to turn aside, to hear the call, to take off our shoes on holy ground, and to hear the voice say to us, "I am the God of your ancestors. I have observed the misery of my people." (Ex 3:6,7).

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TRIBUTE

† JUAN LUIS MOYANO SJ
14 February 1946 – 05 April 2006

JUAN LUIS MOYANO: CARRYING THE BURDEN OF REALITY José M. Meisegeier SJ

“Juan Luis was deeply committed to his time. With the courage of his convictions he lived out strong choices in bravery and freedom. He was a man of action and at the same time a man of reflection ...He lived his life accompanying many people with affection and serenity. In difficult moments – and he had many in his lifetime – and even in the face of illness he lived dramatically.”

These are the words with which Patricia Valdez¹ paid tribute to Juan Luis on behalf of many family members and friends, moments before Fr Cantó blessed his final resting place in the cemetery of the Colegio Máximo.

To confront reality is to take up its burden. For him, this was to be done in a concrete and committed way, to be critical, and at the same time constructive and active. I think that this was one of the most distinctive characteristics of Juan Luis. Taking on reality, as Jesus did, was to take on and bear the very real crosses he encountered throughout his life. In the words of Gustavo Gutiérrez, “To act is to take on the reality of God, primarily from the perspective of those who are most at risk.” To remember this we believe we need to look back on Juan Luis’s life and I will do so by referring to his testimony given at ‘*Memoria Activa*’ in July 2002.

Juan Luis entered the novitiate of the Society in 1964 and studied humanities at Carlos Paz. In 1968-69 he studied philosophy at San Miguel. There his concerns led him to establish the Student Centre, of which he was first secretary-general. In 1970 and 1971, while attending teacher training classes at the Immaculada, his interest in social issues led him to accompany a Christian community at Alto Verde and participate in the teacher’s union of the province of Santa Fe. He was secretary-general of the provincial office and attended various national congresses.

During his first year of theology (1972) in San Miguel, he lived in a small community in Ituzzaingó, working as a builder and at the same time taking exams. He says in his testimony: “*I wanted to have an experience of manual labour and accompany, even if it was on a part-time basis, the reality of the people living in our neighbourhoods.*”² The following year this small community was dissolved as his three companions decided to leave the Society. He continues, “*After a difficult period of discernment with my superiors I moved to the neighbourhood³ of San Martín de Mendoza, where I continued my studies in theology, taking my exams as an external student in spite of living a thousand kilometres from the university...*”

There were five Jesuits (in Barrio S. Martin). Two of us lived in an adobe house with mud floor, with no running water and electricity hooked onto the public pylons. I worked as coordinator of a literacy campaign for adults organised by the DINEA (The National Directorate for Adult Education), from the Ministry of Education.” Apart from his theological studies, which he attended by regularly travelling to the Máximo [Theological Faculty],⁴ he adds “I took advantage of the fact that the timetable of my theological studies allowed me to obtain a licentiate degree in Philosophy as well at the National University of Mendoza.”

In 1974, a State of Emergency was declared throughout the country. Some days later, following a meeting of the DINEA, the police of Mendoza province arrested all literacy teachers from Barrio San Martin. The next day Juan Luis and another teacher were detained at the police station. There, Juan Luis discovered that there were others from Barrio San Martin who had been detained incommunicado since the previous week. On the third day he was able to have an interview with a lawyer sent by his father, and he explained to him that he had nothing to do with the charge brought against him. The lawyer told him he would be released soon, and ten days later he was given released on bail. He then met his companion Benjamín Villalba who informed him that when he had returned home to Barrio San Martin following Juan Luis’s detention, he found that the house had been turned inside out and that they had dug holes in the floor, presumably looking for weapons. Juan Luis says:

“From the moment of my release, the real problems began. Though I was officially free, having signed out from the police station, some federal police officers kidnapped me, taking me through the back door (of the Residence in Mendoza). For three days I was categorized as ‘having disappeared.’ I was questioned and tortured continuously... We arrived at the federal police [station] of Mendoza and I was put into the first cell, on the left hand side, of the three next to the patio. I was stripped naked. The beatings were at different times on different days. One tall, thin man and another bigger man beat me through half-hour sessions. They would make me stand against the wall, almost diagonally and beat me with truncheons and sticks all across my body continuously. Also, they used ‘the telephone’, that is to say, repeated smacks against my ears with open palms, etc. Shortly after they left, another officer would enter and try to convince me that he was not in favour of this violence and that he wanted to help me. Then he would ask the same questions. They were following the ‘bad guy’/‘good guy’ technique...”

