

Fratelli Tutti: synthesis of the encyclical

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Fratelli tutti (*All Brothers*) is the third encyclical letter of Pope Francis, after *Lumen fidei* and *Laudato si'*. It is subtitled "on fraternity and social friendship"

The document was signed on 3 October 2020, on the occasion of Pope Francis's visit to the tomb of his namesake, Saint Francis of Assisi, and was published the following day, the saint's feast day. He is thought to be the first pope to sign an encyclical outside of Rome for more than 200 years, since Pius VII issued the text *Il trionfo* in the Italian city of Cesena in 1814.

One year after the document on human fraternity - accompanied by a clear condemnation of terrorism - which he signed with the Grand Imam of Al Azhar, Ahmed bin Tayyeb, in Abu Dhabi on February 4, 2019, and five years after the publication of his encyclical *Laudato si'*, this encyclical on human fraternity continues the social reflection dear to Francis in the particular context of the COVID-19 health and social crisis.

The choice of the feast of Francis and this city of Umbria for the signing is not without signification. Needless to say, Francis of Assisi, in addition to being the patron saint of ecology (since 1979), is a major figure in interreligious dialogue - in 2019 the 800th anniversary of his meeting with the Egyptian Sultan Malik al-Kâmil in Damietta took place. And it was also there, in the saint's homeland, that the first "Assisi Meeting" took place in 1986, on the initiative of John Paul II, to invite all the world's great religions to pray for peace.

The document focuses on contemporary social and economic problems. It speaks about the globalization of indifference. It constitutes a vigorous denunciation of war. And it proposes an ideal world of solidarity, fraternity and social friendship in which all countries can be part of a "larger human family." Throughout the encyclical, the pope emphasizes the primacy of love, in both social and political contexts.

Fraternity and social friendship are the ways indicated by the Pope to build a better, more just and peaceful world, with the commitment of all, peoples and institutions. In the letter the pope urged people of good will to promote fraternity through dialogue, renewing society by putting love for others ahead of personal interests.

The reason of the encyclical

Pope Francis explained that his new encyclical brought together many of his previous reflections on human fraternity and social friendship, and also expanded on themes contained in the "Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together," which he signed with Sheikh Ahmed el-Tayeb, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, in Abu Dhabi in 2019.

The pope said he was struck that, when St. Francis met with the Egyptian Sultan Al-Kamil in 1219, he "*urged that all forms of hostility or conflict be avoided and that a humble and fraternal 'subjection' be shown to those who did not share his faith.*"

"*Francis did not wage a war of words aimed at imposing doctrines; he simply spread the love of God ... In this way, he became a father to all and inspired the vision of a fraternal society,*" the pope wrote (4)

"*The following pages do not claim to offer a complete teaching on fraternal love, but rather to consider its universal scope, its openness to every man and woman,*" *The Pope* he writes. "*I offer this social encyclical as a modest contribution to continued reflection, in the hope that in the face of*

present-day attempts to eliminate or ignore others, we may prove capable of responding with a new vision of fraternity and social friendship that will not remain at the level of words.”(6)

The title

“Fratelli tutti,” the text’s opening phrase, means “All brothers” in Italian. The words are taken from the writings of St. Francis of Assisi, to whom the pope paid tribute at the beginning of the encyclical, describing him as the “saint of fraternal love.”

The encyclical's title has been criticized by some (Jesuit Thomas J. Reese, Catholic Women's Council) who found it to be discriminatory toward women, because the literal translation of the title is "Brothers all". However, the Italian phrase has the common connotation of "all of humanity" and is, by default, inclusive

Structure

Most of the encyclical contains what the Pope has already said. The Pope incorporates many past sayings from homilies, speeches and statements. It can be considered as a systematic, comprehensive rearrangement of the work Francis has produced during his seven-year papacy. The pope divided his third encyclical, after the 2013 *Lumen fidei* and 2015 *Laudato si'*, into eight chapters.

- 1) The first, "Shadows of a Closed World," is a rather bleak account of the lack of fraternity in the world of 2020.
- 2) The second, "A stranger on the way", presents the figure of the Good Samaritan, insisting on the notion of "neighbor".
- 3) The third chapter, "Thinking and managing an open world," offers the example of a universal love that allows the advent of the right of peoples. It is the more important chapter which deals on migrants, borders, and bring forth the christian notion of the universal destination of created goods. and k
- 4) The fourth chapter is entitled "A heart open to the world" and invites us to create a dialogue between the local and the universal, especially in the aftermath of the pandemic of 2020.
- 5) The fifth chapter, "The best policy", turns the failures of populism and liberalism upside down and invites us to take a different path.
- 6) In the sixth chapter, "Dialogue and Social Friendship," the Pope takes up a theme that he loves, social friendship, in which he contrasts encounter and benevolence with cruelty.
- 7) The seventh chapter, "Paths to find one another," proposes paths to build peace, taking a stand against war, nuclear weapons and the death penalty.
- 8) The eighth and final chapter, "Religions in the service of brotherhood in the world", is based on the document on human brotherhood, co-signed on February 4, 2019 with Ahmed el-Tayeb, rector of al-Azhar mosque. François insists on the positive role of religions in the advent of human fraternity.

Calls

Other than the call to human brotherhood that underlies the entire document, seven more concrete appeals are listed.

- Call for a new ethics; a global ethics of solidarity and cooperation (127) . *interdependence and shared responsibility in the whole human family*” It is based on the doctrine of the Church of the universal destination of created goods. Each country must feel responsibility for people who are not born in it.

- Call for international cooperation on migrants. Fourth chapter. This call regards Europe and the United States in particular. Pope Francis calls for a global governance for migration that can open up long-term projects (129-132).

- Call for the reform both of the international financial system and multilateral institutions such the United Nations , in order to avoid the authority "being co-opted by a few countries". This is necessary "avoid this organization being delegitimized, because its problems or inadequacies
- The fourth call is linked to the rejection of the concept of a "just war" and of the concept of "deterrence". It is an admonition for the total elimination of nuclear weapons as a moral and humanitarian imperative

The fifth is a reaffirmation of the inadmissibility of the death penalty, an affirmation that is not new either in the mouth of Francis or in the pen of a pope.

The sixth is a reminder of the vocation of all religions to peace, and the impossibility for them to advocate violence.

Finally, the seventh call is a call for Christian unity and a reminder of its urgency

I - CHAPTER ONE "DARK CLOUDS OVER A CLOSED WORLD,"

Shattered dreams

In the first of the eight chapters, entitled "*Dark clouds over a closed world*", the document focuses on the many distortions of the contemporary age. The Pope denounces the selfishness and the disinterest in common good; the prevalence of a market logic based on profit and the culture of waste; unemployment, racism, poverty.

He offers a critique of contemporary political debate, and of online communication, which he said was often marred by "*disagreement and confrontation*."(15)

A throwaway world

Pope Francis denounces once more what he calls the "*throwaway world*"(18) that includes abortion and euthanasia, neglect of the elderly, discrimination against women, and slavery, among other threats.

"persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected, especially when they are poor and disabled, 'not yet useful' – like the unborn, or 'no longer needed' – like the elderly"(18)

A culture of walls

These are global problems that require global actions, the Pope emphasizes, also pointing the finger against a "culture of walls" that favors the proliferation of mafias, fueled by fear and loneliness (27-28).

"new walls are erected for self-preservation...we encounter "the temptation to build a culture of walls, to raise walls, walls in the heart, walls on the land, in order to prevent this encounter with other cultures, with other people."(27)

A globalized indifference

Pope Francis points to the illusion of unity given by globalization. Instead of giving a sense of belonging to a common family, globalization seems to drive toward a "globalized indifference". And a "deceptive illusion" of power.

“In today’s world, the sense of belonging to a single human family is fading, and the dream of working together for justice and peace seems an outdated utopia,” he wrote. *“What reigns instead is a cool, comfortable and globalized indifference, born of deep disillusionment concealed behind a deceptive illusion: thinking that we are all-powerful, while failing to realize that we are all in the same boat.”*(30)

The COVID-19 pandemics

Among these challenges facing humanity there is the coronavirus crisis, which has killed more than a million people worldwide . It illustrates our vulnerability and the fact that “no one is saved alone, we can only be saved together”]

“True, a worldwide tragedy like the Covid-19 pandemic momentarily revived the sense that we are a global community, all in the same boat, where one person’s problems are the problems of all. Once more we realized that no one is saved alone; we can only be saved together. As I said in those days, “the storm has exposed our vulnerability and uncovered those false and superfluous certainties around which we constructed our daily schedules, our projects, our habits and priorities”(32)

II - CHAPTER TWO “A STRANGER ON THE ROAD”

In the face of so many shadows, however, the encyclical responds with a shining example, that of the Good Samaritan, to whom the second chapter, "A Stranger on the Road" is dedicated.

Pope Francis presents the Samaritan who helped a traveler who had been left for dead as a model of human fraternity, in contrast to others who simply passed by.

He notes that devout men failed to help the traveler, saying:

“Paradoxically, those who claim to be unbelievers can sometimes put God’s will into practice better than believers”(74)

The Pope emphasizes that we are in a sick society that turns its back on pain and don’t care for the weakest and most fragile

“We need to acknowledge that we are constantly tempted to ignore others, especially the weak. Let us admit that, for all the progress we have made, we are still “illiterate” when it comes to accompanying, caring for and supporting the most frail and vulnerable members of our developed societies”(64)

Instead of that, we are all called to be close to the other, overcoming prejudice and personal interests.. Love builds bridges and we "*are made for love*" (88), adds the Pope, urging Christians in particular to recognize Christ in the face of all those who are excluded (85).

Francis urges readers to follow the teaching of Jesus by not setting limits on who they regard as their neighbors. He added that he sometimes wondered why *“it took so long for the Church unequivocally to condemn slavery and various forms of violence.”*(86)

III - CHAPTER THREE, “ENVISAGING AND ENGENDERING AN OPEN WORLD”

The principle of the capacity to love according to "*a universal dimension*" (83) is taken up in the third chapter, "*Envisaging and engendering an open world*"⁸⁷. This chapter deals with the need to bring “love” to a wider, universal dimension, and this brings the matter of migrants, and of the rights of foreigners.

Francis exhorts us to "*go outside’ the self to find a fuller existence in another*" (88), opening ourselves to our neighbor according to the dynamism of charity that makes us tend "*toward universal communion*" (95).

The spiritual dimension of human life is measured by love

Fundamentally, the encyclical recalls us that the spiritual dimension of human life is defined by the love that leads us to seek the best for the life of the other (92-93).