Two or three hours later, the same operation would be repeated and it went on like this for three days, with four or five sessions a day. When I didn’t answer, they just hit harder. They knew everything about what I did in the neighbourhood, in the National University of Cuyo and with the priests of Tercer Mundo (Third World). They wanted to know names and who was in charge. Every time they would come in I would panic, but I decided that I would not give them names and addresses of the people belonging to the Peronist Youth, the University, the neighbourhood, or the priests I knew. Since I

wouldn't talk, they would insist that I was obviously an important member and trained to withhold information.

...Before releasing me they 'transferred' me, shutting me in a wicker basket in the trunk of a car. They took me to an isolated place and left me alone standing in front of two or three of them. They were armed and threatened to kill me; they stood as if they are going to shoot me, they kept on asking me the same questions. I am not sure if I fully realised that they could in fact do more than just threaten me; nevertheless I didn't tell them anything

... I presume that through pressure from my family and the Church, seeing that they couldn't get anything out of me although they continued to consider me dangerous, my detention was made official and I was placed in the custody of the National Executive Power (Poder Ejecutivo Nacional (PEN))."

On the 5th of December 1974 he was transferred to the prison of Mendoza.

"One of the first days in the prison, whilst I was washing myself with water from a bucket in the patio, Carlitos, an ordinary prisoner with whom we were detained, said to me that he was scared to see that my body looked like one big bruise."

In the prison the conditions changed completely. He was able to receive visits from his family, the Jesuits of Mendoza, people from his neighbourhood, religious sisters. He remarks, *"...it was with some surprise that the prison guards wondered how a 'subversive' could have so many 'catholic' friends."* His friends from the faculty brought him the books he needed and he was able to study and complete the monograph for his degree. Under the supervision of Enrique Dussel he wrote his thesis entitled 'Towards a break from the totalitarianism of the Hegelian State'.

He was held at the prison in Mendoza for four months. He tells us that on 7th April, 1975, *"...they called me because I had a visitor. I went as I was, in my slippers, and suddenly I was in a small airplane on my way to the prison of Resistencia. My family and the Jesuits told me later that they were desperate; for days they had no idea where I had been taken. I don't have clear memories of that transfer. It was my first time on an airplane."*

The prison conditions were much stricter there: *"...we weren't allowed to read anything, not even the Bible, nor have the Eucharist on Sundays."* Then when he was granted permission to leave the country. *"... I was taken to Buenos Aires and three days later, once my papers were arranged directly by the federal police, I left, on the 1st of July 1975 for Frankfurt, Germany, to finish my theological studies."* Once he had finished his Licentiate in Theology in 1977 at S. Georgen, Frankfurt, he moved to Peru. The State of Emergency continued in Argentina and the PEN banned him from returning to Argentina or any of the bordering states.

In October of that year he was in Peru. On the 24th February 1978, Juan Luis was ordained in Lima by Mons. Bambarén (a Jesuit called 'the bishop of the

young' for his commitment to the "tugurios," the large slums of the Cono Norte and Sur de Lima). In 1978-79, when he arrived in Peru, he was sent to Jaen where he worked as an ordinary priest. He then did his tertianship in Lima (1982) and took final vows on the 15th August 1983.

Afterwards, in 1989 he was sent to Ilo on the coast, a mining and fishing city in the south of Peru. There, in addition to his pastoral activities in the Jesuit community in one of the new areas on the outskirts of Ilo, Juan Luis taught at the CENECAPE (Centro de Capacitación, Orientación y Promoción or Centre for Formation, Orientation and Promotion). Later he established and directed the Centre 'Pedro Pescador' (Peter the Fisherman), a vocational training centre for young people.

Once democracy was re-established in Argentina and the State of Emergency lifted, Juan Luis returned to Buenos Aires. "...At Christmas, in 1983 I was able to return for the first time to Argentina to see my family and friends. I had not seen some of my brothers and sisters for nine years and I was able to meet fourteen nieces and nephews who had been born in the meantime." That is how the testimony he gave at *Open Memory* concludes. In 1990 he returned finally to Argentina. Juan now took on a variety of responsibilities. He was made Socius of three provincials, Consultor of the Province, Director and Superior of CIAS, National Director of Fe y Alegría and a member of the Pastoral Social Commission. It is worth highlighting some of the other 'responsibilities' he took on over time:

At CIAS he managed the CENPROSIN (Centro de Promoción Sindical or Centre for the Promotion of Trade Unions). He also looked after the prayer groups and Ignatian spirituality groups related to CONFAR and was part of the editorial team of the magazine *CAMINOS de CONFAR*. On weekends he did his pastoral work in Las Catonas (Pfizer Barrio), work which the Bishop of Merlo-Moreno, Fernando Bargalló, commended during Juan Luis's funeral mass in the chapel of Máximo. He also wrote articles for the CIAS magazine, in *CAMINOS de CONFAR*, *NUEVA TIERRA*, and other publications, and worked at the José María Llorens Foundation.

Another important aspect of Juan Luis's work was the attention he gave to students and priests who had been some years with the Society and left their ministry. Through meetings and discussions he was able to ease some of the tensions that had risen during a period which had marked them all deeply.

I would also like to mention his work with Fe y Alegría. Shortly after his arrival he found he had to take up the burden of dealing with the misdeeds of the previous Governor of Corrientes. This person had built a large school in the outskirts of the city of Corrientes. He had appointed as teachers almost a hundred members of his own political group. When later the government of the province was suspended, the wages of the teachers were withheld, and they then took Fe y Alegría to court. This was a difficult situation that he had to

face, and it was further exacerbated by a court case put by the Ongay family who charged the governor with having built the school on their land without prior authorisation.

There was one thing that Juan Luis was however unable to accomplish to his satisfaction. He often mentioned that he wanted to continue his duties but live with other Jesuits in a poor community. His experiences in the neighbourhood of Nylon, an area of Ilo where he lived for fourteen years with other Jesuits including Francisco Chamberlain, Santiago Vallebuona, Luis Sauto and others, as well as those in San Martín de Mendoza, had certainly helped him find the meaning of his vocation in sharing his life directly with those most in need.

It maybe that this overview of the 'burdens of reality' that Juan Luis took on during his lifetime appears too long. Perhaps some may find the story of his arrest, torture and imprisonment inappropriate; it was something that he himself seldom spoke of. Nevertheless, I think it is worth remembering these details in his own words.

Pedro Casaldáliga, in his latest book, provides a semi-autobiographical account of his years as Bishop in Mato Grosso. He says we must learn to dirty our hands in the waters of history and that the worst thing that can happen is not missing the train but missing the God who travels on that train. "Only those who get it wrong, find love / and receive much more than they give / Later, all hope will not be enough" (Nicolás Guillén).

We cannot forget his last days, illness and death. On the 18th February 2005, he wrote an email to his friends:

"In the face of death, faith and the certainty that the Lord is waiting for me - that [death] is not a leap in the dark -are mixed up with a psychological reaction which tries to make sense of the death as something natural, something that will happen to me too. At the bottom of this lies the tranquillity of knowing that I have taken a path which has enabled me to live my life and expectations to the full. The knowledge that I have loved and felt loved and accepted by those whom I love, that I have been able to make a contribution to make another world possible. All this expresses quite well what I feel and helps me to face peacefully enough the likelihood of taking this final step. However, I continue to believe in the present and our commitment to 'building the Kingdom' here and now.'

"And what if the reaction is then one of rebellion? It is possible and probable. I have faced death before and it did not appear. For now I continue to deal with the situation in this way. If I share this with you it is not because I am depressed but so that I may help you to follow me closely during this time."

With these two sentences the message for that day ended. As the time of his final Easter drew near, many friends and family members gathered. I would like to mention his sister, Josefina, to whose house in Los Nogales he was

transferred at the end of last year. Also, his mother, who spent large parts of the day with him every day. And I would like to remember José Molina, who apart from being a doctor, could engage closely with Juan Luis, especially in those final days when he was able to communicate with Juan Luis almost to the very end, understanding his basic needs even when he found it very difficult to speak.

Pepe Molina, in agreement with Alfonso and Cantó firmly refused to consider leaving him in intensive care in the FLENI. They brought him to the CIAS on 4th April and he died the next day at about 6.30 pm. Moments earlier his mother had said "Tini, you can rest now, go to heaven to meet your father."

Sister Maria Luisa Berzosa, who worked with Juan Luis in Fe y Alegría, wrote in a note from Rome "... thanks for your self-gift, solid and without strings, impervious to discouragement, and growing in adversity. Thank you for your encouragement to continue along the chosen path."

And Patricia Valdez ended her farewell with these words

"Juan Luis, you leave us before your time. We had still so much talking to do, much to celebrate and share. You still had so much to do in order that this world may resemble a little more the 'Kingdom of Heaven'. ... I hope that we can take from him some of the ways in which he was able to live his Christian faith."

Original Spanish
Translation by Susana Barnes

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¹Patricia Tapatá de Valdez is the president of *Memoria Abierta* (Open Memory). This is a network of human rights NGOs (APDH, CELS, Fundación Memoria Histórica y Social Argentina, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora, SERPAJ). The main objective of this organisation is to collect testimonies of those who played a leading role before and during the years of the military regime.

²All the material in italics that follows are quotations from Juan Luis Moyano's testimony at Memoria Activa, July 2002.