Pope Francis says that *“the spiritual stature of a person’s life is measured by love,”*(92) and adds: but *“some believers think that it consists in the imposition of their own ideologies upon everyone else, or in a violent defense of the truth, or in impressive demonstrations of strength.”*(92)

He continues: *“All of us, as believers, need to recognize that love takes first place: love must never be put at risk, and the greatest danger lies in failing to love.”*(92)

Racism, hidden exiles

The pope underlines that racism remained a threat, comparing it to a virus that *“quickly mutates and, instead of disappearing, goes into hiding, and lurks in waiting.”*(97)

He also alludes to the “hidden exiles,” that is people with disabilities, *“who are treated as foreign bodies in society.[76] Many persons with disabilities “feel that they exist without belonging and without participating”.*(98)

Critic of the abstract french proclamation: “Freedom. Equality, fraternity” . Need for a cultivation of fraternity

The encyclical takes the french motion “Freedom, equality, fraternity” to question it: these are words, abstract proclamation. What is needed is to cultivate them, to promote each one.

“Fraternity is born not only of a climate of respect for individual liberties, or even of a certain administratively guaranteed equality. Fraternity necessarily calls for something greater, which in turn enhances freedom and equality. What happens when fraternity is not consciously cultivated, when there is a lack of political will to promote it through education in fraternity,?

“Nor is equality achieved by an abstract proclamation that “all men and women are equal”. Instead, it is the result of the conscious and careful cultivation of fraternity”(103-104)

Critic of individualism (105)

He argues that individualism “does not make us more free, more equal, more fraternal.”

“Individualism does not make us more free, more equal, more fraternal. The mere sum of individual interests is not capable of generating a better world for the whole human family.”(105)

Critic of the individualistic rights: persons as “monads” (111)

“Today there is a tendency to claim ever broader individual – I am tempted to say individualistic – rights. Underlying this is a conception of the human person as detached from all social and anthropological contexts, as if the person were a “monad” (monás), increasingly unconcerned with others... Unless the rights of each individual are harmoniously ordered to the greater good, those rights will end up being considered limitless and consequently will become a source of conflicts and violence”.[85]”(111)

Market freedom and efficiency don’t give place for disabled, poor persons(109)

Liberal society, built of the religion of market freedom and of efficiency, don’t give a place to the poor, the uneducated people, who have “little access to adequate health care”

“If a society is governed primarily by the criteria of market freedom and

efficiency, there is no place for such persons, and fraternity will remain just another vague ideal.”(109)

What is needed: A universal love that promotes persons (106)

What is needed, he said, is a “universal love” that promotes the dignity of every human being.(106)

The value of solidarity(114)

The sense of solidarity and fraternity is born in families, which must be protected in their “ *primary and vital mission of education*” (114)

“ I think first of families, called to a primary and vital mission of education. Families are the first place where the values of love and fraternity, togetherness and sharing, concern and care for others are lived out and handed on.”(114)

The universal destination of created goods (118)

Pope Francis comes here to a very important point in his analysis, a point that is firmly rooted in Patristic teachings and Church’s moral tradition, the principle of the “**universal destination of created goods**”. This part of the encyclical has surely irritated many who consider private property as an intangible right, and who are not aware of Church’s moral teachings

The basis of this right is that “*The world exists for everyone*”(118), and the “*privileges of some*” over “*the right of all*” cannot be justified from “*differences of colour, religion, talent, place of boirth or residence*”.

“The world exists for everyone, because all of us were born with the same dignity. Differences of colour, religion, talent, place of birth or residence, and so many others, cannot be used to justify the privileges of some over the rights of all. As a community, we have an obligation to ensure that every person lives with dignity and has sufficient opportunities for his or her integral development”(118)

Pope Francis recalls what have said the Fathers of the Church about private property: because God created the world for everybody , everybody should have access to the goods of the earth. Pope Francis quotes Saint John Chrysostom, saint Gregory the Great, and others – saint Basil, saint Peter Chrysologus, saint Augustine.¹

“In the first Christian centuries, a number of thinkers developed a universal vision in their reflections on the common destination of created goods.[91] This led them to realize that if one person lacks what is necessary to live with dignity, it is because another person is detaining it. Saint John Chrysostom summarizes it in this way: “Not to share our wealth with the poor is to rob them and take away their livelihood. The riches we possess are not our own, but theirs as well”. [92] In the words of Saint Gregory the Great, “When we provide the needy with their basic needs, we are giving them what belongs to them, not to us”. [93](119)

Pope Francis quotes saint John Paul II:

“Once more, I would like to echo a statement of Saint John Paul II whose forcefulness has perhaps been insufficiently recognized: “God gave the earth to the whole human race for the sustenance of all its members, without excluding or favouring anyone”. [94]”

¹ [91] Cf. Saint Basil, Homilia XXI, Quod rebus mundanis adhaerendum non sit, 3.5: PG 31, 545-549; Regulae brevius tractatae, 92: PG 31, 1145-1148; Saint peter chrysologus, Sermo 123: PL 52, 536-540; Saint Ambrose, De Nabuthe, 27.52: PL 14, 738ff.; Saint Augustine, In Iohannis Evangelium, 6, 25: PL 35, 1436ff.

[92] De Lazaro Concio, II, 6: PG 48, 992D.

[93] Regula Pastoralis, III, 21: PL 77, 87.

Then Pope Francis gives one another quote, this time from *Laudato si*, on the same topic, the principle of the common use of created goods:

“the Christian tradition has never recognized the right to private property as absolute or inviolable, and has stressed the social purpose of all forms of private property”.^[95] Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si*’ (24 May 2015), 93: AAS 107 (2015), 884.

Pope Francis quotes again Saint John Paul II in *Laborem Exercens*:

The principle of the common use of created goods is the *“first principle of the whole ethical and social order”*;²[*Laborem exercens*, 19] it is *“a natural and inherent right that takes priority over others”*.⁽³⁾ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 12)

Thus private property can only be considered a **secondary natural right**, derived from the principle of the universal destination of created goods.