³The term *neighbourhood* translates the Spanish "barrio" which is closer to 'poor quarter' or 'slum' [Editor's note]

⁴Editor's note.

REVIEWS

FREEING ENERGIES FOR THE POOR

Sergio Sala SJ

Peter J. Henriot SJ, *Opting for the Poor: The Challenge for the Twenty-First Century*. Collection Energies for Social Transformation, Centre of Concern, Washington, DC, 2004, pp. 62.

O*pting for the Poor* is a handy publication of Peter Henriot SJ, U.S. American Jesuit, resident since 1988 in Zambia where he directs the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection.

The publication is part of the Energies for Social Transformation series published by the Center of Concern of Washington, D.C., a center for social analysis and theological reflection, accredited with the United Nations, and specializing in topics of peace and the justice. The title of the series hopes to demonstrate that the world needs to release all the energies that might serve to transform society and realize the Kingdom of God. In his Foreword to the text, Jim Hug, S.J. reveals the irony of our present situation: while we have an ever greater understanding of the mechanisms of the cosmos and are able to free energy more and more, our culture demonstrates signs of passivity and risks paralysis.

In the six chapters of *Opting for the Poor*, Henriot describes a pathway to justice, touching on the themes of political economy and international development in the light of the Church's social teaching and of his personal experience with old and new forms of poverty. Obviously, the book is addressed to a non-poor public. It could be used by groups of adults or classes of adolescents because its style is intentionally direct and quite informal, so as to "share experiences and opinions and to invite the reader to do the same." Each chapter concludes with a "Reflection," a paragraph that summarizes the arguments and offers some points for continuing reflection.

In an appendix to the book, one finds a series of Scripture references from both the Old and the New Testament which gives a Biblical foundation to the discourse on justice and poverty and emphasizes how the process of liberation of the poor and oppressed, beginning with the Exodus and continuing through the entire history of salvation, culminates in the Kingdom of God incarnated in and testified to by Jesus of Nazareth.

Also in the appendix under the title "Tithing of Time," the author gives readers 17 concrete possibilities for encountering the poor at least one hour a week. This is a sort of "heptadecologue" of solidarity which allows those who have only read or heard of the poor but never encountered them to surmount the barriers which separate us from them, "so that they are no longer statistics,

but persons; not problems, but friends." At the end of the book then, one finds the speech which Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, Father-General of the Society of Jesus, gave to inaugurate the "Semana Social de Caracas" in 1998.

One could easily say that Peter Henriot's life has been "spent on behalf of the poor," but frequently in the text the author emphasizes that he has never been poor, nor will he become so in the future. Inserting autobiographical anecdotes here and there, Henriot states that he has used his professional energies and a great part of his time in research on poverty, advocacy and formation; yet he asks whether this can be considered enough. His own response is that one can be said to have exercised a real option for the poor only if research leads to structural change. In fact, "to obtain justice for the poor, structural transformation is absolutely necessary." This path is long and demanding and the daily discernment of how to concretize the option is not easy. Certainly that which cannot be missing is "the tension between responding to the immediate needs of the poor and working for the social change necessary to deal with the structures of poverty" (p.11). With *Opting for the Poor*, Henriot gives readers in various walks of life indications of how to live this tension: addressing himself to politicians and administrators, he asks why, when planning public works, the environmental impact is always considered, but the question of what the impact might be upon the poor is never asked; addressing himself to each one of us, Henriot does not hesitate to call us back to a more simple lifestyle and to a critical analysis of consumerism.

A respect for the poor requires, first of all, that one does not use the word "poor" indiscriminately. Too often, one is tempted to place in this category whoever suffers from a problem be that economic, sanitary, psychological, social, or something else.

Without dismissing the real problems that all these suffering people face, Henriot declares his desire to limit the term "poor" to those who lack economic resources and consequently experience exploitation and oppression. Enlarging the definition of "poor" to other areas would compromise the possibility of making a true option for the poor, since every one potentially could enter in the category. "To make an option for the poor is to try to see reality through a particular lens" (p.26), that of the poor, so as to share their fate even when one does not live as the poor do. It is to live, as Oscar Romero did, an "exceptional model of accompanying the poor." The poor are the masters of the Gospel. In fact, they show a series of characteristics, seen in Chapter Four of the text, which opens them to the profundity of the Gospel message, even if this opening is not made explicit.

Finally, Henriot indicates the *status quaestionis* of the preferential option for the poor in the life of the Catholic Church: how that option was born, how it evolved and how it disappeared, at least from the vocabulary of the

documents of the magisterium. The interest and the analysis of the Church have been constant, serious and attentive, and the pontificate of John Paul II has presented us with documents of undeniable value, but what is missing from the part of the magisterium is the vocabulary, perhaps because “opting for the poor” still recalls protests and misunderstanding. Nevertheless, “the preferential option for the poor is at center of the church’s affirmation of truth. The challenge is to place it also at the center of the church’s life” (p.21).