“The right to private property can only be considered a secondary natural right, derived from the principle of the universal destination of created goods. »(120)

From that principle, every country is also that of the foreigner, and the goods of the territory cannot be denied to one who is in need and comes from another place. The natural right to private property will thus be secondary to the principle of the universal destination of created goods (120).

But it happens very often that this secondary right override the primary rights:

“This has concrete consequences that ought to be reflected in the workings of society. Yet it often happens that secondary rights displace primary and overriding rights, in practice making them irrelevant”(120)

*“The right to private property is always accompanied by the primary and prior principle of the subordination of all private property to the universal destination of the earth’s goods, and thus the right of all to their use.”*⁴ (*Laudato Si*, 93, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 189-190)(123)

Rights without borders

Because of this teaching on the common use of created goods, it follows that the rights to such use are not limited by borders.

The right to live in dignity cannot be denied to anyone, the Pope affirms, and since rights are without borders, no one can remain excluded according to his or her place of birth (121).

“ No one, then, can remain excluded because of his or her place of birth, much less because of privileges enjoyed by others who were born in lands of greater opportunity. The limits and borders of individual states cannot stand in the way of this. As it is unacceptable that some have fewer rights by virtue of being women, it is likewise unacceptable that the mere place of one’s birth or residence should result in his or her possessing fewer opportunities for a developed and dignified life”(121)

² Saint John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (14 September 1981), 19: AAS 73(1981), 626.

³ Cf. Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the church*, 172. *The universal right to use the goods of the earth is based on the principle of the universal destination of goods. Each person must have access to the level of well-being necessary for his full development. The right to the common use of goods is the “first principle of the whole ethical and social order” [363] and “the characteristic principle of Christian social doctrine” [364]. For this reason the Church feels bound in duty to specify the nature and characteristics of this principle. It is first of all a natural right, inscribed in human nature and not merely a positive right connected with changing historical circumstances; moreover it is an “inherent” [365] right. It is innate in individual persons, in every person, and has priority with regard to any human intervention concerning goods, to any legal system concerning the same, to any economic or social system or method: “All other rights, whatever they are, including property rights and the right of free trade must be subordinated to this norm [the universal destination of goods]; they must not hinder it, but must rather expedite its application. It must be considered a serious and urgent social obligation to refer these rights to their original purpose” [366].*

⁴ Cf. Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si*’ (24 May 2015), 93: AAS 107 (2015), 884-885; Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), 189-190: AAS 105 (2013), 1099-1100.

For the same reason, the “rights to free enterprise or market freedom” cannot “supersede the rights of peoples” and “respect for the natural environment”

“The right of some to free enterprise or market freedom cannot supersede the rights of peoples and the dignity of the poor, or, for that matter, respect for the natural environment, for “if we make something our own, it is only to administer it for the good of all” (Laudato Si ,95)(122)

The rights of people (124) against borders and territories

The pope wrote, quoting the U.S. bishops’ 2018 pastoral letter against racism, “Open Wide Our Hearts,” which said there are fundamental rights that “precede any society because they flow from the dignity granted to each person as created by God

“Nowadays, a firm belief in the common destination of the earth’s goods requires that this principle also be applied to nations, their territories and their resources. Seen from the standpoint not only of the legitimacy of private property and the rights of its citizens, but also of the first principle of the common destination of goods, we can then say that each country also belongs to the foreigner, inasmuch as a territory’s goods must not be denied to a needy person coming from elsewhere. As the Bishops of the United States have taught, there are fundamental rights that “precede any society because they flow from the dignity granted to each person as created by God”. [104]” (124)

Each country shares responsibility for people who are not born in it.

The need for a network of international relations

The principle of the common destination of the earth’s goods calls for a new way of understanding relations between countries:

“This presupposes a different way of understanding relations and exchanges between countries. If every human being possesses an inalienable dignity, if all people are my brothers and sisters, and if the world truly belongs to everyone, then it matters little whether my neighbour was born in my country or elsewhere. My own country also shares responsibility for his or her development,” (125)

From this perspective, the Pope also calls to think of a “new network of international relations” to ensure “the fundamental rights of people to subsistence and progress”(126)

*“We are really speaking about **a new network of international relations**, since there is no way to resolve the serious problems of our world if we continue to think only in terms of mutual assistance between individuals or small groups. Nor should we forget that “inequity affects not only individuals but entire countries; it compels us to consider an ethics of international relations” (Laudato Si 51)”(126)*

The foreign debt

The encyclical also addresses the question of foreign debt: the principle of repayment of all legitimately contracted debt remains firm, but this must not compromise the growth and subsistence of the poorest countries.(126).

*“the fundamental right of peoples to subsistence and progress”,(Centesimus annus, 35)[...] is at times severely restricted by the pressure created by **foreign debt**. [...] While respecting the principle that all legitimately acquired debt must be repaid, the way in which many poor countries fulfil this obligation should not end up compromising their very existence and growth.”(126)*

Call for a new ethics; a global ethics of solidarity and cooperation (127)

A new ethics has to be developed, a “**global ethics of solidarity and cooperation**”
“For a real and lasting peace will only be possible “on the basis of a global ethic of solidarity and cooperation in the service of a future shaped by interdependence and shared responsibility in the whole human family”. (Address on Nuclear Weapons, Nagasaki, Japan (24 November 2019): L’Osservatore Romano, 25-26 November 2019, 6.)(127)

IV - CHAPTER FOUR “A HEART OPEN TO THE WHOLE WORLD”.

The theme of migration is addressed in the fourth chapter, *“A heart open to the whole world”*. With their “destroyed lives”, having fled wars, persecutions, natural disasters, unscrupulous traffickers, torn from their communities of origin, migrants must be welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated.

The pope appeals to countries to “**welcome, protect, promote, and integrate**” newcomers. In detail, the Pope indicates some “indispensable responses” especially for those fleeing “serious humanitarian crises”: developing and simplifying the granting of visas, opening humanitarian corridors, providing housing, security and essential services, offering work and training opportunities, promoting family reunification, protecting minors, guaranteeing religious freedom(129).

In countries of destination, the right balance must be struck between protecting the rights of citizens and guaranteeing reception and assistance for migrants (38-40).

The Pope urges governments to take a series of “**indispensable steps**” to help refugees. These included “increasing and simplifying the granting of visas,” as well as “freedom of movement and the possibility of employment,” and “supporting the reuniting of families.”(129)

But even these steps would prove insufficient, he said, if the international community failed to develop “a form of **global governance** with regard to movements of migration.”

What is needed above all, the document states, is a **global governance for migration** that can open up long-term projects, going beyond the mere management of emergencies, in the name of development in solidarity with all peoples (129-132).

V - CHAPTER FIVE, A BETTER KIND OF POLITICS

The theme of the fifth chapter is *“A better kind of politics”*(154).

In this fifth chapter, the pope calls for states to adopt policies that promote the common good, criticizing both an “**unhealthy**” **populism** and an excessively **individualistic liberalism**. He said that populism could conceal a lack of concern for the vulnerable, while liberalism could be used to serve the economic interests of the powerful.

“Lack of concern for the vulnerable can hide behind a populism that exploits them demagogically for its own purposes, or a liberalism that serves the economic interests of the powerful.”(155)

The legitimate meaning of the word “people”

“A better kind of politics” is the one that places itself at the service of the common good (180) and recognizes the importance of the people, understood as an open category, open to debate and dialogue (160).

“If we wish to maintain that society is more than a mere aggregate of individuals, the term “people” proves necessary

“Men and women are capable of coming up with shared goals that transcend their differences and can thus engage in a common endeavour”

“it is extremely difficult to carry out a long-term project unless it becomes a collective aspiration. All these factors lie behind our use of the words “people” and “popular”.

The meaning of “people” for Pope Francis is that of a **shared identity** arising from social and cultural bonds, and “advancing towards a **common project**”

“The word ‘people’ has a deeper meaning that cannot be set forth in purely logical terms. To be part of a people is to be part of a shared identity arising from social and cultural bonds. And that is not something automatic, but rather a slow, difficult process... of advancing towards a common project”.⁵ (158)

Populism distort the word “people”. It ignores the legitimacy of the notion of "people". It creates consensus to instrumentalize it for its own service (159).

“unhealthy “populism” when individuals are able to exploit politically a people’s culture, under whatever ideological banner, for their own personal advantage or continuing grip on power. Or when, at other times, they seek popularity by appealing to the basest and most selfish inclinations of certain sectors of the population”(159)

Employment

But the best politic is also one that protects employment, an "essential dimension of social life” and seeks to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to develop his or her own capacities (162).

“The biggest issue is employment. The truly “popular” thing – since it promotes the good of the people – is to provide everyone with the opportunity to nurture the seeds that God has planted in each of us: our talents, our initiative and our innate resources.”

“In a genuinely developed society, work is an essential dimension of social life, for it is not only a means of earning one’s daily bread, but also of personal growth, the building of healthy relationships, self-expression and the exchange of gifts. Work gives us a sense of shared responsibility for the development of the world, and ultimately, for our life as a people.”(162)

The best help that we can give to the poor is to give them an employment, because it is a path to “a life of dignity”

“This is the finest help we can give to the poor, the best path to a life of dignity. Hence my insistence that, “helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the face of pressing needs. The broader objective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work”.(Laudato Si 128)(162)

Everyone should have a chance to contribute his or her talents and efforts

“Since production systems may change, political systems must keep working to structure society in such a way that everyone has a chance to contribute his or her own talents and efforts. For “there is no poverty worse than that which takes away work and the dignity of work”.⁶ (162)

The benefits and limits of liberal approaches

⁵Antonio Spadaro, S.J., Le orme di un pastore. Una conversazione con Papa Francesco, in Jorge Mario Bergoglio – Papa Francesco, Nei tuoi occhi è la mia parola. Omelie e discorsi di Buenos Aires 1999-2013, Rizzoli, Milan 2016, XVI; cf. Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium (24 November 2013), 220-221: AAS 105 (2013), 1110-1111.

⁶ [137] Address to the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See (12 January 2015): AAS 107 (2015), 165; cf. Address to Participants in the World Meeting of Popular Movements (28 October 2014): AAS 106 (2014), 851-859.

Pope Francis also criticizes the neoliberal conviction that the market can resolve every problem, It calls it the “dogma of neoliberal faith.”

Individualistic liberal approach rejects the concept of “people” as developed by Pope Francis, because it only conceive the worlds as “a sum of coexisting interests”

“The concept of a “people”, which naturally entails a positive view of community and cultural bonds, is usually rejected by individualistic liberal approaches, which view society as merely the sum of coexisting interests. One speaks of respect for freedom, but without roots in a shared narrative;”(163)

The notion of a people is considered an abstract construct, something that does not really exist” (163)

The liberal approach believes that marketplace could solve all problems. The neoliberalism believes in the **theory of “spillover”**: if the market works well, this will bring profit also to the poor, by “spillover”. Por Pope Francis, market cannot resolve every problem and the theory of “spillover” does nor resolve the inequalities.