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LETTERS/COMMENTARIES

THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

(A reader's feedback)

Léon de Saint Moulin SJ

The two articles that José Aldunate and Ricardo Antoncich published in *Promotio Iustitiae* 88 (2005/3) on the social dimension of the Spiritual Exercises filled me with joy. They developed fundamental and new ideas that I hold dear. Nevertheless, and this may sound pretentious, I think that their texts remain marked by the very failure they denounce regarding the way the church's thought welcomes the findings of the social sciences. I therefore thought it would be helpful to share the following considerations as an invitation to go even further in the reflection that they initiated so well.

1. What was well stated regarding the social dimension of the Exercises

Father José Aldunate is right to say that today we need to develop the social dimension in the way we give and do the Spiritual Exercises and he shows clearly fundamental ways of doing so: the vision of God's plan in the Principle and Foundation, social sin, the concern for God's Kingdom in Christ's call as well as in the election, the understanding of Christ's Passion as an act for the salvation of the world.

I take the following statements as particularly meaningful: social sin is not merely the social impact of individual sin but the sin for which society is accountable (society is the subject). It is an institutional and structural sin. The Church opened herself to social analysis with some reluctance, but she recognizes, especially in her social encyclicals, that evangelisation must lead to the reform of structures and to poverty alleviation. This is really the idea that needs to be integrated in the Spiritual Exercises because "we are at once individuals and members of society." It would be easy to find the social dimension both of those who carry out the mission and of those who benefit from it in the pontifical documents on the Church's mission, namely *Evangelii nuntiandi* (1975) and *Redemptoris missio* (1990). The Spiritual Exercises could be greatly enriched by these documents.

Father Ricardo Antoncich takes this idea further still and begins by noting that "individualism is a heavy cultural burden which modern liberalism has placed on us." I wholly agree with him that the Spiritual Exercises are far less individualistic than most commentaries on them suggest, and less individualistic than the way we generally experience them. For the first companions the Exercises constituted the base for a commitment to the world. The election is not only about a life project of an individual, but rather an ecclesial life project, which by its very nature is social.

He is also right to say that "The lesson that sociologists give us while drawing our attention to structures and institutions is that isolated persons can never transform them," although I will suggest a different interpretation of the same

consideration. I modify his thought somewhat by drawing attention to the fact that we talk today about apostolic subjects to describe the social forces we want to raise if we are to have some impact on history.

2. What I think needs still to be said about the social dimension

a) The Bible has also been read from an individualistic viewpoint

All evangelisation naturally emerges from the Bible. The latter has a strong social dimension, as can be seen in the Magnificat, the Benedictus and Simeon's song as well as in the sending off of the disciples in Mt 28: 16-20. These texts evoke collective subjects from beginning to end. But the Bible's commentaries in modern times have been written with an individualistic mentality of which we are not fully aware. Even Ezekiel's chapter 18 cannot be reduced to the discovery and exaltation of individual responsibility; it calls for assuming responsibilities, and not considering history as fate. The person who is faithful to God or who turns away from him is responsible for his/her destiny. Ezekiel calls everybody to assume responsibilities, social as well as individual ones. It is a pretence to use him as a means of legitimising western individualism.

As for the social dimension of sin in the New Testament, one of the authors who succeeds best in emphasizing it from a superb Ignatian perspective is Carlos Martini, in *Le confessioni di Paolo*, a retreat with Saint Paul translated into several languages. Paul's conversion, he states, was an illumination. God took him from an abyss of darkness (Col 1: 13) but God's action had to be permanent, for Paul felt that the abyss would remain in him for ever (Rm 7: 17). The Church and the Exercises speak indeed of a "fundamental sin," of "the root of sin."

In a retreat that I gave recently to a group of priests, the emphasis on the social dimension of sin touched them deeply and helped them understand that confessing one's individual shortcomings is not enough to give rise to a penitential movement. They felt a call to commit themselves to promoting humanity and justice. John Paul II's encyclical *Dives in misericordia* can contribute greatly to such a social commitment with regard to sin.

b) The social cannot be reduced to social structures

Cardinal Martini's considerations on social sin show that the latter is not so uniquely constituted by structures and mechanisms as to make it almost impossible to extricate oneself from radical unjust situations, to use John Paul II's own words in Encyclical *Dives in misericordia* (1980). Moreover Cardinal Martini believes that social sin lies more in "ways of life, mentalities, and generally accepted ideas."