“The marketplace, by itself, cannot resolve every problem [..],

Whatever the challenge, this impoverished and repetitive

school of thought always offers the same recipes. Neoliberalism simply reproduces itself by resorting to the magic theories of “spillover” or “trickle” – without using the name – as the only solution to societal problems. There is little appreciation of the fact that the alleged “spillover” doesnot resolve the inequality that gives rise to new forms of violence threatening the fabric of society.”(168)

The policy that is needed, Francis stresses again, is one that is centered on human dignity and not subject to finance. The "havoc" provoked by financial speculation have demonstrated this (168)

Popular movements are important

.Popular movements are therefore of particular importance. They must be involved in society, in a coordinated way, provoking a "**torrent of moral energy**". In this way it will be possible to move from a policy directed "*for*" the poor to a policy developed "*with*" them and from them (169).

The need for stronger and more efficient international organizations.

Because economic and financial sectors are transnational, this bring a weaknessing of the power of nation states

“The twenty-first century “is witnessing a weakening of the power of nation states, chiefly because the economic and financial sectors, being transnational, tend to prevail over the political”(172)

It is therefore essential to devise stronger and more efficient organized international institutions

“Given this situation, it is essential to devise stronger and more efficiently organized international institutions, with functionaries who are appointed fairly by agreement among national governments, and empowered to impose sanctions”(172)

The need for a reform of the United Nations and economic institutions”.

Another wish present in the encyclical concerns the reform of the United Nations

Pope Francis urges reform both of the international financial system and multilateral institutions such the United Nations, saying it was vital for countries “to establish shared goals and to ensure the worldwide observance of certain essential norms.”

“In this regard, I would also note the need for a reform of “the United Nations Organization,

and likewise of economic institutions and international finance, so that the concept of the family of nations can acquire real teeth". (Cf. Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter Caritas in Veritate (29 June 2009), 67: AAS 101(2009), 700)(173)

Given the predominance of the economic dimension, the duty of the United Nations will be to give concrete expression to the concept of a "**family of nations**" working for the common good, the eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights. The Pontifical Document (173-175) affirms that the UN must promote the force of law over the law of force by ensuring "**tireless recourse to negotiation, mediation and arbitration**"(173)

The politics we need: An "Healthy politics, not economics"

Pope Francis insists on the fact that "politics must not be subject to the economy"

*"Here I would once more observe that **"politics must not be subject to the economy, nor should the economy be subject to the dictates of an efficiency-driven paradigm of technocracy"**. [158]"(177)*

*"what is needed is a politics which is far-sighted and capable of a new, integral and interdisciplinary approach to handling the different aspects of the crisis". [160] In other words, a **"healthy politics ... capable of reforming and coordinating institutions, promoting best practices and overcoming undue pressure and bureaucratic inertia"**. [161](177)*

And Pope Francis add;

"We cannot expect economics to do this, nor can we allow economics to take over the real power of the state." (177)

Political love

Setting out his proposal for renewal, Pope Francis said that leaders should focus on the long-term common good, imbuing their work with what he called "political love."

"Recognizing that all people are our brothers and sisters, and seeking forms of social friendship that include everyone, is not merely utopian," he insisted. "It demands a decisive commitment to devising effective means to this end. "

Effective love- "Social love"(183),

This "political love" that Pope Francis is asking is in fact an effective love, that is a social love. No mere sentiments, but a **force** capable of inspiring new approaches.(183)

Subsidiarity inseparable from solidarity

The true anti-poverty strategy, the encyclical affirms, is not simply to contain the indigenious, but to promote them from the perspective of **solidarity and subsidiarity** (187).

It is not enough to "contain" poverty. Poor should not be reduced to passivity. They have to shape their own future, they have to participate in society. Each human being must be allowed to shape his or her own future.

*" What are needed are new pathways of self-expression and participation in society. Education serves these by making it possible for each human being **to shape his or her own future**. Here too we see the **importance of the principle of subsidiarity, which is inseparable from the principle of solidarity**".(187)*

The violations of human rights, human trafficking

Pope Francis also highlights the "urgent need to combat all that threatens or violates fundamental human rights," such as social exclusion, trafficking in organs, human tissue, weapons and drugs,

sexual exploitation, slavery, terrorism and organized crime. The Pope reiterates a strong call for the elimination of human trafficking, "a shame for humanity," (188)

Pope Francis reiterates a call to eliminate hunger which is "criminal" because "food is an inalienable right" (189).