Sociology has long been defined as the science of social relations. It is at that level that we talk of classes or, generally speaking, collective subjects constituted by those sharing the same social position. In a more profound way, John Paul II has often said that structures, i.e. the organization of social relations, possess a logic that leads spontaneously towards obtaining those aims for which they have

been set up. One cannot therefore listen to God's word and remain indifferent to society's choices or to social problems.

But John Paul II is also a Pope who greatly helped the culture component to find its place in social analysis. He says in *Centesimus Annus* (1991) that "the fundamental error of socialism is anthropological in nature. Socialism considers the individual person simply as an element, a molecule within the social organism" (n. 13). For him, "it is not possible to understand man on the basis of economics alone, nor to define him simply on the basis of class membership. Man is understood in a more complete way when he is situated within the sphere of culture through his language, history, and the position he takes towards the fundamental events of life, such as birth, love, work and death. At the heart of every culture lies the attitude man takes to the greatest mystery: the mystery of God. Different cultures are basically different ways of facing the question of the meaning of personal existence" (n. 24).

Culture is therefore at once a way of interpreting life and a system of values according to which we appreciate what we live. Being born or living in a social environment implies interiorising its mindset and behaviour. It is important to be aware of that interiority produced by society in us, because we do not fight in the same way to correct a personal flaw as to change a mindset. The anthropologist Louis Dumont effectively illustrated that individualism is not a trait of character, but the social affirmation of a value, it is peculiar to a society that values the individual above all. Evangelisation in depth, of which African Bishops have spoken so frequently and which was also a concern of *Evangelii nuntiandi*, is the evangelisation of culture as well as of social environments.

c) The social is not exterior to the person

It is not enough to say, as does Father José Aldunate, that "we are at the same time individuals and members of a society." These two dimensions constitute us: "we are at the same time individual and social". Society exists only in us; it is not something external to us. There are things that we cannot change in ourselves unless we act upon society as a whole – for instance, all that concerns the way mentality influences our behaviour. Our identities are defined by our social belonging.

Even social structures are not exterior to us. We are never isolated actors. We are always part of networks of solidarity. It is not enough to say, as Father Antoncich does, that isolated individuals cannot change structures and institutions. We have to acknowledge that we are always caught in social actions that are part of us. Vatican II has already declared "Profound and rapid changes make it more necessary that no one ignoring the trend of events or drugged by laziness, content himself with a merely individualistic morality... Yet there are those who, while possessing grand and rather noble sentiments, nevertheless in reality live always as if they cared nothing for the needs of society... Let everyone consider it his sacred obligation to esteem and observe social necessities as belonging at the primary duties of modern man" (n. 30).

The dialectics between the individual and the social can give rise to sterile debates, for the two dimensions always go hand in hand. I however join Father Aldunate and the moralist Marciano Vidal in considering that social sin is the *analogatum princeps* of the notion of sin, seeing as how all our perceptions have a social source. We can only grasp reality within a culture, our affectivity is permanently marked by the first choices that our environment made for us. I am afraid however that Father Ricardo Antoncich gives an individualistic reading in the sentence a “personal laboratory of sin and grace” whereas the person is at the same time an individual and collective subject.

At a more fundamental level, it seems no longer acceptable to me to speak of the social dimension of the human being and refuse to recognize the capacity of collective subjects to make ethical decisions. If it is true that people write their own history and that the latter is not the outcome of fate, then they have a responsibility for the choices they make, and the gospel is also addressed to them as a light and a call to conversion. Paul VI in *Evangelii nuntiandi* spoke of evangelising cultures and social environments in the sense of the conversion of people’s collective conscience and the transformation of the activities in which they are involved. John Paul II spoke of “the ‘subjectivity’ of society” (*Centesimus Annus* n. 13).

It is accurate to say, as Father Ricardo Antoncich does, that one cannot affect individual persons and social structures in the same way; the nature of ethical decisions cannot be the same for the two ways of acting. In that sense, society does not belong to us; it has an exteriority apart from us. But we are also society and we must assume social responsibilities. Saying “structures alone are not subjects of conversion” seems to lose sight of the fact that structures do not exist without underlying principles nor apart from the persons who set them up and maintain them. Father José Aldunate notes that the Church resisted admitting the idea of social sin, claiming that all sin presupposes the individual’s freedom and responsibility, while indicating that encyclicals are somewhat open to the idea. But does he sufficiently follow that insight when he writes that “structures can assimilate social habits that originate from individual sins and therefore bear that sin,” and that our responsibility for social sins is that of accomplices in so far as we participate in a structure of abuse and of oppression? Is this not once again a way of considering structures as external to the person?