A love that integrates and unites: to build a polyhedral reality

Political charity is also a spirit of openness to everyone
Government leaders can help to create "a beautiful polyhedral reality in which everyone has a place" (190)

Contrary to fundamentalist intolerance, let us be committed to teaching the value of respect for others (191)

Pope Francis recalls there his meeting in february 2019 in Abu Dhabi with Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar

"In this regard, Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb and I have called upon "the architects of international policy and world economy to work strenuously to spread the culture of tolerance and of living together in peace; to intervene at the earliest opportunity to stop the shedding of innocent blood".[189] (192)

VI - CHAPTER SIX. DIALOGUE AND FRIENDSHIP IN SOCIETY

In the sixth chapter, the pope encouraged people to engage in authentic dialogue,
"Approaching, speaking, listening, looking at, coming to know and understand one another, and to find common ground: all these things are summed up in the one word "dialogue". If we want to encounter and help one another, we have to dialogue.."(198)

True dialogue should not be confused with the exchange of opinions on social networks, which are often "parallel monologues"
However, the media can help , they can create a spirit of solidarity, a sense of unity of the human family. Internet at this regard offers immense possibilities."*for encounter and solidarity. This is something truly good,a gift from God".(205)*

Consensus and truth: need to arrive to fundamental truths

Need to acknowledge certain enduring values, to arrive to fundamental truths
To make for a robust and solid social ethics
To realize that these fundamental values rise above consensus, that they are not negotiable (211)

A new culture: a culture of encounter (215)

"Life is the art of encounter" with all, also with the peripheries of the world and with the first peoples, because "something can be learned from each one, no one is useless" (215).

The image of the multi-faceted polyhedron

“I have frequently called for the growth of a culture of encounter capable of transcending our differences and divisions. This means working to **create a many-faceted polyhedron** whose different sides form a variegated unity, in which “the whole is greater than the part”

No one is useless – need to include those on the peripheries

“Each of us can learn something from others. **No one is useless** and no one is expendable. This also means finding ways to include those on the **peripheries of life**. For they have another way of looking at things; they see aspects of reality that are invisible to the centres of power where weighty decisions are made.”(215)

The creation of a “social covenant”

It is also necessary to form a “covenant” between all members of society, rich and poor, which obliges everyone to give up some things for the common good.(219)

*“Such a covenant also demands the realization that some things may have to be renounced for the common good. **No one can possess the whole truth** or satisfy his or her every desire, since that pretension would lead to nullifying others by denying their rights. **A false notion of tolerance** has to give way to a dialogic realism on the part of men and women who remain faithful to their own principles while recognizing that others also have the right to do likewise. This is the genuine acknowledgment of the other that is made possible by love alone.”*

Recovering kindness (222)

The Pope calls to “cultivate kindness,” an attitude to be recuperated because it constitute those who do so “*stars shining in the midst of darkness*” and a liberation “*from the cruelty..., anxiety and ...frantic flurry of activity*” that prevail in our contemporary age (222-224)

“Consumerist individualism has led to great injustice. Other persons come to be viewed simply as obstacles to our own serene existence; ..

”Yet even then, **we can choose to cultivate kindness**. Those who do so **become stars shining in the midst of darkness**.”(222)

“Kindness **frees us from the cruelty** that at times infects human relationships, **from the anxiety** that prevents us from thinking of others, **from the frantic flurry of activity** that forgets that others also have a right to be happy.”(224).

VII - CHAPTER SEVEN, PATHS OF RENEWED ENCOUNTER

In chapter seven, Pope Francis discusses the conditions for peace and reconciliation, deploring the injustices of war and calling for an end to the use of the death penalty worldwide.

Starting anew from the truth

Making peace means to speak the truth. To cultivate a penitential memory , to accept the past in order not to cloud the future.(226)

Peace process requires enduring commitment (226)

“*It is a patient effort to seek truth and justice, to honour the memory of victims and to open the way, step by step, to a shared hope stronger than the desire for vengeance*”.(226)

A never ending task

Peace is a "craft" in which everyone must do his or her part and whose task is never finished "*a never-ending task*"(232).

A tireless commitment to restore the dignity of brothers and sisters

"For peace **"is not merely absence of war but a tireless commitment** – especially on the part of those of us charged with greater responsibility – to recognize, protect and concretely restore the dignity, so often overlooked or ignored, of our brothers and sisters, so that they can see themselves as the principal protagonists of the destiny of their nation".[220](233)

The value and meaning of forgiveness

Forgiveness is linked to peace: one must love everyone, without exception, But it does not mean renouncing our own rights

"loving an oppressor does not mean allowing him to keep oppressing us, or letting him think that what he does is acceptable. On the contrary, true love for an oppressor means seeking ways to make him cease his oppression" r (241-242).

Memory

Forgiveness does not mean impunity, but justice and memory, because forgiveness does not mean forgetting, but renouncing the destructive force of evil and vengeance. The Pope exhorts us never to forget such horrors as the Shoah, the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the persecutions and ethnic killings. *"They need to be remembered, always and ever anew"* so as not to anesthetize us and *"keep alive the flame of collective conscience"*.

War: a constant threat, the negation of rights, the failure of politics and humanity

Part of the seventh chapter then turns to war, a "*constant threat*" that represents "*the negation of all rights*,"(257) the "*failure of politics and humanity*," "*a shameful capitulation*" "*before the forces of evil*"(261).

Moral legitimacy of war

Pope Francis notes that the Catechism of the Catholic Church recognizes the possibility of legitimate defense by military force. But he said this was often interpreted too broadly, arguing that "it is very difficult nowadays to invoke the rational criteria elaborated in earlier centuries to speak of the possibility of a 'just war.'"

*"Yet it is easy to fall into an **overly broad interpretation** of this potential right. In this way, some would also wrongly justify even "preventive" attacks or acts of war that can hardly avoid entailing "evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated".[240](258)*

Moreover, because of the nuclear, chemical and biological weapons that strike many innocent civilians, we can no longer think of a possible "just war" as in the past, but we must forcefully reaffirm "*Never again war*"(258).