The only moral stand fully consistent with the statements made about the reality of the social seems to consist in acknowledging that the human being is not only an individual actor but also a collective subject. Even if that happens differently, he/she must assume not only his/her individual responsibilities but also social responsibilities which are at the same time those of other people with whom he/she makes up a collective subjects. There is also room for ethical decisions, even if taking them necessitates assuming collective commitments without which the person would be part of the failure inherent in the denial or refusal to commit him/herself. I borrow that expression from Maurice Blondel’s *L’action* (p. 133)

Conclusion

These reflections have been written in the hope of contributing to the understanding of the social dimension of the human being which we all try to develop, and of integrating better this social dimension when we do or give the Spiritual Exercises. I apologise if I have raised more difficulties for some people, but let the dialogue go on for the greater glory of God and the salvation of the world.

Original French
Translation by Christian Owe

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THE SACRAMENT OF TOUCHING

Bomki Mathew SJ

I am a student at the Faculty of Philosophy at St Pierre Canisius in Kinshasa - D.R. Congo. It was with great joy that I read your article entitled « Looking after the sick » in *Promotio Iustitiae* number 88, 2005/03. I would like to thank Fr Oskar Wermter SJ for sharing his profound experience of working with the sick and his invitation to us to reach out to them. This delights me, more so as in our community we have decided to continue this mission started by St Ignatius. This tradition goes back to Christ who was a friend to the sick, the untouchables, those who were thought to be beyond hope.

In fact, to want to be close to those who are sick or dying is a testimony to the strength of love which is given freely.

In order to respond to the needs of those whom we serve what is fundamental is the sacrament of touch. To touch is in reality to bridge the gap separating each from the other. Such a gesture is essential to those who feel unwanted, rejected, no longer regarded as living by those who are alive. To touch is to liberate the saving energy which is within us (cf. « Lumière et Vie », N° 197, July 1990.).

What I liked particularly was Fr Oskar's point that, as a Church, we are asked to pray for the sick and accompany the dying. We must also struggle for those for whom the hour to die has not yet come. I would like to add that we must become good Samaritans who know not only how to be close to the sick but are also

willing to pay for their keep at the inn, because the man who is in need by the roadside is our brother, our neighbour. We must promote and practice a pastoral mission of care and compassion!

Original French
Translation by Susana Barnes

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THE PHENOMENON OF GLOBALISATION

I have appreciated the issue no. 88 of *Promotio* with the tribute to Father Alberto Hurtado recently canonised, and the contributions of Fathers José Aldunate and Ricardo Antoncich on the personal and social dimensions of the Spiritual Exercises. These contributions complement each other very well. I agree with the fact that the personal and social dimensions should be linked in the dynamic of the Spiritual Exercises, even if “the structures of sin”, or social sin, are created by people who have political and economic responsibility. But if people – even as individuals – do not change their hearts according to the Principle and Foundation and the Kingdom of Christ, who will change the structures which are shaped to suit the powerful? We should invite the powerful financial and economic administrators of big multinationals which condition globalisation to do the Spiritual Exercises. However this remains a great utopia that will translate into reality only if the human race comes to understand that, without the dimension of love and universal brotherhood taking root, the world will explode even without an atomic bomb.

Talking about social justice we must never forget that justice which is lived in our personal lives and which offers a credible example.

Furthermore, with regard to the great problem – the phenomenon of “globalisation” – I believe we must not fall into the trap of simplifying things when we condemn it fully because it is a very complex phenomenon with inherent positive and negative potentialities. It depends on how, and by whom it is directed. The phenomenon is unstoppable because it is not only an economic and market-governed issue led by huge multinationals, but involves increasingly advanced mass media information technology, which expands and dominates without any constraint. Globalisation should be read and corrected in the light of the spiritual vision proposed by Teilhard de Chardin, with “planetisation” – the growth of a human planetary consciousness for a loving solidarity freely wished for and desired is the only path to save humanity and converging towards Christogenesis, or the Omega point in the history of the Resurrected Christ. But

there is still a long way to in order to reach this planetary consciousness and overcome nationalisms and ethnic and religious fundamentalisms, all of which oppose this considerably. When religions all feel themselves sisters, living with mutual respect, then perhaps ethnic groups and nations, both rich and poor, will be able to accept a conscious and solidarity-based globalisation free of partisan interests. We must not despair of the positive forces of history which marches on - Those who live will see.

Original Italian
Translation by Judy Reeves

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The two documents on globalisation and marginalisation, and the one on spirituality are superbly done...just what we need at this time...The framework of the first is simply an excellent job. I have underlined every page of the documents and there is so much to chew and pray over...Great.. Miles to go for the social justice line...

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I just had an opportunity to read Globalization and Marginalization more thoroughly. It is well done. I especially appreciated the regional reports and the accompanying footnotes. This is excellent material for any Jesuit or lay person who wants to get an solid and reliable introduction to these two central issues of the day and how they are interrelated - as well an apostolic response. Warmest congratulations. I realize who much work was involved to get this book.

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FAITH THAT DOES JUSTICE: JUSTICE THAT SEEKS GOD

Dear Fernando: Thank you for the issue Faith that does Justice. Justice that seeks God. With the very interesting narratives and commentaries. They say a lot about the source of the commitment of these companions and friends of the Jesuits: the effective encounter with poor people, people in need, people despairing, immediately referred to the image of Jesus the Christ. The whole issue also tells of the difficulty to reach the area or the level of an action upon the structures, beyond being and living with the poor. It is understandable, we can however not give up. I also feel that the place of the social doctrine of the Church, an ethical doctrine, is not too clear in all this, or the relationship of these ethics to spirituality is not clear (it is clear nowhere in the Church, it used to be clearer in the time of Leo XIII). It was a great idea to have all those companions to communicate their experience. All the best. (I shall use the material in a talk in Tokyo at the Social Centre for an anniversary on the 8th of July).

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I mentioned in my brief electronic communication the other day that I had not yet read the CIS Journal (No. 90), a publication on Ignatian spirituality, which was sent out with *PJ*. I just finished reading it today and I think it is excellent. It provides a broad and global perspective, it deals with many of the 'frontier' situations in which we find ourselves when we live close to people and reflects, with great modesty, mature spiritualities. I would like to congratulate you on this great initiative, which will undoubtedly help many companions in their personal reflections on faith as they are restless to find the right response in their own apostolic commitment.

I found some **key words** missing. If these testimonies are developed in later publications, I am sure these perspectives will be included. However, I would like to draw your attention to them now to see if they can facilitate exchange. Spoken with some passion and all together these words include:

- **Political charity** – in the sense J. B. Metz uses this expression.
- **Structural change** – the desire to have an impact on the realities which create injustice.
- **Secularity** (*laïcité*) – a value which we have discovered working beyond the ambit of explicitly faith-based institutions (especially in Europe).
- **Ideology, Marxism** – as concepts, projects or utopias that are not faith-based

with which we have worked and collaborated in certain aspects and contents. A brief mention of these is made on page 95.

- **'Mysticism'**– expressions and experiences of a real contemplative spirituality, which we may well affirm, manifest in some of the published testimonies.
- The need to **re-formulate the Mission of the Society** in the light of the centrality of the poor in relation to justice. GC 33, 4th decree, noted on pages 136 and 137.

I will end here. You can see the direction in which my concerns are moving. The reason may lie in the fact that from the perspective of the Workers Mission, we lived and defended with great intensity some dimensions which hardly appear in this issue; that reality, which transformed us deeply, is now strangely silenced or quietly circumvented. I would like to end by reiterating my joy at this initiative of spirituality 'from below' and I hope that there will be further issues.

Original Spanish
Translation by Susana Barnes

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SEEKING PEACE

Dear Friends, a big hug from Manaus. I have just finished the pleasurable reading of 'Looking for Peace in a Violent World'. I felt bad that I was unable to attend the meeting last September. I am very grateful to you for sending the published notes of the meeting and the sincerity of the discussions. With the same sincerity I have to say that "*Je suis reste sur ma faim*" (I have to remain hungry), looking not only at the notes of what you discussed (very nice and certainly fundamental) but also the content of the conclusions and proposals which you reached... which I hope they will be able to sustain us. A hug ... from Manaus where we keep working for the Kingdom.

Original Portuguese
Translation by Susana Barnes

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Many thanks for the format and the content of *PJ*. I am heading the department of Justice and peace of the Diocese of Rumbek and organise inter diocesan workshop on Justice and peace. Now I have started to preach through various missions of our diocese that the God of Jesus of Nazareth is a GOD OF NON-VIOLENCE. There is lot of violence among the ethnic groups; it might be they are instigated by the Northerners to keep these people divided. There is killing, stealing cows, burning houses....

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They may have done something

24 March 2006

**'They may have done something' --
censure that we often hear
wrapped in many faces
ideologies, options, prejudices.
Lost histories by identity makers
all anonymous
as if they could erase their own footprints**

**'They may have done something'
It is good to hear these words
they show us our path
and the footprints we leave as we walk**

**'They may have done something'
because it is worse not to try
because we want to live on our soil
because to know ourselves we must lie concealed.**

**They may have done and said something
Because an Andean Indian said:
'what we say is not so difficult to understand'**

**They may have done something
And we want to do much more**

For past memory, the present and the future. For Argentina

Original Spanish

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