The deterrence

The idea of a “deterrence” of war through fear or threat of the nuclear is not a good idea. It did not prevent terrorism or various conflicts. It undermines relationship of trust. How sustainable is a stability based on fear?(262)

The total elimination of nuclear weapons

The total elimination of nuclear weapons is a moral and humanitarian imperative "*the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons becomes both a challenge and a moral and humanitarian imperative*" (262),

With arms money it would make more sense to set up a Global Fund for the Eradication of Hunger (262).

The death penalty

Francis expresses an equally clear position on the death penalty: **it is inadmissible** and must be abolished throughout the world. "

“*Saint John Paul II stated clearly and firmly that the death penalty is inadequate from a moral standpoint and no longer necessary from that of penal justice.[246] There can be no stepping back from this position. Today we state clearly that “the death penalty is inadmissible” and the Church is firmly committed to calling for its abolition worldwide.[248]*”

An accompanying footnote said: “St. Augustine, who forged a concept of ‘just war’ that we no longer uphold in our own day, also said that ‘it is a higher glory still to stay war itself with a word, than to slay men with the sword, and to procure or maintain peace by peace, not by war.’”

“*During the trial of the murderers of two priests, Saint Augustine asked the judge not to take the life of the assassins with this argument: “We do not object to your depriving these wicked men of the freedom to commit further crimes. Our desire is rather that justice be satisfied without the taking of their lives or the maiming of their bodies in any part. And, at the same time, that by the coercive measures provided by the law, they be turned from their irrational fury to the calmness of men of sound mind, and from their evil deeds to some useful employment. This too is considered a condemnation, but who does not see that, when savage violence is restrained and remedies meant to produce repentance are provided, it should be considered a benefit rather than a mere punitive measure... Do not let the atrocity of their sins feed a desire for vengeance, but desire instead to heal the wounds which those deeds have inflicted on their souls” (Epistola ad Marcellinum 133, 1.2: PL 33, 509)(265)*

VIII - CHAPTER EIGHT. RELIGIONS AT THE SERVICE OF FRATERNITY IN OUR WORLD

In the eighth and final chapter, the Pope dwells on "*Religions at the service of fraternity in our world*". Pope Francis highlights the role of religious communities in building a more fraternal world, by rejecting violence and engaging in dialogue, as outlined in the “Document on Human Fraternity.”(271)

Christian identity

The encyclical reflects in particular on the role of the Church: she must not relegate her mission to the private sphere, and without engaging in politics, she does not renounce the political dimension of existence, attention to the common good and concern for integral human development according to Gospel principles,(276)

Religion and violence

Pope Francis recalls that terrorism is not due to religion, but to misinterpretations of religious texts, as well as to policies of hunger, poverty, injustice and oppression (282-283).

An Appeal

Finally, Francis cites the Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Common Coexistence, signed by him on February 4, 2019, in Abu Dhabi, with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmed Al-Tayyeb: from this milestone of interreligious dialogue, the Pope takes up the call that in the name of human fraternity, dialogue be adopted as the way, common collaboration as the conduct, mutual knowledge as the method and criterion (285).

“In the name of God and of everything stated thus far, [we] declare the adoption of a culture of dialogue as the path; mutual cooperation as the code of conduct; reciprocal understanding as the method and standard”(285)

Conclusion

In the encyclical’s conclusion, Pope Francis said that the text was inspired not only by St. Francis, but also by non-Catholics such as Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu and Mahatma Gandhi, as well as the French Catholic missionary Blessed Charles de Foucauld, who the pope is expected to canonize.

“In these pages of reflection on universal fraternity, I felt inspired particularly by Saint Francis of Assisi, but also by others of our brothers and sisters who are not Catholics: Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu, Mahatma Gandhi and many more.

Yet I would like to conclude by mentioning another person of deep faith who, drawing upon his intense experience of God, made a journey of transformation towards feeling a brother to all. I am speaking of Blessed Charles de Foucauld.

287. Blessed Charles directed his ideal of total surrender to God towards an identification with the poor, abandoned in the depths of the African desert. In that setting, he expressed his desire to feel himself a brother to every human being,[286] and asked a friend to “pray to God that I truly be the brother of all”. [287] He wanted to be, in the end, “the universal brother”. [288] Yet only by identifying with the least did he come at last to be the brother of all. May God inspire that dream in each one of us. Amen.

A Prayer to the Creator

Francis ended the letter with both an ecumenical prayer and a “Prayer to the Creator,” which read:

“Lord, Father of our human family,
you created all human beings equal in dignity:
pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit
and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter,
dialogue, justice and peace.”

“Move us to create healthier societies
and a more dignified world,
a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.”

“May our hearts be open
to all the peoples and nations of the earth.
May we recognize the goodness and beauty
that you have sown in each of us,

and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects, and shared dreams. Amen.”

Summary of the encyclical

The new encyclical reads like quintessential Pope Francis, encouraging a universal brotherhood that can't help but feel at least a bit utopian, especially at this time in history. He envisions a global society in which individuals and nations place care and concern for one another over care and concern for themselves — at the root of which is a fundamental acknowledgement of the dignity of each human person. Fratelli Tutti is a consideration of love in a social context: one that is open to all, that doesn't count the cost, that isn't combative, that values all, and that ultimately leads to peace.

But despite the loftiness of such aspirations, Francis insists that universal brotherhood is not an impossibility. It does, however, demand “a decisive commitment to devising effective means to this end” (No. 180). This commitment and method is what Francis attempts to inspire in Fratelli Tutti.

In essence, this encyclical is seen as a spiritual testament of Francis, because all the themes he loved are juxtaposed in it: peace, interreligious and social dialogue, the defense of creation, the welcoming of migrants, the importance of forgiveness and the establishment of political forms of charity.